

ANTI-ARMY SPEECH Pak police register report against PM

PTI, Islamabad

Pakistani police have registered a report against Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif for allegedly provoking people and creating hatred against the armed forces.

The report was lodged at Civil Line police in Rawalpindi on Wednesday by Advocate Ishfaq Ahmed Mirza, who claimed himself as the chairman of the IM Pakistan party.

The one-page report registered by the police is not an FIR and is known in local parlance as 'roznamcha', 'The Dawn' newspaper reported.

Mirza claimed he had received a video clip on his WhatsApp which showed a man making a speech.

He said the man delivering the speech was Sharif himself who was allegedly provoking people and creating hatred against the armed forces.

The complainant asked for the registration of a case against Sharif, head of the PMLN party.

Mirza claimed that his IM Pakistan political party was registered with the Election Commission of Pakistan, the report said.

Nawaz Sharif has narrowly survived an attempt in the supreme court to unseat him on allegations of corruption levelled by the opposition. The case against Sharif emerged last year after the Panama Papers leak linked his children to offshore companies in the British Virgin Islands in relation to the purchase of upmarket property in London.



Masked Kashmiri protesters throw stones towards Indian government forces during clashes after Friday congregational prayers outside The Jamia Masjid in Srinagar, India yesterday. Thousands of Indian soldiers and paramilitaries were Thursday engaged in a huge anti-militant operation in Kashmir, where armed rebels have repeatedly attacked government forces in recent weeks. PHOTO: AFP

Nepal SC blocks impeachment of chief justice

AFP, Kathmandu

Nepal's Supreme Court yesterday blocked the government's attempt to impeach the chief justice, a move that had prompted concerns the ruling coalition was seeking to undermine judicial independence.

The government filed a motion to impeach the country's first female Chief Justice Sushila Karki last Sunday after the two main parties in the coalition accused her of political interference.

The move came just days after Karki overturned the government's choice for chief of police.

The order issued by the top court said that the government's move went against "the spirit of the constitution".

Supreme Court spokesman Bishwaraj Paudel told AFP that Karki would resume her duties from Sunday.

The UN human rights



Trump, Turnbull mend ties

Discuss refugee deal as US president says earlier telephone spat with Aussie PM had been 'all worked out'

AFP, New York

Donald Trump met Australia's Malcolm Turnbull for a patching-up summit in New York Thursday, when the US president said an earlier telephone spat had been "all worked out."

Trump claimed a bad-tempered call with the Australian prime minister early in his White House tenure had been "fake news" that was a "big exaggeration" by the media.

However, during a speech later in the evening, he admitted it "got a little bit testy."

Trump reportedly exploded and cut short the call when he was told about a Barack Obama-era deal to move refugees from Australia to America.

The president took to Twitter afterward to call the agreement "dumb," rattling a decades-old alliance.

"It's all worked out. It's been worked out for a long time," Trump said on Thursday, as the pair, dressed in black ties, smiled and swapped legislative war stories.

"We had a great telephone call. You guys exaggerated that call. That was a big exaggeration. We're not babies," Trump said during his first meeting with Turnbull, reverting to his favored tactic of media-bashing.

"We get along great. We have a fantastic relationship, I love

Australia, I always have," he added.

Turnbull said that "we can put the refugee deal behind you and move on."

The pair convened on a decommissioned aircraft carrier, the Intrepid, to mark the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of the Coral Sea -- and to steady the long-standing alliance after relations soured at a time of growing tensions in the Asia-Pacific.

The World War II fight against Japanese forces helped forge an alliance during which Australia has pitched in alongside the United States in every major conflict since.

The crisis over North Korea's nuclear and missile programs and a fence-mending trip to Sydney by Vice President Mike Pence last month appears to have eased tension between the United States and Australia.

After meeting Turnbull, Pence had said the United States would take the refugees but added it "doesn't mean we admire the agreement."

A businessman-turned-politician like Trump, Turnbull has said he was "delighted" to meet with the US leader and affirm the relationship.

Trump, for his part, said he would be happy to travel Down Under, describing the United States and Australia as "rebellious children of the same parent."



India's top court upholds death sentences for four

REUTERS, New Delhi

India's top court yesterday upheld death sentences against four men who fatally gang raped a woman on board a bus in 2012, a crime that sparked widespread protests and drew international attention to violence against women.

Applause broke out in court among relatives of the victim - whose identity is protected by law - as judges explained the crime met the "rarest of the rare" standard required to justify capital punishment in India.

"It's a barbaric crime and it has shaken the society's conscience," Justice R Banumathi said, as a three-judge Supreme Court panel threw out an appeal on behalf of the defendants.

The five men and a juvenile lured the 23-year-old trainee physiotherapist and her male friend on to a bus in New Delhi on Dec 16, 2012, before repeatedly raping the woman and beating both with a metal bar and dumping them on a road.

The woman died of internal injuries nearly two weeks later in a Singapore hospital. "I am very satisfied. Today I am happy," the victim's mother said outside the courthouse.

Her father said: "It's not just a victory for my family, it's a victory for each and every woman in our country."

Four of the attackers were sentenced to death 2013 while the fifth hanged himself in prison during the original seven-month trial. That verdict was upheld by the Delhi High Court in 2014.

The four - gym instructor Vinay Sharma, bus cleaner Akshay Kumar Thakur, fruit-seller Pawan Gupta and unemployed Mukesh Singh - then appealed to the Supreme Court. The defendants were not in court yesterday.

A P Singh, a lawyer representing three of the condemned men, said justice had not been done. He vowed to file a review petition to the chief justice of the Supreme Court.

The last recourse of the convicts, all of whom are now in their twenties, would be to seek clemency from President Pranab Mukherjee.

2012 GANG RAPE CA

One defendant committed suicide

Barbaric crime shook society's conscience: judge

Condemned men to seek review; clemency still possible

200 inmates break out of Indonesia jail

AFP, Jakarta

About 200 inmates broke out of an overcrowded prison in western Indonesia yesterday, rushing out of the jail after they were let out of their cells to pray, officials said.

Almost 80 were quickly recaptured after the incident, which occurred when prison guards allowed inmates to take part in Friday prayers in the Muslim-majority nation.

But the inmates instead headed to the main door of the jail in Pekanbaru city, on Sumatra island, and tried to break through it.

When that failed, they fled through a side entrance and broke through a wire fence at the jail, which was guarded by only a handful of officers, Indonesia's director general of prisons, I Wayan Dusak, told AFP.

Amateur footage broadcast on local TV stations showed scores of men, some wearing sarongs, scurrying through the gates of the Sialang Bungkok prison, with no sign of officials in pursuit.

"About 200 escaped, but at least 77 people have been recaptured," local police spokesman Guntur Aryo Tejo told AFP.

Police have put road blocks in the city and launched a massive hunt for the inmates still on the loose.

Dusak said the trigger was discontent over the head guard, whom prisoners want replaced.

The male-only prison has a capacity of 300 people but was holding 1,870 inmates, with only five guards and a porter on duty at any one time, Dusak said.

More than a thousand inmates who did not escape the prison were refusing to return to their cells unless the head guard was replaced.



An opposition supporter picks up a tear gas canister during clashes with security forces at a protest against President Nicolas Maduro in Caracas, Venezuela, on Thursday. Anti-government protests raged on in Venezuela as students launched fresh marches after a day of flames and tear gas brought the death toll to 33. PHOTO: REUTERS

Clashes erupt on Pak-Afghan border

Eight civilians killed; dozens wounded

AFP, Quetta

Pakistani and Afghan officials accused each other of killing civilians yesterday after gunfire erupted near a major border crossing where Pakistani census officials were carrying out a count, exacerbating tensions between the neighbours.

At least eight civilians were killed, according to officials -- seven on the Pakistani side, and one on the Afghan side -- and dozens wounded before the fighting near the Chaman border crossing subsided late yesterday afternoon, officials said.

Samim Khpalwak, spokesman for the governor of Afghanistan's southern Kandahar province, said the Pakistani census officials had strayed on to the Afghan side of the border and were attempting to count people living there.

The census enumerators are being accompanied by security forces as they carry out the count.

Kandahar police chief Abdul Raziq said one civilian was killed and up to 17 Afghan troops wounded, adding he had asked his men to hold fire -- unless Pakistani forces begin shooting again.

But Pakistan's military and Foreign Office maintained they had told Afghan authorities where they would be in advance, saying that "indiscriminate" fire had killed seven Pakistani civilians and wounded 33 more, including four paramilitary border police.

Philip's retirement triggers cyclone!

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

An island cult who worship Prince Philip as their God may believe his retirement has triggered a tropical cyclone, according to an author who has lived among the villagers.

Residents of the remote village of Yaohnanen, on the Pacific island of Tanna, hailed a 2015 cyclone as a sign the Duke of Edinburgh would visit the islands.

Now, just as the Duke announced news of his retirement, another storm is on the way, which may be interpreted in a similar way by the villagers.

Author and journalist Matthew Baylis, who lived among the villagers, said the cyclone could indicate the Duke has reached a higher "sacred status".

"They told me that they see Philip's living in a palace, surrounded by guards, and travelling in a car with darkened windows, as evidence of his taboo status," he told The Telegraph.

"So they may well see his withdrawal from public duties as connected to that -- having attained some higher rung of taboo, sacred status."

"Equally, they might think he is preparing to come 'back' to Tanna, in some form, spiritually or bodily."

The cult -- known as the Prince Philip Movement -- emerged in the 1950s but grew after Queen Elizabeth II, along with her husband Philip, visited the South Pacific nation of Vanuatu in 1974.

WEBSITE BLOCKING Turkey rejects Wikipedia's appeal

AFP, Istanbul

A Turkish court yesterday rejected an appeal by the Wikimedia Foundation against the nearly week-long blocking of access in Turkey to the online encyclopedia Wikipedia, state media said.

The first magistrates court in Ankara threw out the appeal filed earlier this week by the Wikimedia Foundation, which owns the domain name for Wikipedia, the state-run Anadolu news agency said.

The ban had been imposed on Saturday by Turkey's Information and Communication Technologies Authority (BTK) and had remained in place after being backed up by a court order earlier this week.

RUMOUR OF POLITICAL INSTABILITY Myanmar warns of fake news about Suu Kyi govt

REUTERS, Yangon

Myanmar's government has warned the public that false news and rumours are being spread by unidentified people wishing to cause "political instability" during the tenure of leader Aung San Suu Kyi, state-run media said yesterday.

Nobel laureate Suu Kyi took power in April 2016 as part of a transition from military rule.

Her first year in power has been beset by bureaucratic inertia, ethnic and religious tensions, and conflicts that have displaced tens of thousands, including an estimated 75,000 Rohingya Muslims who fled to Bangladesh amid a military crackdown late last year.

Rumours emerged in recent days that President Htin Kyaw - who Suu Kyi picked for head of state - would step down. Suu Kyi directs the civilian administration in the specially created role of state counsellor because the constitution - drafted by the still-powerful military - bars her from the presidency.

Police said they would prosecute those responsible for the information, which has spread quickly on online social networks that have grown in popularity amid expanding freedoms and internet access in Myanmar.

"False news regarding the president and the state counsellor have been spread on purpose by using accounts with false names," Suu Kyi's office carried in the government's Global New Light of Myanmar newspaper yesterday.

It named two Facebook accounts that it said had published "fabricated news".

"It has been found that these acts are being done intentionally to cause political instability during the tenure of the incumbent government," Suu Kyi's office said, adding that the perpetrators wished to "create a situation among the people to live in fear and anxiety due to the spread of rumours".



NEWSIN brief

US soldier killed in Somalia mission

AFP, Mogadishu

An American soldier was shot dead and two others wounded in Somalia during a joint operation with Somali forces against Shabaab militants, the US military said yesterday. Two US soldiers were also wounded in the operation, said AFRICOM spokeswoman Robyn Mack, adding the US forces were "conducting an advise and assist mission alongside members of the Somali National Army."

Pak airlines to suspend Mumbai-Karachi flight

PTI, Mumbai

Pakistan International Airlines (PIA), which operates a weekly flight between Mumbai and Karachi, will suspend its service from May 11. The national flag carrier of Pakistan operates the flight on every Thursday. The PIA communication did not specify the reason for the suspension of its flight service. The airline did not operate its service on Thursday.

Five dead in suicide attack in Nigeria

AFP, Maiduguri

Five people were killed in two suicide bombings in northeast Nigeria, police said yesterday, in the latest attacks blamed on Boko Haram jihadists. Borno state police spokesman Murtala Ibrahim said two women with explosives strapped to their bodies blew themselves up in the Konduga area on Thursday night, "killing themselves and five others". "Six persons sustained various degrees of injuries," he said in a statement.