

NEWSIN
brief

EU urges members to
step up Brexit preps

AFP, Brussels

The European Union yesterday urged EU member countries and businesses to "step up preparations" for Britain's exit next year from the bloc, underlining fears the negotiations could fail. The appeal came before Britain's new Brexit negotiator Dominic Raab was due in Brussels following a rebellion in May's government over strategy.

Canada PM shakes up
govt ahead of polls

AFP, Ottawa

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau reshuffled his government on Wednesday, setting the stage for his Liberal Party ahead of legislative elections next year. The shake-up appeared designed to give the Liberals a lift at a time when polls show their Conservative Party opponents are hard on their heels.

South Korea liable for
botched ferry rescue

AFP, Seoul

The South Korean government is liable for the botched rescue of more than 300 people, mostly school-children, who drowned when their overloaded ferry sank, a court ruled yesterday, ordering the state to compensate relatives. The Seoul Central District Court awarded the next of kin of each deceased passenger from the Sewol ferry 200 million won.

Bus plunges into Indian
gorge, 14 dead

AFP, Dehradun

A bus plunged into a gorge in a Himalayan state of northern India yesterday, killing 14 people and injuring 17 others, a disaster official said. The driver lost control of the vehicle as he tried to negotiate a narrow bend in the picturesque Tehri district. Earlier this month, 44 people were killed in Uttarakhand when a bus crashed into a gorge.

Israel adopts divisive law

EU expresses concern as Arab MPs, Palestinians call the move 'racist'

REUTERS, Jerusalem

Israel yesterday passed a "nation-state" law declaring that only Jews have the right of self-determination in the country, stirring anger from members of the Arab minority who said it was racist and drawing an expression of concern from the EU.

The bill, backed by the right-wing government, passed through parliament after months of political argument and some Arab lawmakers shouted and ripped up their papers after the vote.

"This is a defining moment in the annals of Zionism and the history of the state of Israel," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told the Knesset.

"An absolute majority wants to ensure our state's Jewish character for generations to come," he said.

Largely symbolic, the law was enacted just after the 70th anniversary of the birth of the state of Israel. It stipulates "Israel is the historical homeland of the Jewish people and they have an exclusive right to national self-determination in it".

Palestinian leaders condemned the move. "No racist law will undermine

the rights of our people. We are proud of being a strong nation deeply rooted in our homeland," Palestinian chief negotiator Saeb Erekat said in a statement.

In Brussels, a spokeswoman for EU foreign affairs chief Federica Mogherini expressed concern at the move and said it would complicate a

JEWISH NATION STATE

Netanyahu says law is the will of an 'absolute majority'

Law plants seeds of 'apartheid state': critic

Palestinian killed in Israeli strike in Gaza

two-state solution to the Israel-Palestinian conflict.

The bill also removes Arabic as an official language alongside Hebrew, downgrading it to a "special status" that enables its continued use in Israeli institutions.

Israel's Arab citizens number some

1.8 million, about 20 percent of the 9 million population.

"I announce with shock and sorrow the death of democracy," Ahmed Tibi, an Arab lawmaker, told reporters after the law was adopted.

Early drafts had gone further in what critics at home and abroad saw as discrimination towards Arabs, who have long said they are treated in Israel as second-class citizens.

Clauses that were dropped after political wrangling would have enshrined in law establishment of Jewish-only communities.

Even after the changes, critics said the new law will deepen a sense of alienation within the Arab minority.

"This is racist legislation by a radical right-wing government that is creating radical laws, and is planting the seeds to create an apartheid state," said physician Bassam Bisharah.

Meanwhile, a Palestinian was killed in an Israeli strike in the Gaza Strip yesterday, the enclave's health ministry said, after Israel said one of its aircraft targeted a group launching balloons carrying firebombs.

Spain drops int'l arrest
warrant for Puigdemont

AFP, Madrid

A Spanish judge yesterday dropped European and international arrest warrants for deposed Catalan president Carles Puigdemont and other separatist leaders who fled abroad, the Supreme Court said, which means they no longer face extradition.

In a court ruling, Pablo Llarena said he had taken the decision after a German court agreed to extradite Puigdemont, but only for misuse of public funds and not on the more serious charge of rebellion.

This means that Puigdemont, who is currently in Germany awaiting extradition proceedings, and five other Catalans who are scattered in Scotland, Belgium and Switzerland, are free to move from country to country.

The Spanish arrest warrant, however, remains open which means they will be detained if they try to come back.

Puigdemont is one of 13 separatist leaders accused of the most serious charge rebellion over their role in Catalonia's failed secession bid last October.

Nine are in custody in Spain awaiting trial.

Of those currently abroad, Puigdemont and three others are charged with rebellion and other lesser offences like misuse of public funds.

The remaining two have only been charged with disobedience and misuse of public funds, but not rebellion.

In its decision earlier this month, Puigdemont's extradition, the German court argued that the

closest legal equivalent to rebellion, high treason, did not apply because his actions last autumn were not accompanied by violence.

The decision meant that if he were to be extradited, Spain would only be able to try him on charges approved in the extradition order, and not rebellion.



CATALAN CASE



Fire departments and volunteers work to control a large forest fire in Pyharanta, Finland yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

SKRIPAL NERVE ATTACK

UK police identify
Russian suspects

REUTERS, London

British police have identified several Russians who they believe were behind the nerve agent attack on former spy Sergei Skripal and his daughter, the British news agency, Press Association, said yesterday, citing a source close to the investigation.

A police spokesman declined to comment on the report. Security Minister Ben Wallace was dismissive, saying it belonged to the "ill informed and wild speculation folder".

Skripal, a former colonel in Russian military intelligence who betrayed dozens of agents to Britain's MI6 foreign spy service, and his daughter Yulia, were found unconscious on a public bench in the English city of Salisbury on March 4.

Britain blamed Russia for the poisonings and identified the poison as Novichok, a deadly group of nerve agents developed by the Soviet military in the 1970s and 1980s. Russia has repeatedly denied any involvement in the attack.

After analysing closed-circuit television, police think several Russians were involved in the attack on the Skripals, who spent weeks in hospital before being spirited to a secret location, the Press Association report said.

"Investigators believe they have identified the suspected perpetrators of the Novichok attack," the unidentified source close to the investigation said, according to PA.

"They (the investigators) are sure they (the suspects) are Russian," said the source, adding security camera images had been cross checked with records of people who entered the country.

Syria's Assad set to recover
control of Golan frontier

Rebels agree to surrender terms after deal

REUTERS, Beirut

President Bashar al-Assad is set to recover control of the Syrian frontier with the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights in a major victory over rebels who have agreed to surrender terms, sources on both sides said yesterday.

Backed by Russian air power and unopposed by Assad's foreign adversaries, government forces have swept through southwestern Syria in the last month in one of the swiftest campaigns of the war, forcing surrender on massively outgunned rebels.

The campaign, which has already restored Assad's control over a critical portion of the frontier with Jordan, marks another milestone in his efforts to recover control of the country fractured by more than seven years of conflict.

There was no government confirmation of the Quneitra agreement. State media cited "reports" a deal had been reached. It was not clear when implementation would begin.

A copy of the agreement sent to Reuters by a rebel source said insurgents had negotiated the deal with Russia.

Echoing Russian terms imposed on

rebels elsewhere, opposition fighters agreed to give up heavy and medium-sized weapons. Those wishing to stay in the area will "settle" their status with the state, meaning accepting a return of its rule.

Those who reject the deal will be given safe passage out to the opposition-held province of



Busses transporting residents and fighters from Fuua and Kefraya arrive in al-Eis crossing point yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Idlib in the northwest, according to terms that were also reported by a military news outlet run by Lebanon's Hezbollah. The Iran-backed group Hezbollah is fighting in Syria in support of Assad.

Once the southwestern campaign is finished, Assad's focus will likely turn to the two remaining areas outside his grasp.

Man found
guilty of
plotting to
kill May

REUTERS, London

A British man was found guilty of a plot to kill Prime Minister Theresa May by first detonating an explosive device to get into her Downing Street office and then using a knife or a gun to attack her.

Naa'imur Rahman, 20, was convicted at the Old Bailey court of preparing to commit acts of terrorism on Wednesday. Rahman, of Ballards Lane in Finchley, London, gave his nationality as Bangladeshi-British in court, reported the Independent.

"We are talking about an individual that would have killed, injured and maimed a number of people including police officers and members of the public," said Dean Haydon, head of the Metropolitan Police's Counter Terrorism Command.

The plot was foiled when Rahman believed he was corresponding online with members of the Islamic State (IS) militant group while planning the alleged attack but was in fact talking to members of undercover officers from the FBI and Britain's MI5 Security Service. Rahman was arrested last November shortly after meeting undercover officers posing as IS members and collecting two dummy explosives.

Haydon said Rahman had been in contact with an uncle who had traveled to Syria and joined IS and who had encouraged his nephew to carry out attacks in Britain. He had been planning to carry out the attack for two years but his resolve was hardened when he heard that his uncle had been killed in a drone attack last summer.

Rahman was described by police as a drifter, who lived on friends' sofas.

Human rights council
UN's 'greatest failure'

US Ambassador Nikki Haley defends her country's decision to quit the UN body

AFP, United Nations

US Ambassador Nikki Haley on Wednesday described the Human Rights Council as the "greatest failure" of the United Nations as she defended the US decision to quit the UN body.

Haley told the Heritage Foundation think tank in Washington that the Geneva-based body had "provided cover, not condemnation, for the world's most inhumane regimes."

"Judged by how far it has fallen short of its promise, the Human Rights Council is the United Nations' greatest failure," she said. The ambassador announced last month that the United States was quitting the council, accusing it of bias against Israel and condemning the "hypocrisy" of its members including China, Egypt, Venezuela and Cuba.

The human rights council has been "not a place of conscience, but a place of politics," Haley said, adding that it had focussed its attention "unfairly and relentlessly on Israel."

US criticism stems from the fact that Israel is the only country that has a dedi-

cated agenda item at council meetings, which means that Israel's treatment of Palestinians has regularly come under scrutiny.

Haley took aim at the council for failing to speak out in support of anti-government protests in Iran, to condemn the violence in Venezuela and over the election of the

Democratic Republic of Congo to the council after its security forces faced allegations of atrocities in the Kasai region.

Despite the US exit, "fixing the institutional flaws" of the council remains "one of our biggest priorities" at the United Nations, Haley said.

The withdrawal followed strong UN criticism of President Donald Trump's policy to separate migrant children from their families at the US-Mexico border.

Haley again took a swipe at rights groups like Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch for failing to back the US bid to reform the council through a resolution at the General Assembly.



Turkey ends
emergency
after 2 years

ALJAZEERA ONLINE

A state of emergency imposed in Turkey after a coup attempt two years ago came to an end yesterday, as the government seeks to pass new legislation to keep in place some of the measure's powers.

Emergency rule was imposed five days after the coup attempt on July 20, 2016, to enable authorities "to take swift and effective action against those responsible" for it.

The government then extended it seven times, facing criticism from the opposition and Turkey's Western allies.

More than 250 people, excluding the plotters, were killed during the coup attempt, which Ankara blames on the movement of Fethullah Gulen, a religious leader living in self-imposed exile in the United States. Gulen has denied any involvement.

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১৮ জুলাই, ২০১৮

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

জাতীয় রাজস্ব বোর্ড-এ ৪২টি অফিস সহায়ক পদে (জাতীয় বেতন স্কেল-১২৫০-২০০১০) বাংলাদেশের স্থায়ী নাগরিকদের নিকট থেকে online-এ দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। আবেদনকারীর ন্যূনতম শিক্ষাপত্র যোগ্যতা অষ্টম শ্রেণী পর্যন্ত হওয়া উত্তীর্ণ। আবেদন ফরম, আবেদনের শর্তাবলী এবং এ সংক্রান্ত বিস্তারিত নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি ও যাবতীয় তথ্য online-এ (http://nbr.teletalk.com.bd এবং http://nbr.gov.bd) website এ পাওয়া যাবে। শুধুমাত্র ঢাকা, পাজীপুর, মানিকগঞ্জ, নারায়ণগঞ্জ, নরসিংদী, ফরিদপুর, গোপালগঞ্জ, মাদারীপুর, শরিয়তপুর, ময়মনসিংহ, জামালপুর, শেরপুর, চট্টগ্রাম, কক্সবাজার, ব্রাহ্মণবাড়িয়া, চাঁদপুর, কুমিল্লা, ফেনী, লক্ষীপুর, রাজশাহী, নওগাঁ, নাটোর, টাঙ্গাইলবাগাবাড়, বগুড়া, রংপুর, ঠাকুরগাঁও, যশোর, দুয়াকান্দা, বরিশাল, ভোলা, পিরোজপুর, সিলেট, মৌলভীবাজার, সুনামগঞ্জ, হবিগঞ্জ জেলার স্থায়ী বাসিন্দাদের আবেদনের জন্য যোগ্য হলেন। প্রার্থীসমূহকে website এ বর্ণিত সকল শর্ত মেনে ১৭/০৮/২০১৮ খ্রিঃ তারিখ সন্ধ্যা ৬.০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে এই website এ প্রদত্ত online Application ব্যবহার করে দরখাস্ত করতে হবে।

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সদস্য সচিব
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UNDP

Invitation to Bid
(ITB-BD-2018-004)

UNDP Bangladesh seeks bids from interested firms/ companies for the procurement of ICT equipment under a provision of Long Terms Agreement.

Deadline for submission of proposal is at 4.30 p.m. 16 August 2018.

The procurement process of ITB-BD-2018-004 will be conducted through online tendering system of UNDP. Bidders who wish to submit an offer must be registered in the system to get the access the bidding document and submit a bid. To register please visit the link: <https://etendering.partneragencies.org> and use the user name and password provided below to start the registration:

User name: event.guest
Password: why2change

The complete user guide and Bidding documents (ITB) can also be downloaded from the UNDP Bangladesh website in the link below: <http://www.bd.undp.org/content/bangladesh/en/home/operations/procurement/>

Pre-bid Meeting on 30 July 2018 at 11:00 am.

Note: Bidder needs to carry a valid Passport/NID/Credit or Debit card with photo/Original driving license in order to enter into IDB Bhaban for the pre-bid meeting