

NEWSIN brief

Palestinian shot dead after stabbing soldier

REUTERS, Jerusalem
A Palestinian stabbed an Israeli soldier and was shot dead by the wounded man and other troops in the Israeli-occupied West Bank yesterday, the military said. In a statement, the military said the incident occurred near the biblical Cave of the Patriarchs, revered by Muslims as the Ibrahim mosque, in the city of Hebron.

Nato member killed in Afghan insider attack

AFP, Kabul
A foreign soldier was killed and two others wounded in an Afghan insider attack yesterday. "Initial reports indicate the attack was committed by a member of the Afghan security forces," Nato's Resolute Support mission in Afghanistan said in a statement.

Govt 'incompetent' to run Pak: ex-president

DAWN ONLINE
Terming the present government "incompetent", former president and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari has called upon all political parties to unite on one platform to declare that the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf government cannot run the country. Zardari also said when he had become the country's president, he transferred all the powers to parliament.

2 dead after migrant boat sinks off Turkey

AFP, Ankara
Two people died yesterday after a boat carrying illegal migrants sank off Turkey's southwestern coast, the Turkish coastguard said. Seventeen others were rescued after the boat ran into trouble 50 metres off the coast of Bodrum district in Mugla province, it said in a statement.



Honduran migrants take part in a caravan heading to the US on the road linking Ciudad Hidalgo and Tapachula, Chiapas state, Mexico on Sunday. Inset, a girl holds her two-month-old sister amid a caravan of thousands of migrants from Central America taking rest while en route to the US, in Tapachula city center, Mexico. PHOTO: AFP, REUTERS



Migrant caravan 'nat'l emergency'

Trump alerts border patrol, military

AFP, Washington
US President Donald Trump yesterday called the migrant caravan heading toward the US-Mexico border a national emergency, saying he has alerted the US border patrol and military. "Sadly, it looks like Mexico's Police and Military are unable to stop the Caravan heading to the Southern Border of the United States. Criminals and unknown Middle Easterners are mixed in," he said on Twitter. "I have alerted Border Patrol and Military that this is a National Emergency (sic). Must change laws!" Thousands of Honduran migrants yesterday prepared to continue their march after a second night in Mexico. Mexican authorities had managed to block the "caravan" of migrants on a border bridge between Mexico and Guatemala, but many later crossed the river below in makeshift rafts before marching north. After walking seven hours from the Guatemalan border, around 3,000 migrants arrived in Tapachula, Chiapas state, Sunday. The migrants are generally fleeing poverty and insecurity in Honduras, where powerful street gangs rule their turf with brutal violence. Yesterday, the caravan's next stop on the journey of at least 3,000 kilometers (1,800 miles) was Huixtla, a town around 40 kilometers away. "We are well aware that this country (Mexico) didn't receive us as we expected, and they can return us to Honduras, and we also know there are drug traffickers who kidnap and kill migrants," Juan Flores, one of those migrants, told AFP.

World would be less safe

Warns Russia after US declares to withdraw from nuclear weapons treaty; US national security adviser visits Moscow

AFP, Moscow
The Kremlin yesterday said the world would be less safe if Washington goes ahead with plans to withdraw from a Cold War-era nuclear weapons treaty that banned intermediate-range missiles. "Such steps, if taken, will make the world more dangerous," said presidential spokesman Dmitry Peskov as he rejected claims by US President Donald Trump that Russia had violated the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF). "Russia has been and remains committed to the provisions of this treaty," he said. The US had previously undermined the foundations of the agreement, Peskov added. "The intention to withdraw from this document is of the deepest concern." Peskov reiterated an earlier statement by President Vladimir Putin that Russia would never strike first even if threatened with a nuclear attack. "We don't feel that we have the right to inflict the first strike," he said.

The INF resolved a crisis over Soviet nuclear-tipped ballistic missiles targeting Western capitals. The treaty banning intermediate-range nuclear and conventional missiles was signed in 1987 by then US president Ronald Reagan and Mikhail

MISSILE DEAL TENSION

Macron defends nuke treaty's 'importance'

US must 'think twice' about pullout: China

Gorbachev, the last Soviet leader, who on Sunday said that "dropping these agreements... shows a lack of wisdom" and was a "mistake". US national security advisor John Bolton is in Moscow for two days of talks in which the issue will be discussed.

He may also speak about the treaty with President Vladimir Putin today, according to Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov, who said the Russian leader was looking for "clarifications" about US intentions. French President Emmanuel Macron stressed the importance of a Cold War-era nuclear weapons treaty during a phone call with Donald Trump, his office said yesterday. "The president noted the importance of this treaty, in particular for European security and our strategic stability," Macron's office said of the call between the two leaders on Sunday. China called on the United States to "think twice" about its decision to ditch the nuclear weapons treaty with Russia. "It needs to be emphasized that it is completely wrong to bring up China when talking about withdrawal from the treaty," said Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying yesterday. The treaty has played an important role in advancing the disarmament process and maintaining a strategic balance and global stability, Hua said.

'We failed them'

Australian PM offers rare national apology to thousands of victims of child sex abuse

AFP, Canberra
Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison issued a national apology to thousands of victims of institutional sex abuse yesterday, admitting the state utterly failed to stop "evil, dark crimes" committed over decades. "This was done by Australians to Australians, enemies in our midst, enemies in our midst," Morrison said in an emotional address to parliament, designed as a belated apology to the 15,000 known survivors of child abuse. "As a nation, we failed them, we forsook them, and that will always be our shame," he said, recounting abuse that a government inquiry has shown was rife in schools, churches, orphanages, sports clubs and other institutions across the country over decades. Morrison's voice cracked and trailed off as he recounted a history of exploitation, cover-ups and state failure. He declared a new national credo for future allegations: "We believe you." The state apology comes after a five-year Royal Commission that detailed harrowing

child sex abuse claims involving once well-trusted institutions. "Today, we say sorry, to the children we failed. Sorry. To the parents whose trust was betrayed and who have struggled to pick up the pieces. Sorry. To the whistleblowers, who we did not listen to. Sorry," Morrison said. "To the spouses, partners, wives, husbands, children, who have dealt with the consequences of the abuse, cover-ups and obstruction. Sorry. To generations past and present. Sorry." In parliament, lawmakers stood for a moment of silence following the remarks, as hundreds of survivors looked on or watched in official events across the country. Normal parliamentary business, a session of prime minister's questions, was suspended in a bipartisan show of respect. Outside the parliamentary chamber, relatives of victims wore tags with the names of departed daughters and sons, brothers and sisters, for whom the apology came too late. After meeting some of the victims, Morrison told journalists "I've never felt



Jordan to reclaim land held by Israel: King

Netanyahu hopes to negotiate extension

AGENCIES
Jordan has told Israel that it intends to reclaim two tracts of territories remained in Israeli private ownership under a 1994 peace treaty, King Abdullah II has announced as Israel said it was still planning to negotiate an extension. Much of the land in Baqoura in the northwestern part of the kingdom and Ghumar in the south is used by Israeli farmers, some of whom were given private land ownership rights and special travel rights under a 1994 peace treaty between the two countries. The agreement will expire next year. King Abdullah has been under increasing public pressure to end the arrangements with Israel. He told senior Jordanian politicians the kingdom wanted to exercise its "full sovereignty" over the two areas, Petra state news agency said.

"These are Jordanian lands and they will remain..," the monarch said on Sunday. In an "era of regional turmoil" his kingdom - sandwiched between Syria to the north, Iraq to the east and Israel to its west - Jordan wanted to protect its "national interests," Abdullah said. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, speaking after Abdullah's comments on Sunday, acknowledged that Jordan wanted to exercise its option to end the arrangement, reported Reuters. But he said Israel "will enter negotiations with it on the possibility of extending the current arrangement". Negotiations over ending the "special regime" of the two areas would be tough with Jordan facing thorny legal issues to reclaim the land where Israeli laws now apply, officials said.

1994 PEACE DEAL

Public opinion puts pressure on king to end the treaty

Difficult negotiations lie ahead: officials



A relative attends a ceremony paying tribute to the victims of a train derailment in Yilan, Taiwan yesterday. Taiwan's president pushed for a swift investigation after 18 people were killed in the train derailment on Sunday.

Pak desperate for Saudi loans

Says Imran Khan

REUTERS, Islamabad
Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan left for Saudi Arabia to attend an investment conference boycotted by other leaders over the death of journalist Jamal Khashoggi at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, Turkey. Khan told an interviewer before leaving he was concerned at Khashoggi's death but could not skip the conference because "we're desperate for possible Saudi loans to shore up Pakistan's economy. It is Khan's second visit to Saudi Arabia in just over a month, but he has not succeeded in securing significant financial assistance to stave off a looming balance of payment crisis. Khan told the Middle East Eye in an interview published yesterday that he could not pass up the invitation to meet Saudi leaders again.

Ageing nation

Unclaimed burial urns pile up in Japan amid fraying social ties

REUTERS, Yokosuka
Unclaimed urns containing ashes of the dead are piling up by the thousands across Japan, creating storage headaches and reflecting fraying family ties and economic pressures in a rapidly ageing nation. The identities of the dead, cremated at public expense, are usually known. But in most cases, relatives either refuse or don't respond to requests to collect their remains. Burials can be costly and time-consuming, a burden on family members who may hardly know the deceased relative. "When I die, though I have only 150,000 yen (\$1,340), will you cremate me and put me in a pauper's grave? I have no one to collect my remains," said a note left by a man in his 70s in Yokosuka, south of Tokyo, who died in 2015 and whose urn was later buried at a local temple. The abandoned remains highlight social, economic and demographic changes in Japan, where more elderly live on welfare and families are more scattered, weakening traditional family bonds and obligations. It is a problem that is likely to grow, experts say; deaths in Japan are projected to rise from 1.33 million a year to 1.67 million by 2040, even as the overall population drops. Yokosuka was so overwhelmed with unclaimed urns that it ran out of space in a 300-year-old channel house that was about to collapse.

Working with Trump not always simple

Says Trudeau, welcomes renegotiation of NAFTA

AFP, Montreal
Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said working with US President Donald Trump is "not always simple," as he welcomed the successful renegotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Speaking on an episode of Quebec's most popular talk show, "Tout Le Monde En Parle," broadcast Sunday Trudeau said he had done his job of "standing up for Canadians" in agreeing the USMCA trade pact with the US, Canada and Mexico. Asked about his relationship with Trump, Trudeau cautiously acknowledged it is "not always simple."

"He knows it and so do I. We are not aligned on many things and it is sometimes difficult to find common ground, but we managed to do it fairly well," Trudeau said. Relations between the two leaders took a hit in June, when Trump taunted Trudeau as "very dishonest & weak" and "meek and mild" as he left a G7 summit in Canada that the prime minister had hosted. Trudeau also defended cannabis legalization during the interview, a key campaign promise that came into effect October 17. He argued 90 years of prohibition had not worked, and only lined the pockets of organized criminals. Meanwhile, ahead of his upcoming campaign for next year's elections, Trudeau vowed to tackle climate change. "The reality is that we must protect the environment while creating economic growth that is sustainable and responsible," he said.



Koreas, UN agree to demilitarise border

AFP, Seoul
The two Koreas and the US-led United Nations Command yesterday agreed to demilitarise a section of the heavily fortified border dividing the peninsula by this week, as a diplomatic thaw gathers pace. "The three parties agreed to carry out measures to withdraw firearms and guard posts at the Joint Security Area (JSA) by October 25," Seoul's defence ministry said in a statement following trilateral talks. They will then conduct a "three-way joint verification" for the following two days, it added. The JSA, also known as the truce village of Panmunjom, is the only spot along the tense, 250-kilometre (155-mile) frontier where troops from the two countries stand face to face. It was a designated neutral zone until the "axe murder incident" in 1976, when North Korean soldiers attacked a work party trying to chop down a tree inside the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), leaving two US army officers dead. South and North Korea -- which are technically still at war -- agreed to take measures to ease military tensions on their border at a meeting in Pyongyang last month between President Moon Jae-in and Kim Jong Un. Earlier this month, the two sides began removing landmines at the JSA -- which is now often used for talks between the two Koreas -- as part of the deal, which was confirmed "complete" at yesterday's talks.



"The reason I feel I have to avail myself of this opportunity is because in a country of 210 million people right now we have the worst debt crisis in our history," he was quoted as saying. "Unless we get loans from friendly countries or the IMF (International Monetary Fund), we actually won't have in another two or three months enough foreign exchange to service our debts or to pay for our imports. So we're desperate at the moment." Finance Minister Asad Umar and Commerce Minister Abdul Razak Dawood are accompanying Khan, a statement from Khan's office said yesterday.