

NEWSIN brief

S'pore PM Lee hints at early polls next year

REUTERS, Singapore

Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong yesterday suggested a general election may be called next year, more than a year before his government's mandate ends. Lee's People's Action Party (PAP) has dominated Singapore's politics over the five decades since the republic's independence, winning all the elections.

Calling a man 'impotent' is defamation: India HC

TNN, Nagpur

In a landmark ruling, the Nagpur bench of Bombay High Court ruled that calling a person "impotent" amounts to defamation and it adversely reflects his manhood. The ruling would help a lot of husbands facing divorce cases where "impotency" was often cited as one of the reasons by wives for separation along with harassment.

Ukraine rebels elect leaders defying West

AFP, Donetsk

Voters in rebel-held east Ukraine yesterday chose new leaders after Russia defied Western calls not to sabotage peace talks and Kiev urged fresh sanctions against the Kremlin. In the Donetsk and Lugansk "People's Republics" in Ukraine's east, voters headed to polling stations after a top rebel was killed in a cafe bombing.

16 killed in Taliban attack on Afghan base

ALJAZEERA ONLINE

At least 12 army soldiers were killed in a Taliban attack on Saturday on a small military base in Afghanistan's northern Baghlan province, officials said. The Taliban left behind explosives that then killed four tribal elders who had come to help collect the soldiers' bodies.



Russian President Vladimir Putin shakes hands with US First Lady Melania Trump, next to US President Donald Trump and German Chancellor Angela Merkel as he arrives yesterday to attend a commemoration ceremony for Armistice Day, 100 years after the end of the First World War at the Arc de Triomphe, in Paris, France.

PHOTO: REUTERS

'Old demons' resurfacing

Macron warns of perils of nationalism, 100 years after end of WWI

CNN ONLINE

Marking the breakout of peace after World War I, President Donald Trump yesterday heard a dire warning from his host: the forces that led to the slaughter are resurgent.

Trump and dozens of his global counterparts gathered at the Arc de Triomphe in central Paris to mark 100 years since the nightmares of World War I ended, a conclusion brought about partly by the entry of the United States into the bitter, nationalism-fueled conflict.

But decades later, as living memories fade of the trenches and the poison gas, nationalism is on the rise. It's been fueled by Trump himself, who has proudly identified himself as a nationalist as he advances an "America First" agenda.

In his address, French President Emmanuel Macron -- who has emerged as Europe's most vocal sentry against a global tide of nationalism -- repeated his warnings.

"Patriotism is the exact opposite of nationalism," he said. "Nationalism is a betrayal of patri-

tism. By saying our interests first, who cares about the others, we erase what a nation holds dearest, what gives it life, what makes it great and what is essential: its moral values."

"I know there are old demons which are coming back to the surface. They are ready to wreak chaos and death," he said. "History sometimes threatens



to take its sinister course once again."

It was impossible to view his remarks as anything less than a rebuke of Trump.

Trump arrived separately from other foreign leaders to yesterday's armistice centenary ceremonies, which occurred under gray skies and cold drizzle. His counterparts, including Macron, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, convened at the Élysée Palace before traveling together in motor coaches to the Arc de Triomphe. They walked in a large group to the event site.

Trump arrived in his own vehicle and walked in separately, due to "security protocols," according to the White House. Russian President Vladimir Putin also arrived separately and walked in solo, flashing Trump a brief thumbs-up as he took his place among the leaders.

The armistice that took effect at the 11th hour on the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918 ended what was then the war meant to end all wars. When conflict broke out on the continent two decades later, the US was again pulled into bloody battle, cementing its role in maintaining European security.

But now, tensions lurk beneath the surface. Trump arrived in Paris on Friday criticising host Macron for being "insulting". Trump took umbrage at a recent interview in which Macron talked about the need for a European army and cited the US, along with Russia and China, as potential security risks.

EBOLA OUTBREAK

Death toll tops 200 in DR Congo

AFP, Kinshasa

The death toll from an Ebola outbreak in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo has risen to more than 200, the health ministry said on Saturday.

The ministry said it had recorded 201 deaths from the virus and that 291 cases have been confirmed since the outbreak began in August.

About half of the cases were in Beni, a city of 800,000 people, in the North Kivu region. The outbreak is the tenth in DR Congo since Ebola was first detected there in 1976.

Ebola is a serious infectious disease that can spread rapidly through small amounts of bodily fluid, causing internal bleeding and potentially death.

WWI IN NUMBERS

Millions dead and millions more wounded, widowed and orphaned: the dizzying casualty tolls from World War I are an indication of the scale and horror of the 1914-1918 conflict. A lack of reliable statistics from the 52-month war a century ago makes the figures difficult to pin down, accounting for the sometimes substantial variations between historians. AFP has compiled the most widely accepted figures from the Great War, providing estimates in cases where major discrepancies remain.

HOW IT STARTED

On June 28, 1914 the heir to the throne of the Austro-Hungarian empire, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, and his wife Sophie are visiting Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia. Bosnia is at the time a province of the empire, a situation resented by some Bosnians and neighbouring Serbia. As the couple move through the city in a motorcade, nationalist Bosnian Serb student Gavrilo Princip opens fire and both are killed. Austria-Hungary accuses Serbia of being responsible, setting off a chain of events that will in weeks lead the European powers into war, sucked in by a web of military alliances. Austria declares war on Serbia on July 28, 1914 and attacks Belgrade sparking the Great War.

MORE THAN 70 NATIONS: Even this figure is tricky, as many of the more than 70 current-day nations drawn into the conflict had not yet gained independence from the six empires and colonial powers at its heart: Austria-Hungary, Britain, France, Germany, Russia and the Ottoman empire. A dozen independent nations went to war at its start in 1914, the rest entering later, such as Italy in 1915 and the United States in 1917. Together the warring nations accounted for more than 800 million people, which was more than half the world's population at the time. Only around 20 countries across the globe were to remain neutral throughout the conflict, most of them in Latin America or northern Europe.

70 MILLION TROOPS: About 20 million men were mobilised by the warring parties at the outset, the number rising to around 70 million as the war dragged on and expanded. There were eight million soldiers from France, 13 million from Germany, nine million from Austria-Hungary and six million from Italy. Britain sent nine million men, including troops from around the British Empire, chiefly India. The United States deployed four million.

10 MILLION SOLDIERS KILLED: Germany (2 million) and Russia (2 million) suffered the highest numbers of dead and wounded, with 10 million soldiers generally estimated to have been killed and more than



double that number wounded overall.

Artillery fire caused 70 percent of the casualties in the fighting, after which between five and six million men were left mutilated for life. The conflict saw the first large-scale use of chemical weapons when German forces deployed chlorine gas at Ypres in Belgium in 1915. Toxic gas eventually claimed 20,000 lives over the war.

MILLIONS OF CIVILIANS DEAD: Between five and 10 million civilians are estimated to have been killed in the war and its consequences, which were many and make a precise figure difficult to establish. The toll generally includes those killed in the actual fighting as well as from the resulting forced displacements of populations, famine and the subsequent civil conflicts in Russia, eastern Europe and Turkey.

- There were six million prisoners of war.
- By 1915 about 20 million civilians were living under the occupation of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria. Most were in Belgium, France, Poland and Serbia.
- The war left 10 million refugees across Europe.
- And three million widows and six million orphans.
- Around 1.3 billion shells were fired during the conflict.
- About 10 billion letters and packages were exchanged between fighters on the front and their loved ones back home.
- The war is estimated to have cost the main parties the equivalent of three or four times the combined GDP of its European players, who were left ruined by the conflict.

SOURCE: AFP

'I'm suffocating'

Khoshoggi's 'last words' revealed by Turkish reporter; Trump, Erdogan discuss response

AGENCIES

The head of investigations at the Turkish Daily Sabah newspaper has told Al Jazeera that Jamal Khoshoggi's last words were "I'm suffocating ... Take this bag off my head, I'm claustrophobic", according to an audio recording from inside the Saudi consulate in Istanbul.

Khoshoggi, a Saudi journalist, suffocated to death while a plastic bag covered his head, Nazif Karaman told Al Jazeera.

Karaman said the murder lasted for about seven minutes, according to the recordings.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said on Saturday that audio related to Khoshoggi's murder was shared with Saudi Arabia, the United States, Germany, France and Britain.

Erdogan yesterday discussed with US President Donald Trump how to respond to the killing, a White House official said yesterday. Trump expects to form a "much

stronger opinion" by next week on Khoshoggi's killing and Washington's response, he said on Nov 7.

According to Karaman, the Saudi entourage covered the floor with plastic bags before dismembering Khoshoggi's body - a 15-minute process that was led by Salah al-Tubaigy, head of the Saudi Scientific Council of Forensics.

Traces of acid were found at the Saudi consul general's residence in Istanbul, where the body was believed to be disposed of with the use of chemicals.

Karaman said that Daily Sabah would publish some of the recordings that document the last moments of Khoshoggi's life.

Khoshoggi, a critic of ruling Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, was murdered at the kingdom's Istanbul consulate by a team sent from Riyadh on October 2. Saudi authorities have acknowledged that the killing was premeditated, but his body has not been found.



Yuba County Sheriff officers carry a body away from a burned residence in Paradise, California, on Saturday. Inset, A blaze rages near a home atop a ridge near Big Bend, California. Firefighters battled raging blazes at both ends of drought-stricken California yesterday, with the death toll rising to at least 23.

PHOTO: AFP



Florida orders recount in governor, Senate races

AFP, Miami

Florida authorities on Saturday ordered a state-wide recount in the contentious races for US Senate and governor, amid tit-for-tat accusations of fraud from the candidates -- plunging the state once again into election uncertainty.

Florida's 67 counties had been given until midday (1700 GMT) on Saturday to submit unofficial totals.

State law triggers a machine recount if the difference in a race is within 0.5 percent. Florida's secretary of state Ken Detzner issued the official order for the recounts after the deadline.

After the cut-off, the Senate race between outgoing Republican governor Rick Scott and incumbent Democrat Bill Nelson was extremely close: Scott's lead stood at just 12,562 votes out of nearly 8.2 million cast, a margin of just 0.15 percent.

In the governor's race, the latest unofficial results on the Florida division of elections website show Republican Ron DeSantis, who was backed by Donald Trump, leading Democratic candidate Andrew Gillum by just 33,684 votes out of more than 8.2 million cast, or a margin of 0.41 percent.

In a statement, Detzner said the results of the machine recount would be due on November 15 at 3:00 pm (2000 GMT).

Most US political races have already been settled. But Florida is not alone.

In neighboring Georgia, the Democratic candidate for governor initiated legal action to ensure all votes were counted in her contest.

In Arizona, there is still no official result in a fierce US Senate battle that has Democrat Krysten Sinema leading Republican Martha McSally by a slim margin.

Srisena usurped MPs' powers

House Speaker ups ante, asks public servants not to carry out his orders

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's parliamentary Speaker yesterday accused President Maithripala Sirisena of "usurping" the rights of legislators and asked public servants not to carry out his "illegal orders".

Karu Jayasuriya in a hard-hitting statement said Sirisena's actions since October 26 to sack Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe and dissolve parliament undermined the freedoms of the people.

"I have watched over the last two weeks as the executive branch has seized the rights and usurped the powers of members of parliament who were elected to represent the people.

"I call upon all public servants to refuse to execute any illegal orders they may receive, no matter from whom."

Sirisena triggered an unprecedented constitutional crisis on October 26 when he sacked Wickremesinghe and

replaced him with former leader Mahinda Rajapakse.

Sirisena dismissed parliament on Friday and called new polls for January 5, throwing the island into fresh chaos as the United States urged

SRI LANKA CRISIS



Mahinda Rajapakse

Karu Jayasuriya

Sri Lanka to respect democratic processes.

Meanwhile, Rajapakse yesterday vowed snap elections would go ahead to "seek a mandate from the people".

Rajapakse, a former president who

led Sri Lanka with an iron fist for a decade, said "no one" could stop the polls going ahead.

"The election will go ahead and I am confident we will sweep the election," he told reporters yesterday in his first remarks since the polls were called.

His rival Wickremesinghe insists he still heads the government and has refused to vacate the prime minister's official residence in Colombo.

The United States has led a chorus of international voices expressing concern over threats to democracy in the island of 21 million people strategically located in the Indian Ocean. In separate statements EU, UK, Canada and Australia all have condemned the crisis.

Only China has recognised Rajapakse's appointment as prime minister. Wickremesinghe is thought to be close to India while Rajapakse is closer to China.

Migrant caravan starts journey toward US

AFP, Mexico City

Around 5,000 Central Americans left Mexico City at dawn Saturday, brushing exhaustion and illness aside to get back on the road towards the United States as part of a migrant caravan that has drawn fury from President Donald Trump.

Between coughs and sneezes, the migrants packed up their makeshift camp in a sports park, where they had rested for six nights, and headed to the city's metro -- which opened an hour early to transport them toward neighboring Mexico State.

From there, the plan was to set off once again on foot toward Queretaro in central Mexico, still hundreds of kilometers (miles) from the US border.

Summit bears fruit S Korea flies tangerines to North

REUTERS, Seoul

South Korean military transport aircraft began a tangerine airlift to North Korea yesterday, the first of a gift of 200 tonnes of the fruit from the southern island of Jeju, South Korea's presidential Blue House said.

The present comes after the North Koreans gave South Korean President Moon Jae-in two tonnes of pricey pine mushrooms after a summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in Pyongyang in September.

North Korea has pursued nuclear and missile programmes in defiance of UN sanctions and South Korean officials said last week they had tested the mushrooms for radiation after an opposition lawmaker complained.

The Jeju tangerines were packed in 20,000 boxes and will be flown to Pyongyang by four C-130 aircraft during multiple flights starting from yesterday, the Blue House said in a statement.

Several senior South Korean officials, including Vice Unification Minister Chun Hae-sung and presidential secretary for unification policy Suh Ho, flew to Pyongyang to deliver the first shipment.

North Korean leader Kim faces continued international pressure over his weapons programmes.

He vowed to work toward denuclearisation during his historic June summit with US President Donald Trump, but Pyongyang's actions have fallen short of US demands for irreversible steps to scrap its arsenal, including a full disclosure of nuclear facilities and materials.