

# NEWSIN brief

## US deputy attorney general resigns

AFP, Washington  
US Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, who chose Special Counsel Robert Mueller to lead the Russia interference probe and protected him from political intrusion, announced Monday he was stepping down. In a letter to President Donald Trump, Rosenstein said he would depart on May 11, after more than two turbulent years as the second highest-ranking official in the Department of Justice.

## Boko Haram kill 21 in Nigerian attack

AFP, Kano  
Boko Haram fighters killed 21 people when they stormed into a village in northeastern Nigeria and set it on fire, residents said yesterday. The militants, packed into four trucks and flanked by gunmen on motorbikes, swept into the village of Kuda in northeast Nigeria's Adamawa state late on Monday afternoon, firing as they came.

## Record 26 Ebola deaths in Congo in a single day

AFP, Butembo  
Twenty-six people died of Ebola in a single day in the Democratic Republic of Congo's North Kivu province, the highest daily toll since its outbreak nearly nine months ago, the health ministry said yesterday. The current outbreak is the second deadliest on record, after the epidemic that struck West Africa in 2014-2016 and killed more than 11,300 people. The health ministry it had counted 957 deaths in the country, of which 891 were confirmed cases and 66 suspected ones.



**Soldiers supporting Venezuelan opposition leader and self-proclaimed president Juan Guaido take position in front of La Carlota base in Caracas, yesterday. Inset, Guaido shakes hands with a military member near the Generalissimo Francisco de Miranda Airbase "La Carlota", in Caracas.**

PHOTO: AFP, REUTERS

# Coup' under way to topple govt

### 'Guaido claims troops joined him; Maduro claims 'total loyalty' of military chiefs

AGENCIES

Venezuelan opposition leader and self-proclaimed acting president Juan Guaido yesterday said that troops had joined his campaign to oust President Nicolas Maduro as the government vowed to put down what it called an attempted coup.

Hundreds of people, many waving Venezuelan flags, flocked onto a highway near a Caracas military base, and police responded with tear-gas as some of the demonstrators broke away to throw rocks at security forces.

The government said it was "deactivating" an attempted coup by a small group of "treacherous" soldiers.

Several dozen armed men in military uniform accompanying Guaido clashed with soldiers supporting Maduro at a protest outside the La Carlota air base, Reuters witnesses said, but the incident fizzled out and did not appear to be part of an immediate attempt by the opposition to take power by force.

Maduro said Venezuela's military chiefs had assured him of their "total loyalty".

Guaido, in a video posted on Twitter earlier yesterday, said he had begun the "final phase" of his campaign to topple Maduro, calling on Venezuelans and the military to back him.

The US, meanwhile, threw its full support behind Guaido, with the White House calling on the military to protect the people and support the country's "legitimate institutions," including the opposition-controlled National Assembly.



**VENEZUELA CRISIS**  
Guaido says 'no turning back' in bid to oust Maduro  
US says 'fully supports' people's 'quest for freedom'  
Govt says confronting small group of traitors attempting coup

"The US Government fully supports the Venezuelan people in their quest for freedom and democracy. Democracy cannot be defeated," US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Twitter.

In a video recorded at Caracas' La Carlota military air base and posted on social media, the US-backed Guaido said troops had heeded months of urging to join his campaign to oust Maduro.

"Today brave soldiers, brave patriots, brave men supporting the constitution have answered our call," he said.

"The moment is now! The 24 states of the country have taken the path, no turning back, the future is

ours. People and the Armed Forces united by the cessation of usurpation," he later said in a message on Twitter.

Television images showed soldiers and Guaido supporters on a road outside the base milling around without urgency.

Hundreds of people gradually joined the group on a highway overpass near the base, many waving Venezuelan flags.

Maduro's call comes ahead of plans to hold a massive Mayday protest in Caracas that Guaido has termed "the biggest march in Venezuela's history."

In his video, Guaido appeared alongside high-profile opposition politician Leopoldo Lopez who had been put under house arrest by Maduro's regime but who announced he had been "freed" by soldiers supporting Guaido.

Tensions in Venezuela have been ratcheted up to a critical level this year, after Guaido, who is head of the opposition-ruled National Assembly, announced January 23 that he was the acting president under the constitution. He said Maduro had been fraudulently re-elected last year.

The United States and major Latin American powers including Brazil, Peru and Chile swiftly backed Guaido, followed later by EU nations.

Although US President Donald Trump has repeatedly said "all options" are on the table regarding Venezuela -- including, implicitly, military action -- there has been no noticeable US military mobilization.

## North Korea slams 'foolish and dangerous' Pompeo

A senior North Korean official yesterday accused US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo of having "foolish and dangerous ideas," and warned Washington of an "unwanted outcome" if it does not adjust its stance on economic sanctions. Pyongyang and Washington have been at loggerheads since the collapse of a summit between North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and US President Donald Trump in February with no deal reached on the North's denuclearisation. Since then tensions have mounted, and Tuesday's comments marked the second time Pyongyang has criticised the top US diplomat this month. The reclusive state has previously demanded the removal of Pompeo from future talks, labelling him as "reckless."

## Latest weapon unveiled in fight against obesity

A new capsule was recently cleared by the US Food and Drug Administration to help adults who are overweight or obese shed some pounds when used along with diet and exercise, according to the biotechnology company Gelesis, which developed the product. Research finding that this weight management approach has a "strong safety and efficacy profile" was presented Monday at the 26th European Congress on Obesity in Glasgow, Scotland. The research was funded by Gelesis. The company announced FDA clearance this month and noted that the product, called Plenity, is the only prescription weight management product cleared for use by overweight adults with a body mass index of 25 or higher. Nearly 40% of people 20 and older in the United States are living with obesity. Gelesis said Plenity will be broadly available by prescription in the United States in 2020.



## Trump made 10,000 'false' claims in office: report

After just over 800 days in office, President Donald Trump has made more than 10,000 "false or misleading claims," according to a tally released Monday by the Washington Post. The count, kept by the newspaper's "Fact Checker" database, was started in the Republican leader's first 100 days in office in early 2017. At the time, Trump averaged just five false claims a day. In the past seven months, that total has risen to an average of nearly 23 every day, made at rallies, on Twitter, in speeches or in encounters with the media. During his "Make America Great Again" rallies, Trump has taken the most liberties with the truth, the Post said: 22 percent of his erroneous comments are made at rallies of his dedicated supporters. Another notable element of these claims is that the former reality television star has a tendency to repeat the same false formulas again and again.

SOURCE: AFP, CNN

## Are you British?

### Indian govt asks Rahul Gandhi to respond

REUTERS, New Delhi

India's government has asked Rahul Gandhi, the president of the main opposition Congress party, to respond to a complaint by a lawmaker from Prime Minister Narendra Modi's party accusing him of holding dual British citizenship against Indian law.

Gandhi, the scion of the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty that has dominated Indian politics for much of its history since independence from Britain in 1947, is the main challenger to Modi in the 39-day general election that began on April 11. Results will be known on May 23.

Congress dismissed a notice sent to 48-year-old Gandhi, who has studied and worked in England, by the Ministry of Home Affairs on Monday as a "pathetic stunt that is not just frivolous but downright stupid".

The notice was based on a letter from Subramanian Swamy, an outspoken member of parliament from Modi's nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Swamy has for long cited what he calls annual reports and other documents from

2005, 2006 and 2009 of a UK-registered company, at which Gandhi was a director, as mentioning his nationality as British.

"You are requested to intimate the factual position in the matter to this ministry within a fortnight of the receipt of this communication," BC Joshi, a director in the Indian interior ministry, said in the notice to Gandhi.

Federal Home Minister Rajnath Singh, also a senior BJP leader, told reporters his ministry was following due process.

India's constitution says that any person voluntarily acquiring a foreign passport automatically loses Indian citizenship.

Congress said the BJP was making fake, personal attacks on Gandhi after sensing defeat in the election. Gandhi has been a member of India's lower house of parliament since 2004 and is contesting this election from two seats.

"This is outrageous, outlandish and obtuse," Congress spokesman Sanjay Jha said. "The people of India can see through these malicious and malevolent personal attacks."



## US vows to track down IS leaders

AFP, Washington

The United States vowed Monday that it would track down and defeat surviving leaders of the Islamic State movement after its elusive supreme Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi appeared to speak in a newly released videotape.

The US-led coalition against the group will fight across the world to "ensure an enduring defeat of these terrorists and that any leaders who remain are delivered the justice that they deserve," a State Department spokesman said.

In Baghdadi's first purported appearance in five years, a cross-legged speaker said to be the world's most wanted man referred to the group's defeat last month in its final redoubt of Baghouz and threatened revenge attacks.

## Trump sues banks in bid to block Congress subpoenas

AFP, New York

US President Donald Trump, along with his family and businesses, on Monday sued Deutsche Bank and Capital One in an attempt to stop them from complying with Congressional subpoenas issued as part of a probe into foreign political influence.

The subpoenas -- which the Trumps described in their suit as "intrusive and overbroad" -- were issued to several banks by the Democratic-majority House's intelligence and financial services committees, which are looking into the president's finances as part of a larger probe into election meddling by Russia.

The lawsuit is the latest step in Trump's fightback against the Democrats, and alleges that the subpoenas have "no legitimate or lawful purpose."

"The subpoenas were issued to harass President Donald J. Trump, to rummage through every aspect of his personal finances, his businesses, and the private information of the President and his family, and to ferret about for any material that might be used to cause him political damage," said the suit, filed with the US

federal court in the Southern District of New York.

"No grounds exist to establish any purpose other than a political one."

The suit accuses Congress of stepping beyond its law-making mandate into law enforcement, and says the subpoenas violate the financial privacy rights of Trump and his family.

Deutsche Bank was one of the few major Western financial institutions to continue to lend to Trump's real estate empire after several of its casinos went bankrupt in the 1990s, resulting in claims by creditors valued at \$330 million in present-day dollars.

The Trumps want to block any such disclosures, and have requested in their latest lawsuit "a permanent injunction prohibiting Deutsche Bank and Capital One from disclosing, revealing, delivering, or producing the requested information, or otherwise complying with the subpoenas."

Their filing also argues that Congress is seeking information about "events that occurred while President Trump was a private citizen, years before he was even a candidate for public office."

## CJI CASE

### Ex-SC staffer refuses to join in-house probe

THE INDIAN EXPRESS ONLINE

Former Supreme Court staffer who had levelled allegations of sexual harassment against Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi has refused to participate in the in-house panel proceedings headed by SC judge Justice Bobde.

The complainant has alleged she was not allowed to have the presence of her lawyer in the in-house committee adding that she felt "intimidated and nervous in the presence of three Hon'ble Judges of the Supreme Court and without having a lawyer or support person."

She said she felt she was "not likely to get justice from this committee and so (she is) no longer participating in the proceedings."

The woman has also sought for the inquiry to be treated as a "formal inquiry and the Committee follow the letter and spirit of the Prevention of Sexual Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act".

The inquiry, which began on Friday, is in the nature of a departmental inquiry on the administrative side, and not a judicial inquiry. On Friday, the Secretary General of the Supreme Court was asked to be present with all relevant documents and had appeared before the committee.

The inquiry committee has been set up to inquire into the 28-page complaint -- that also contains an affidavit -- where the woman has alleged sexual harassment by the CJI.

Last week, Justice N V Ramana, who was part of the 3-member in-house inquiry panel recused himself from hearing the case after the complainant wrote a letter to the panel expressing reservation over his inclusion in the committee.

## SUDAN UNREST

### Civilian-military stand-off goes on

AFP, Khartoum

Sudan's military rulers yesterday said that 6 members of the security forces were killed during protests, as tensions mounted over the makeup of a joint civilian-military council.

Demonstrators reinforced their barricades outside the army headquarters in Khartoum after the two sides differed in talks Monday on the number of council seats for civilians and military representatives.

The joint body is supposed to replace the military council that took power after the army ousted veteran president Omar al-Bashir on April 11 in the face of mass protests against his three-decade rule.

But the two sides are at odds over its composition, with the military pushing for a 10-member council including seven military representatives and three civilians.

Protesters want a majority of civilians on a 15-member joint council along with seven military representatives.

## Akihito

Significant dates in the life of Japan's 125th emperor

- Dec 23, 1933**  
Born the fifth child and eldest son of Emperor Hirohito and Empress Nagako
- Nov 1952**  
Coming of age ceremony and investiture as Crown Prince
- 1956**  
Finishes education at the private Gakushuin University, Tokyo
- 1959**  
Marries Michiko Shoda, becoming the first imperial heir to wed a commoner
- Jan 1989**  
Inherits the Chrysanthemum Throne on the death of his father, Emperor Hirohito, and ushering in Heisei ("Achieving Peace") Era
- 1992**  
In a landmark trip to China, said Japan had "inflicted great suffering on the people of China"
- Apr 30, 2019**  
Steps down from the throne, ending the Heisei Era
- 2011**  
Makes an unprecedented television address in the aftermath of the March 11 earthquake and tsunami
- 2016**  
Makes a televised plea to essentially ask the public to let him abdicate
- Childhood years**  
Evacuates to Nikko in the countryside during the Second World War
- 1953**  
Represents Japan at the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in the UK, making his first overseas trip, followed by visits to 13 other countries
- Feb 23, 1960**  
Now-Crown Prince Naruhito is born
- 1965**  
Second son, Prince Akishino, is born

Sources: AFP Photos © AFP