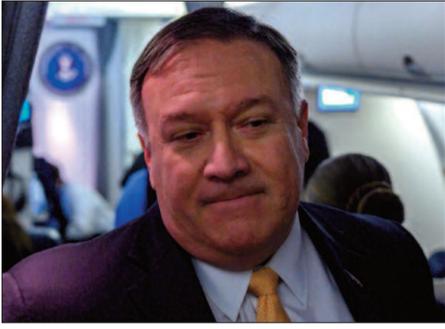


US Secretary of State Pompeo meets Iraqi Speaker in Baghdad



BAGHDAD: US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo met with Iraqi Speaker of Parliament Mohammed al-Halbousi in Baghdad on Wednesday, according to a statement from the Speaker's office. US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo speaks with the press as he flies to the Middle East on January 7, 2019. Andrew Caballero-Reynolds/Pool via REUTERS

Pompeo is on a tour of Middle Eastern capitals. The U.S. State Department did not immediately comment on reports of Pompeo's visit to Iraq. Asked on Tuesday about a possible visit, Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mahdi declined to confirm it.

However, he said any meeting with Pompeo would involve a discussion of how to deepen Iraq's relationship with the US-led coalition fighting Islamic State.

"He's an ally, he represents a friendly country," said Abdul Mahdi. "We will raise those issues, and how to deal with regional issues altogether and deepen our economic and educational relations with the United States."

Pompeo told a news conference in Amman on Tuesday that the fight to defeat Islamic State and Iran remained the most pressing issues in the region.

Pompeo's visit comes against a backdrop of escalating tensions between Washington and Tehran, as Washington seeks to counter Iran's sway in the Middle East.

It also comes weeks after President Donald Trump's abrupt announcement that he will pull all 2,000 U.S. troops from Syria, which caused alarm among U.S. allies in the region.

Trump has not said, however, that he intends to withdraw American forces from Iraq, where 5,200 American troops are stationed.

Trump made a visit to the Al Asad Air Base outside Baghdad on Dec. 26 in the wake of the announcement.

He met with U.S. troops stationed there but not with Iraqi leaders, leading to condemnation from Iraqi political and militia leaders.

A meeting between Trump and Abdul Mahdi was canceled due to a disagreement over the venue, and the men instead spoke by telephone. —Reuters

Thailand welcomes EU decision to lift warning on illegal fishing

BANGKOK: Thailand on Wednesday welcomed a decision by the European Commission to drop the Southeast Asian nation from a list of countries it had warned over illegal and unregulated fishing.

In 2015, the world's third largest exporter of seafood received a so-called "yellow card", or warning from the European Union over unsustainable fishing practices, carrying the threat of a European ban on the exports.

That move prompted a major crackdown by Thailand's military government on illegal fishing and an overhaul of the industry. "There have been sacrifices and adjustment to the way fishing was conducted," the deputy spokesman of the military government, Lieutenant General Werachon Sukhondhapatipak, told Reuters. "Thailand's fishing industry at all levels has a responsibility to the environment and the world through more sustainable fishing practices in line with international standards." —AFP

UN says Saudi teen is refugee, asks Australia to resettle

SYDNEY: The United Nations has found that a teenage woman who fled Saudi Arabia to Thailand is a legitimate refugee and has asked Australia to take her in, officials in Canberra said Wednesday.

"The UNHCR has referred Ms Rahaf Mohammed Al-Qunun to Australia for consideration for refugee resettlement," the Department of Home Affairs said in a statement.

The decision marks a significant victory for the 18-year-old, who is currently in Bangkok where she says Thai authorities attempted to block her from travelling to Australia to claim asylum.

The home affairs department said it will "consider this referral in the usual way, as it does with all UNHCR referrals".

Australian officials have strongly hinted that Qunun's request will be accepted.

"If she is found to be a refugee, then we will give very, very, very serious consideration to a humanitarian visa," health minister Greg Hunt had said before the UN determination was public.

Qunun has documented her bid to flee her

allegedly abusive family with minute-by-minute social media updates.

Her plight shot to public attention when she barricaded herself in a Bangkok airport hotel room to avoid deportation and shared dozens of fearful but defiant messages online insisting on her right to asylum.

Video footage posted on Twitter by a Saudi human rights activist appeared to show a Saudi official complaining that Thai authorities should have confiscated Qunun's smartphone.

"When she arrived, she opened a new (Twitter) account and her followers grew to 45,000 in one day," he said in Arabic.

"It would have been better if they had confiscated her mobile instead of her passport." AFP was unable to contact Saudi authorities for comment on the footage.

Saudi Arabia has some of the world's toughest restrictions on women, including a guardianship system that allows male family members to make decisions on behalf of female relatives.

Another report adds: Malta will allow two ships that have been stranded at sea for



weeks with 49 migrants on board to dock, Prime Minister Joseph Muscat said on Wednesday, adding that they will then be redistributed among eight European Union countries.

The Sea-Watch 3, a vessel run by a German humanitarian group, plucked 32 people

from an unsafe boat off the coast of Libya on Dec. 22. Another German charity, Sea-Eye, rescued 17 others on Dec. 29.

They have both been sailing back in forth in Maltese waters for days after Italy, Malta and all other EU countries refused to offer them a port of safety. —AFP

BD police use tear gas, water cannons on protesting garment workers

DHAKA: Bangladeshi police used water cannons, tear gas and batons to disperse thousands of protesting garment factory workers on Wednesday, after they pressed their demands for higher wages by blocking roads for a fourth day.

Garment workers protest for higher wages in Dhaka, Bangladesh, January 9, 2019.

The government of Bangladesh, the world's second biggest garment exporter behind China, said on Tuesday it would consider demands for an increase in the minimum wage, after clashes between police and protesters killed one worker and wounded dozens.

But the protesters came out again on Wednesday, blocking roads and burning tyres in the Savar industrial district just north of the capital, Dhaka.

Police and trade union leaders said more than two dozen people, includ-

ing police, were injured in clashes on Wednesday.

"Police at first tried to convince them through discussions and requested them to leave the roads so that transport can move easily, but instead they threw stones and bricks," Tahmidul Islam, a police officer in the area told Reuters.

"So to disperse them police used tear gas ... Now the situation is under control and the workers have left."

Ruhul Amin, executive president of the Garments Trade Union Centre, told Reuters police used batons, tear gas and also water cannons in some places to disperse the crowds.

Similar protests were going on in the Mirpur area of Dhaka but without any violence, police said.

The government said in September the minimum wage for garment workers would increase by up to 51 percent this year to 8,000 taka a month, the first such

increase since 2013. But workers say that increase would benefit only a small percentage of the more than 3.5 million people employed in the sector.

The government has formed a panel of factory owners, union leaders and officials to investigate the pay demands, Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi said on Tuesday, adding he hoped a resolution could be reached in a month.

The garment industry generates about \$30 billion of exports a year, accounting for 80 percent of Bangladesh's merchandise export earnings and serving some of the biggest brands in the world.

"We urge the government to sit with us and settle the issue, otherwise the movement will continue," Amin said. Another report adds: Democratic Republic of Congo's

of an announcement of results from the presidential election that could come later in the day.

A Congolese news paper with the headline "The next president is him" is seen at a news stand in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, Jan 9.

Riot police were deployed in front of the commission headquarters in the capital Kinshasa and along the city's main boulevard, as Congo braced for possible violence amid accusations of vote fraud and suspicions that the government was negotiating a power-sharing deal with one opposition candidate.

The Dec. 30 poll was meant to lead to the vast Central African country's first democratic transfer of power in its 59 years of independence, but a disputed result could trigger the kind of violence that erupted after the 2006 and 2011 elections and

CORRECTION OF FATHER NAME



I MUHAMMAD SHAHID SHARIF have passed the Secondary School Annual/Supply Examination 2007 under Roll No 44404 and intermediate Annual/Supply Examination 2009 under Roll No 43717 from B.I.S.E Lahore My Father's Name is MUHAMMAD SHARIF where on certificate my Father's name has been mentioned as MUHAMMAD SHARIF IQBAL Which is incorrect. I want to get changed my father's name from MUHAMMAD SHARIF IQBAL to MUHAMMAD SHARIF. If a person/organization/agency has any objection, then the same may be intimated in writing to the Secretary, Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, 86-Mozang Road Lahore, within 15

Maldives president appeals for details of graft under predecessors

MALE: The president of the Maldives has appealed to citizens to furnish details of graft during the term of his pro-China predecessor and earlier, as the Indian Ocean island investigates deals worth billions of dollars given to Chinese firms.

Since Ibrahim Mohamed Solih beat Abdulla Yameen in a surprise election result last year his administration has been trying to determine the extent of Chinese loans used to fund a construction boom in the Maldives.

In a statement late on Tuesday, Solih's office asked the public to submit written complaints about "cases of corruption and abuse of power within state institutions", over a period of nearly six years from Jan. 1, 2012.

Critics have said contracts were given to Chinese companies at inflated prices, for example one relating to a bridge linking the capital Male to the main airport of the palm-fringed islands famous for their luxury diving resorts.

Yameen has denied any wrongdoing, saying he took on loans to accelerate economic development. The investigation also covers the final two years of the term of his predecessor, Mohammed Waheed, when the government took a \$500-million Chinese loan for infrastructure and housing.

"Corruption was institutionalized under Yameen's tenure," Hamid Abdul Gaffoor, a spokesman for Solih's Maldivian Demo-

cratic Party, told Reuters. "Some state institutions were totally looted."

China has been building ports, highways and power stations as part of its giant Belt and Road Initiative to boost trade and transport links across Asia and beyond. But some of its projects are being criticized for high costs, lack of transparency and expensive loans, stoking fears the arrangement could push small countries, such as the Maldives and Sri Lanka, into a debt trap.

Another report adds: Police in Australia are investigating suspicious packages sent to a wide range of embassies and consulates on Wednesday, which officials said included the US and British missions in Melbourne, but there were no reports of harm to staff.

Domestic media reported more than a dozen foreign offices received the packages and that some staff said they contained asbestos, a material used in building that can cause cancers and other health problems.

There were no details of any possible motive and some of the targeted sites that Reuters reporters visited were open later on Wednesday afternoon. "The packages are being examined by attending emergency services," the Australian Federal Police (AFP) said in a short statement. It said the packages were sent to consulates in Melbourne and embassies in Canberra but did not provide a total number of affected sites or identify any of them. —AFP

North Korea's Kim discusses with Trump

BEIJING: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and Chinese President Xi Jinping discussed an expected U.S.-North Korea summit in talks in Beijing on Tuesday, Yonhap news agency said, days after Kim warned he may take an alternative path if the United States does not ease sanctions.

Kim's visit to China, confirmed by North Korean and Chinese state media, comes amid plans for a second summit with U.S. President Donald Trump aimed at denuclearizing the Korean peninsula. South Korea's Yonhap, without identifying its sources, said the two leaders held talks for an hour in which they discussed the second U.S.-North Korea summit and strengthening bilateral ties.

The meeting was followed by a dinner hosted by Xi and his wife, Yonhap said. —AFP

COURT NOTICE

IN THE COURT OF JUDGE BANKING COURT SAHIWAL JAHAZ GROUND NEAR IMAMIA COLLEGE SAHIWAL
Suit No. —371/18
National Bank of Pakistan
VERSUS
Mrs Fajjan Bibi
SUMMONS U/S 9 (5) OF THE FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS (RECOVERY OF FINANCE)

ORDINANCE; 2001 (ORDINANCE NO. XLVI OF 2001)

Summon to:-
Defendant: Mrs Fajjan bibi d/o Ghulam w/o Muhammad Ashiq caste watto manika R/o mouza chura lakhura manika tehsil Depalpur district okara.

Mumtaz Ahmad so Manzoor Ahmad caste watto manika r/o mouza chura lakhurea manika tehsil depalpur district okara.

WHEREAS, the aforesaid plaintiff has instituted a suit against you and others for the recovery of

Rs: 277200/- along with Markup/Interest and cots etc., claimed to be payable by you. A summon U/S 9(5) OF Ordinance No XLVI Of 2001 referred to above is hereby issued requiring you to make within 30 day of the service of the summon an application for leave to defend the suit in the form of written statement U/S 10 of the said ordinance.

Take notice that on your failure to file such application within time specified above, the banking court shall pass a decree as prayed for in the plaintiff banking company. Next Date for Further proceedings, in the case has been fixed on 18-02-2019

Given my hand and the seal of the court this 20-12-2018.

COURT NOTICE

IN THE COURT OF JUDGE BANKING COURT SAHIWAL JAHAZ GROUND NEAR IMAMIA COLLEGE SAHIWAL
Suit No404/18
National Bank of Pakistan
VERSUS
Tanveer Bakhtiar
SUMMONS U/S 9 (5) OF THE FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS (RECOVERY OF FINANCE)

ORDINANCE; 2001 (ORDINANCE NO. XLVI OF 2001)

Summon to:-
Defendant: Tanveer Bakhtiar S.o bakhtiar ahmad (Khan) R/o chak no 45/SP tehsil Depalpur district Okara.

Whereas the aforesaid plaintiff has instituted a suit for declaration, rendition of account 575462/- with permanent injunction against you. A summon u/s 9 (5) of Ordinance No. XLVI of 2001 referred to above is hereby issued requiring you to make within 30 days of the service of the summon an application for leave to defend the suit in the form of written statement u/s 10 of the said ordinance.

Take notice that on your failure to file such application within time specified above, the banking court shall pass a decree as prayed for in the plaintiff banking company. Next date for further proceedings, in the case has been fixed on 18-02-2019.

Given under my hand and the seal of court this. 17-12-2018.

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PSO fuels prosperity and is determined to give back to the community. As the nation's largest oil marketing company we aim to make education, and healthcare accessible for the people of our country in order to build a strong community.

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