

Greece Votes in Referendum



Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras votes at a polling station in Athens, Greece July 5, 2015.

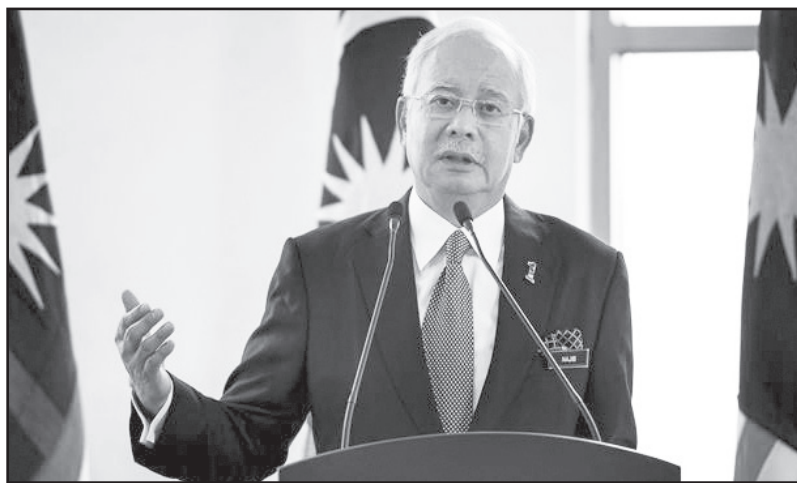
ATHENS (Reuters) - Greeks voted on Sunday whether to accept or reject the tough terms of an aid offer to stave off financial collapse, in a referendum that may determine their future in Europe's common currency. Held against a backdrop of default, shuttered banks and threats of financial apocalypse, the vote was too close to call and looked certain to herald yet more turbulence whichever way it went. The country of 11 million people is deeply divided over whether to accept an offer by international creditors that left-wing Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, elected in Jan-

uary on a promise to end years of crippling austerity, calls a "humiliation". He is urging a resounding 'No', saying it would give him a strengthened mandate to return to negotiations and demand a better deal, including a writedown on Greece's massive debt. His European partners, however, say rejection would set Greece on a path out of the euro, with potentially far-reaching consequences for the global economy and Europe's grand project of an unbreakable union. "I voted 'No' to the 'Yes' that our

European partners insist I choose," said Eleni Deligainni, 43, in Athens. "I have been jobless for nearly four years and was telling myself to be patient ... but we've had enough deprivation and unemployment." Angry and exhausted after five years of pension cuts, falling living standards and rising taxes, Greeks now face closed banks, rationed ATM withdrawals and the prospect of the country literally running out of cash. Tsipras, a 40-year-old former student activist, has framed the referendum as a matter of national dignity and the future course of Europe.

Malaysia PM Faces Criminal Charge Over Graft Allegations

KUALA LUMPUR (Press TV) - Malaysia's Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak is facing a potential criminal charge over allegations that millions of dollars were transferred into his personal bank accounts from an indebted state fund. Malaysia's Attorney-General Abdul Gani Patail said late Saturday that a task force investigating the troubled state investment fund (IMDB) had passed him documents related to allegations that some USD 700 million were wired from entities linked to the fund into Najib's accounts.



Malaysia's Prime Minister Najib Razak

"I confirm that I have received documents from the special task force related to IMDB, including documents related to the allegations of channeling of funds to accounts owned by Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak," Abdul Gani said. According to Abdul Gani, the task force comprises members of the country's anti-corruption commission, police and central bank. "I have advised the special task force to follow up on the next

course of action," he said, without elaborating. Najib, who founded the IMDB and heads its board of advisers, has been under growing political pressure over the fund, which amassed USD 11 billion in debt. It is the first time the Malaysian leader is facing criminal allegations. Abdul Gani's remarks came a day after the Wall Street Journal reported that Malaysian govern-

ment investigators looking into the IMDB's activities had traced almost USD 700 million in deposits into what they believe are Najib's personal accounts. Critics, led by former Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, have expressed concerns about the IMDB's massive debt and alleged lack of transparency. Najib has dismissed the allegations as "political sabotage."

Japan Joins US-Australia Military Exercise

TOKYO (Press TV) - Japan has for the first time decided to join the war games by the US and Australia in the Australian region of Northern Territory and the state of Queensland, amid growing tensions with China over South China Sea islands. As many as 30,000 personnel from the US and Australia are taking part in the massive sea, air and land exercise, dubbed "Talisman Sabre," which started on Sunday and will last until July 21. The joint US-Australia

The drills are taking place in an atmosphere of intensified tensions between Japan and China over the islands in the South China Sea and US criticism of China. Japan and China have been at loggerheads over the sovereignty of a chain of islands in the East China Sea known as Senkaku in Japan and Diaoyu in China. China maintains that the islands are inherent parts of its territory and that it has indisputable sovereignty over them, while the Japanese gov-



Personnel from the 2nd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, embark on HMAS Choules, an Australian Navy ship, to participate in exercise Talisman Saber in July 2013.

military exercise is a biennial event. It was first held in 2005. According to reports, some 40 troopers from Japan's Ground Self-Defense Force (JGSDF) are scheduled to join the war games.

ernment regards the islands as a part of its Ishigaki, in Okinawa Prefecture. The islands have been under Japanese administrative control since the reversion of Okinawa to Japan from US administrative rule in 1972.

Tunisia Beach Gunman Had Worked in Tourism: PM

TUNIS (AFP) - The Tunisian gunman behind the June 26 attack at a resort that killed 38 foreigners had worked in the tourism industry, Prime Minister Habib Essid said in an interview published Sunday. "We know he was a member of a dance club and was familiar with the tourism sector, having worked in it as an event organizer," Essid told the French-language newspaper La Presse. Tourists fled in horror as 23-year-old Seifeddine Rezgui pulled a Kalashnikov assault rifle from inside a furled beach umbrella and went on a shooting spree outside a five-star hotel. The attack at Port El Kantaoui, north of Sousse, killed 30 Britons, three Irish nationals, two Germans, one Belgian, one Portuguese and a Russian. The assailant was himself later

shot dead by police. Both the authorities and relatives later described the gunman as having been an apparently normal young Tunisian who had been keen on breakdancing. A resident near where his parents live in the town of Gaafour had previously told AFP that Rezgui worked "in tourism in the area of Kantaoui", where the attack is thought to have been planned, although there had been no confirmation of this from another source. The attack on the beach and around the swimming pools of the Riu Imperial Marhaba Hotel was claimed by the Islamic State group. On Saturday, eight days after the deadly rampage, President Beji Caid Essebsi declared a state of emergency, saying the attack had left Tunisia facing a "special type of war".

News in Brief

MANILA (AP) - A tropical storm blowing across the Philippines' mountainous north has caused floods and knocked out power in several towns. Officials said there were no immediate reports of casualties Sunday from Tropical Storm Linfa. They said government rescue teams were deployed to evacuate villagers in some of the 11 towns flooded in La Union province, where wide areas also lost power. The storm had sustained winds of 85 kilometers (53 miles) per hour and gusts of 100 kph (62 mph). It's expected to start blowing away from the country on Monday.

BEIJING (AP) - A shoe factory collapsed in eastern China during a weekend shift, killing at least 11 people and injuring more than 30, officials said Sunday. Three other people were missing in the collapse Saturday afternoon in the Zhejiang province city of Wenling, and nine people escaped. Rescuers pulled 42 people from the rubble and sent them to a hospital, where nine of them died, the Wenling city government said on its microblog. They pulled two bodies from the wreckage on Sunday. The cause of the accident is under investigation.

BOGOTA (Press TV) - Colombia has threatened to abandon negotiations with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) as the rebels have intensified their attacks across the country. "The peace process is at its worst moment since we began talks... I want to tell the FARC in all seriousness, this could end. Someday, it's probable that they won't find us around the table in Havana," Colombia's peace negotiator Humberto De la Calle said.

He called on the FARC rebels to show more commitment in the talks. He also said that the government would consider a bilateral ceasefire before a final agreement, if the rebels accepted judicial responsibility for their attacks and abstained from drug trade and extortion. De la Calle has been leading the talks with the FARC rebels since 2012. In recent weeks, the group has carried out a series of bomb attacks on oil pipelines along rivers, causing a serious environmental disaster, which has spread as far away as the Pacific coastline.

WASHINGTON (Press TV) - A group of American activists gathered together in Tampa, Florida to hold protests against the widespread racism in the country and burned the stars and stripes flag to show their frustration. The "End Racist Violence" protesters also burned the US confederate flag arguing that both flags are the same and represent genocide and slavery. The protest was held on the eve of the anniversary of Independence Day at Curtis Hixon Park. "To us the confederate flag and the American flag, those represent the same thing, which is that this country, this social system was built on slavery and genocide," said Jesse Nevel, with the Uhuru Solidarity Movement.

Guatemalans Urge President to Resign

GUATEMALA CITY (Press TV) - Thousands of Guatemalans have taken to the streets of the capital to protest against corruption in the government, calling for the resignation of President Otto Perez Molina. On Saturday night, some 5,000 protesters marched in downtown Guatemala City, demanding the resignation of the country's corruption-plagued president. The demonstrators, who were marching from the Supreme Court to the National Palace in the city's historic center, shouted slogans against Perez. "The president's resignation is a starting point and would breathe fresh air into the situation. It wouldn't resolve all the problems but would be a good way to move forward," Juan Alberto Fuentes, a former finance minister, told AFP during the rally. "We live with much injustice in Guatemala, the governments are complicit in corruption," said Oscar Farfan, a 40-year-old protester. Opposition parties have requested the probe against Perez, who is currently facing a pre-trial investigation into corruption accusations. On June 30, Guatemala's Constitutional Court rejected Perez's appeal for presidential immunity from a congressional corruption probe. On Friday, a Congressional committee recommended that Perez be stripped of his immunity from prosecution over fraud scandals. Earlier in April, a UN-backed investigation reported that senior customs officials had received bribes from businessmen seeking to avoid paying taxes. Guatemalan Vice President Roxana Baldetti resigned from her post in May after the Supreme Court unanimously ruled that there was enough evidence potentially linking her to corruption allegations. She denied any wrongdoing.