

'Iran won't coordinate with US on Syria'

Iran will never coordinate with the United States in Syria and other regional conflicts, supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said in remarks published on his website yesterday. "We don't want such a coordination as their main objective is to stop Iran's presence in the region," Khamenei said. Iran and Russia support Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's fight against armed rebels and jihadists.

Ex French PM Michel Rocard dies aged 85

Former French Socialist prime minister Michel Rocard, hailed a "visionary statesman", died Saturday aged 85 his son Francois told AFP. Rocard served as prime minister for three years from mid-1988 under Francois Mitterrand, the two-term Socialist president who led the country from 1981 to 1995. Hollande paid tribute to a man he called "a great figure of the Republic and of the Left."

Uganda motorway pile up kills 20

A pile-up on a busy highway outside the Ugandan capital Kampala left at least 20 people dead yesterday and injured several more, some seriously, police said. "Twenty people have so far died and several are in hospital with major injuries," area police spokesman Phillip Mukasa told AFP. "Five vehicles were involved in the accident on the Kampala-Masaka highway," he added.

Al-Qaeda kidnaps rebel chief in Syria

US-backed rebels yesterday accused al-Qaeda-linked fighters of storming their headquarters in northwest Syria and kidnapping their commander and dozens of other combatants. In an online statement, Jaish al-Tahrir (Liberation Army) said its commander, Mohammad al-Ghbi, was abducted from his father's home in the town of Kafra-nbel by Al-Nusra Front jihadists on Saturday.



Scotland Yard summoned Israel's ex-FM for war crimes

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK
Israel's former foreign minister was reportedly summoned by Scotland Yard over alleged war crimes ahead of her visit to the UK this weekend.

Tzipi Livni was summoned on Thursday for a "voluntary interview" by police for questioning over suspicions she was involved in war crimes during the Gaza War in 2008, Israeli newspaper Haaretz reports.

However, the summons was cancelled after diplomatic talks between Israel and Britain.

The questioning was reportedly intended to discuss Livni's alleged involvement in war crimes and violations of the Geneva Convention as foreign minister and vice prime minister, and as a member of the diplomatic-security cabinet of Israel during the 2008 Operation Cast Lead in Gaza.

The conflict resulted in up to 1,417 Palestinian deaths and 13 Israeli deaths.



Iraqis evacuate a body from the site of a suicide car bombing claimed by the Islamic State group in Baghdad's central Karrada district, yesterday. The blast killed at least 120 people and also wounded scores more, security and medical officials said. PHOTO: AFP

Flash floods kill 43 in northern Pakistan

AFP, Ursoon

Overnight flash floods killed at least 43 people in northern Pakistan, the majority in a remote village that did not receive an evacuation warning before the waters hit washing away most of the settlement, officials said yesterday.

The heavy monsoon rains began late Saturday and were concentrated mainly in the northwestern province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which has been badly affected by flooding in recent years that some scientists have linked to climate change.

The worst hit district was Chitral, on the country's northwest border with Afghanistan, where the flood waters killed 41 people in the village of Ursoon near the Afghan border, which is home to some 100 families, district mayor Maghfirat Shah told AFP.

Eighty-two homes in the village were affected by the waters, a rescue services statement said, with some of them swept away, along with a mosque and an army post.

"Sixteen of the dead were offering prayers in the mosque when it was swept away by the flood," said Latifur Rehman, a spokesman for the provincial disaster management authority.

At least eight of the victims were soldiers, and another eight bodies were swept over the border into Afghanistan.

Separately, two Chinese engineers were killed and five Pakistani workers injured when the heavy rains caused the roof of a construction site to collapse at Tarbela Dam, also in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, Rehman said.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's office issued a statement expressing his

DEADLY BAGHDAD SUICIDE ATTACK

Tears, blood flow as search continues for dear ones

AFP, Baghdad

A weeping Zainab Mustafa brought a photo of her husband to the still-smouldering site of a bloody bombing in Baghdad yesterday, seeking word of him and their two missing children.

The three had gone out the night before to buy clothes for the upcoming holiday marking the end of the holy Muslim fasting month of Ramadan, and Mustafa has not heard from them since.

The suicide car bombing in the Karrada area, which was claimed by the Islamic State group and killed at least 119 people, sparked raging fires in nearby buildings, and smoke still rose from charred structures more than 12 hours after the explosion.

"We have looked everywhere; members of my family are looking for them," said Mustafa.

The street in the Karrada area is littered with rubble, and the search for victims within the burned buildings could take days.



The lists of victims I saw included whole families -- the father and his sons, the mother and her daughters -- whole families were wiped out by this explosion," a member of the civil defence forces said.

"We need a number of days to be able to recover the bodies of victims. It is a difficult task," he said.

Fadhel Salem is missing two of his brothers who were in the family's shop.

"I think they are still there inside the store, but I can't see anything because of the heavysmoke," he said.

Five people worked with shovels to try to find their friends at another shop where the ceiling had collapsed.

Baghdad has been hit by a number of bombings this year, but none nearly as deadly as the yesterday's attack, which combined explosives and shrapnel with raging flames.

Identifying all of the victims who are found will also be an enormous challenge.

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'He was the conscience of the world'

Obama leads the tributes to Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel

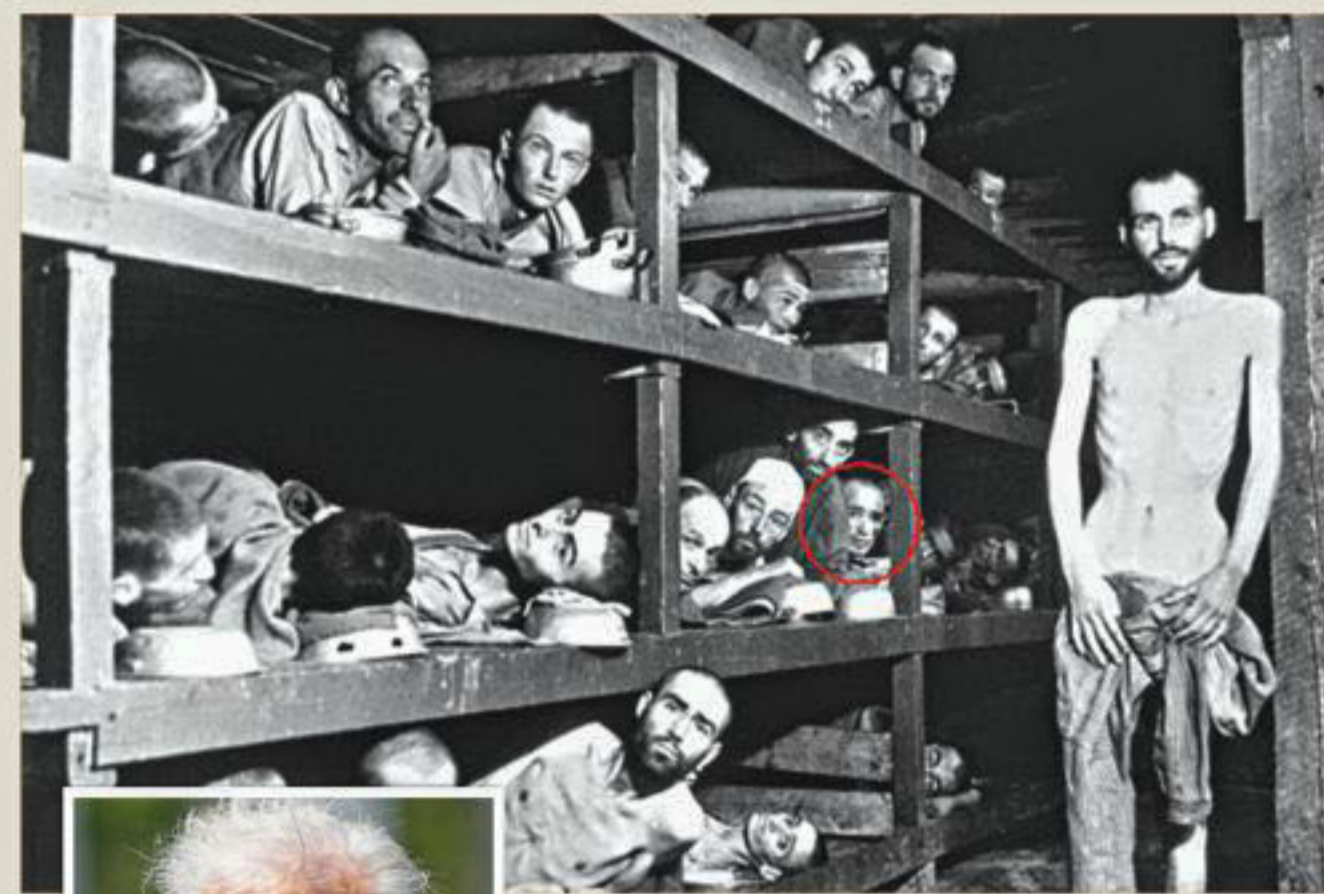
AGENCIES

Activist and writer Elie Wiesel, the World War Two death camp survivor who won a Nobel Peace Prize for becoming the life-long voice of millions of Holocaust victims, has died, Israel's Holocaust memorial Yad Vashem said on Saturday.

Wiesel, a philosopher, speaker, playwright and professor who also campaigned for the tyrannized and forgotten around the world, was 87.

The Romanian-born Wiesel lived by the credo expressed in "Night," his landmark story of the Holocaust - "to forget the dead would be akin to killing them a second time."

In awarding the Peace Prize in 1986, the Nobel Committee praised Wiesel as a "messenger to mankind" and "one of the most important spiritual leaders and guides in an age when violence, repression and racism continue to characterize the world."



Wiesel (circled in red) was a victim of the death camps in Poland, including Buchenwald and Auschwitz during the WWII. PHOTO: MAIL ONLINE

President Obama has paid tribute to Wiesel, reports Mail Online. Leading the tributes in Wiesel, Obama said: "Elie Wiesel was one of the great moral voices of our time, and in many ways, the conscience of the world."

Wiesel never let the world forget the Holocaust horror. While at the White House in 1985 to receive the Congressional Gold Medal, he even rebuked US President Ronald Reagan for planning to lay a wreath at a German ceme-

tery where some of Hitler's notorious Waffen SS troops were buried.

Wiesel and his family had first been taken by the Nazis from the village of Sighetu Marmatiei in the Transylvania region of Romania to Auschwitz, where his mother and one of his sisters died. Wiesel and his father, Shlomo, ended up in Buchenwald, where Shlomo died. In "Night" Wiesel wrote of his shame at lying silently in his bunk while his father was beaten nearby.

After the war Wiesel made his way to France, studied at the Sorbonne and by 19 had become a journalist. He pondered suicide and never wrote of or discussed his Holocaust experience until 10 years after the war as a part of a vow to himself. He was 27 years old in 1955 when "Night" was published in Yiddish, and Wiesel would later rewrite it for a world audience.

MEMORABLE QUOTES FROM ELIE WIESEL

- "No one is as capable of gratitude as one who has emerged from the kingdom of night."

- "We must always take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented."

- "To forget the dead would be akin to killing them a second time."

- "The opposite of love is not hate, it's indifference. The opposite of beauty is not ugliness, it's indifference. The opposite of faith is not heresy, it's indifference. And the opposite of life is not death, but indifference between life and death."

- "No human race is superior; no religious faith is inferior. All collective judgments are wrong. Only racists make them."

- "Friendship marks a life even more deeply than love. Love risks degenerating into obsession, friendship is never anything but sharing." SOURCE: AFP

China to unveil world's largest telescope

AL JAZEERA ONLINE

China has put the final piece of what is set to be the world's largest radio telescope in place, state media have reported.

The "Five-hundred-metre Aperture Spherical Telescope", or FAST, is the size of 30 football fields and has been hewn out of a mountain in the southwestern province of Guizhou.

"The project has the potential to search for more strange objects to better understand the origin of the universe and boost the global hunt for extraterrestrial life," Zheng Xiaonian, deputy head of the National Astronomical Observation under the Chinese Academy of Sciences, which built the telescope, said yesterday.

The \$180m radio telescope would be a global leader for the next one to two decades, Xiaonian was quoted as saying by the official Xinhua news agency. The telescope, which took about five years to build, is expected to begin operations in September.



Tensions rife in Rakhine

Restless Myanmar state sees mass anti-Muslim protests

AFP, Yangon

Myanmar's bitterly-divided Rakhine State saw mass protests yesterday as thousands of Buddhists, including monks, demonstrated in a show of opposition to a government edict referring to Muslim communities in the restive province, organisers told AFP.

Anti-Muslim rhetoric has spiked across Myanmar recently, with two mosques torched by Buddhist mobs in just over a week in a country where sectarian violence has left scores dead since 2012.

Home to around one million stateless Rohingya Muslims, Rakhine State has been hardest hit by religious violence that has left tens of thousands of the persecuted minority in fetid displacement camps.

The Rohingyas are reviled by

Rakhine Buddhists who refuse to recognise any shared rights to the province and instead call them "Bengalis" -- or illegal immigrants from nearby Bangladesh.

Aung San Suu Kyi's new government has sought to defuse the row over the term Rohingya instead ordering officials to refer to "Muslim communities in Rakhine".

But protesters yesterday said that too was unacceptable as it hands Muslims recognition in a Buddhist state.

"Bengalis should be called Bengalis," Phoe Thar Lay, a leader of a local Rakhine youth group told AFP, adding that 17 townships across Rakhine were participating in protests on Sunday afternoon.

Most Rohingya live cut off from the Buddhist community in displacement

camps or remote settlements since sectarian riots tore Rakhine apart in 2012.

Persecution and poverty have forced tens of thousands to flee by sea, but the dangerous trafficking route south through the Bay of Bengal was closed late last year during a Thai crackdown on people smuggling.

The Rohingyas are not recognised by the government as an official ethnic minority.

After a 12-day visit to Rakhine and other conflict sites in Myanmar, a UN rights investigator warned Friday that "tensions along religious lines remain pervasive across Myanmar society".

Yanghee Lee urged the country's new civilian government to make "ending institutionalised discrimination against the Muslim communities in Rakhine State... an urgent priority".