

Iraq condemns 4th IS member to death

AFP, Baghdad

An Iraqi court yesterday condemned a fourth French citizen to death for joining the Islamic State group, despite France reiterating its opposition to capital punishment.

Mustapha Merzoughi, 37, was sentenced to death by hanging, according to an AFP journalist at the court.

In recent months Iraq has taken custody of thousands of jihadists including foreigners captured in neighbouring Syria by the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) during the battle to destroy the IS "caliphate".

Brazil prison clashes leave 15 dead

AFP, Sao Paulo

Clashes between inmates killed 15 people at a jail in Amazonas state in northern Brazil on Sunday, the regional prison authority said. The clashes broke out around 11:00 am (1500 GMT) during visiting hours at the facility, located some 28 kilometers (17 miles) from state capital Manaus. "It was a fight between the inmates. There had never been deaths during the visits," Colonel Marcos Vinicius Almeida told a news conference.

French cops arrest 3 over Lyon bomb blast

AFP, Lyon

French police have arrested three people over an explosion in the heart of the southeastern city of Lyon last week, which injured 13 people, authorities said yesterday. The suspected bomber, a 24-year-old Algerian citizen, was arrested along with his mother and another Algerian student who is a family friend, Paris prosecutors said in a statement. The suspect is an IT student previously unknown to police, Lyon's mayor Gerard Collomb said.

# Trump dovish on N Korea, Iran

*Says not looking for regime change in Tehran, praises Kim Jong Un as 'very smart guy'; Pyongyang slams 'war maniac' Bolton*

AFP, Tokyo



PHOTO: REUTERS

US President Donald Trump toasts with Japan's Emperor Naruhito during a state banquet at the Imperial Palace in Tokyo, Japan yesterday.

Asked about the missile tests, Trump said: "My people think it could have been a violation... I view it as a man who perhaps wants to get attention."

This appeared to be a second put-down of his hawkish National Security Advisor John Bolton, who said Saturday the launches contravened UN Security Council resolutions.

"He knows that with nuclear, that's never going to happen. Only bad can happen. He is a very smart man, he gets it well," said the president, who even said he agreed with the North Korean leader's jibe about the intelligence of Joe Biden, who currently leads the pack to win the Democratic nomination to take on Trump in 2020.

"Kim Jong Un made a statement that Joe Biden is a low IQ individual. He probably is, based on his record, I think I agree with him on that," said the president.

A spokesman for the North's foreign ministry denounced Bolton, calling him a "war maniac" who developed various "provocative policies" against the North.

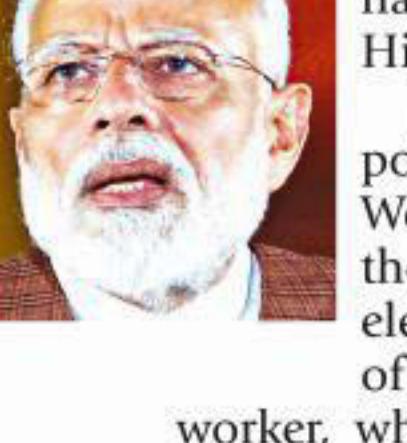
## POST-POLLS INDIA

### 'Chemistry beat arithmetic'

*Modi credits grassroot workers for his victory; BJP worker shot dead in West Bengal's North 24 Parganas district*

AGENCIES

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said yesterday that 'chemistry beat arithmetic' in this election. He was speaking during a thanksgiving visit to his constituency Varanasi after winning from the temple city by nearly 5 lakh votes and leading the NDA to a landslide win in the Lok Sabha elections



'each one of you is Modi' and that they had to run his campaign in his absence. He had also held a massive roadshow before filing his nomination papers on April 26.

The PM-elect led the NDA to a mega win sweeping the Lok Sabha elections winning 352 of the 542 seats polled with BJP alone notching up 303 seats. Varanasi was all decked up to welcome Modi with BJP flags and posters everywhere yesterday. Cleaning and maintenance work has been completed, reported Hindustan Times.

Meanwhile, the fresh spate of political violence that has kept West Bengal burning since before the first phase of Lok Sabha elections 2019 claimed the life of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) worker, who was shot dead in North 24 Parganas district on Sunday night, reported The Statesman.

The deceased, identified as Chandan Shaw, was a resident of Kankinara. He was shot at by bike-borne assailants who also hurled bombs targeting Shaw. The BJP worker, who was in his 20s, died on the spot.

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## Find my replacement

*Rahul Gandhi categorically urges two Congress envoys: sources*

NDTV ONLINE

Congress's Rahul Gandhi has categorically said that the party will have to find a new chief as he won't change his mind about stepping down from the post of the party chief, sources told NDTV. Gandhi, who informed the party about his decision to quit following the party's decimation in the Lok Sabha polls, has refused to meet the party's newly-elected lawmakers who called on him. All his meetings and appointments have been cancelled, though he met two envoys from the party.

Yesterday morning, Gandhi told senior Congress leaders Ahmed Patel and KC Venugopal that the party will have to find a new chief as his decision stands, sources told NDTV.

In a tweet yesterday morning - his first since he announced his decision to quit -- he paid tribute to former Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru - his great-grandfather - to mark his death anniversary.

Sources close to Rahul Gandhi said he is "not abandoning the post" even though he is determined to quit. He will give the party time to choose a new person for the top job.

Rahul Gandhi's mother Sonia Gandhi and sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra reportedly agree with his decision - they had initially tried to get him to change his mind - and acknowledge that the Congress "has to come to terms with the fact that there has to be a change of guard" and a total reset.

Sources also say Rahul Gandhi has not changed his mind, despite several Congress leaders pleading with him over the weekend and asking him to go for a full overhaul.

## Lanka to relax emergency in a month: president

Sri Lanka's President announced yesterday he will allow tough emergency laws to lapse within a month because the security situation was "99 percent back to normal" following the Easter bombings. Maithripala Sirisena told Colombo-based diplomats from Australia, Canada, Japan, the US and European states that security forces were successful in getting at all those responsible for the April 21 bombings. Sirisena declared a state of emergency giving sweeping powers to the military to arrest and detain suspects a day after the bombings that killed 258 people and wounded nearly 500. The suicide bombings against three Christian churches and three luxury hotels were blamed on a local jihadi group, the National Thowheeth Jama'ath, which has since been banned under the emergency.

## 30 dead, dozens missing in DR Congo boat accident

At least 30 people died and dozens more were missing on Sunday after a boat accident on a lake in western Democratic Republic of Congo, a local mayor said. "So far, we have recovered 30 bodies, 12 women, 11 children and seven men," the mayor of Inongo, Simon Mbo Wemba, told media including AFP, adding that there had been more than 350 passengers on board the boat with only 183 survivors. The accident happened on Saturday night on Lake Mai-Ndombe. "