



Palestinians carry the body of a man, one of three killed by Israeli forces in the occupied West Bank city of Nablus, yesterday. Three Palestinians were killed by Israeli forces in the occupied West Bank city of Nablus today during what Israel described as an operation against a “terrorist cell”.

PHOTO: AFP

2008 ATTACKS  
49 convicted  
in India

AFP, Ahmedabad

India convicted 49 people yesterday over a 2008 attack in the western city of Ahmedabad that left dozens dead, in what perpetrators said was retaliation for earlier deadly communal violence.

The string of bombings killed 56 and wounded more than 200 others as shrapnel ripped through markets, buses and other public places in Gujarat state's commercial hub.

A group calling itself the Indian Mujahideen claimed responsibility, and said the act was revenge for 2002 religious riots in the area that left scores dead.

Nearly 80 people were charged but 28 were acquitted, prosecutor Amit Patel told reporters.

The remaining 49 defendants were all found guilty of murder and criminal conspiracy with sentencing to be issued on Wednesday, he added.

The marathon trial has lasted nearly a decade, with more than 1,100 witnesses called to testify. Proceedings were dragged out by procedural delays, including a legal battle by four of the accused to retract their confessions.

‘Talent first casualty  
of dynastic politics’

Modi, in parliament, blames Congress for India’s woes

NDTV ONLINE

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, blasting the Congress and the Gandhis in parliament yesterday, said “talent is the first casualty of dynastic politics” and listed how the country would have been different “if there were no Congress”.

The Congress walked out in the middle of the speech.

“The Congress’s problem is it has never thought beyond its dynasty. The biggest threats to democracy are dynastic parties. And when a family becomes paramount then the first casualty is talent,” Modi said in Rajya Sabha, replying to a debate on government policies.

He said Mahatma Gandhi wanted the Congress to be scrapped. “This was Mahatma Gandhi’s wish - he knew what would happen if they remained and said destroy this. If Gandhi’s wishes had been followed, India would have been free from nepotism,” he remarked.

“If, going by Gandhi’s wish, there were no Congress, there would be no stain of Emergency. Corruption would not have been institutionalised for decades. There would have been no casteism or regionalism. Sikhs would not have been massacred. There would not have been an exodus from Kashmir,” he added.

Hitting back at the Congress for accusing him of destroying federalism, Modi said the party had

a history of dismissing state governments. “They believed in discredit, destabilise, dismiss.”

He also commented that Congress “is trapped in the ideology of urban naxals”.

“That’s why their mentality is destructive. Urban naxals took advantage of the Congress and took over their minds.”

India, he said, is known as the “mother of democracy”, and democracy and debate was a tradition of centuries.

Congress thinks the country was born only in 1947. This mindset is harmful for the country as its policies have affected the country’s progress in the last 75 years. We will never learn lessons in democracy from those who trampled over democracy in 1975,” PM Modi said.

The Indian PM in his speech also accused the Congress of submitting to the Gandhi family. “Whenever anyone in the Congress has spoken against a particular family, the results have been there for all to see,” he said, referring to Sitaram Kesri, who was removed as party chief.

This is Modi’s second attack on opposition parties in two days. Speaking in the Lok Sabha on Monday, PM Modi didn’t pull any punches and blamed the Congress for not doing enough to help the poor or keep its promises. He also repeatedly invoked India’s civilizational unity and alleged that the Opposition was attempting to harm the country by pursuing the colonial goal of “divide and rule”.



At UN, Russia,  
China call out  
‘unilateral’  
sanctions

AFP, United Nations

Russia, facing the threat of Western penalties over Ukraine, and China on Monday spoke out against what they called “unilateral” sanctions imposed by countries without the backing of the United Nations Security Council.

“Only Security Council sanctions are legal,” said Russia’s Deputy Ambassador to the UN Dmitry Polyanskiy.

But Polyanskiy denounced “unilateral” measures that hurt peace efforts and interfere with the sovereignty of nations, such as in Syria, Belarus, Cuba, Venezuela, Iran, Afghanistan, Burma.

For his part, China’s ambassador to the UN Zhang Jun said that “coercive unilateral sanctions were a major source of concern.”

UN sanctions are currently in place against 14 regimes around the world, affecting countries such as Libya, Yemen, Sudan and militant groups such as al-Qaeda and the Islamic State.

Covid test in 4 mins!

AFP, Beijing

Chinese scientists say they have developed a new coronavirus test that is accurate as a PCR lab test but gives results within four minutes. Polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests are widely considered the most accurate and sensitive for the virus that causes Covid-19, but they usually take several hours. Researchers from Fudan University in Shanghai say they have a solution. In a peer-reviewed article published Monday in the journal Nature Biomedical Engineering, the team said their sensor -- which uses microelectronics to analyse genetic material from swabs -- can reduce the need for time-consuming Covid lab tests. The researchers said their method offers speed, ease of operation, high sensitivity and portability.

HORN OF AFRICA DROUGHT  
13m face hunger

AFP, Nairobi

An estimated 13 million people in Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia are facing severe hunger as the Horn of Africa experiences its worst drought in decades, the World Food Programme (WFP) said yesterday. Three consecutive rainy seasons have failed as the region has recorded its driest conditions since 1981, the UN agency said. The drought has destroyed crops and inflicted “abnormally” high livestock deaths, forcing rural families who rely on herding and farming to abandon their homes. Water and grazing land is in short supply and forecasts of below-average rainfall in coming months only threaten more misery, said Michael Dunford, WFP’s regional director in East Africa. WFP said \$327 million was required to respond to immediate needs over the next six months and support pastoral communities to become more resilient against recurring climate shocks.

‘Biden, Trump  
harmed US’

REUTERS, Dubai

Iran’s Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali accused Joe Biden and Donald Trump of damaging the reputation of the United States in rare direct criticism of US presidents, Iran’s official IRNA news agency reported yesterday.

“These days, the US is being hit in ways it never computed. The two American presidents - the current and former heads of state - have joined hands to tarnish the image of the United States,” Khamenei said without elaborating. Iran and the United States resumed indirect talks in Vienna yesterday to revive a 2015 nuclear deal that former US Trump left in 2018. While the US State Department says such negotiations are entering their “final stretch”, Iranian officials have declared that part of their demands on sanctions removal have so far been left unaddressed in the Vienna talks.



\$10m for IS-K head

AFP, Washington

The United States on Monday offered a \$10-million reward for information leading to the “identification or location” of the leader of the Afghanistan regional chapter of the Islamic State group. According to Washington, Sanaullah Ghafari -- also known as Shahab al-Muhajir -- was appointed head of IS-K in June 2020 by the Islamic State group. IS-K is the Afghan offshoot of IS, which originated in Iraq and Syria.

PLASTIC POLLUTION IN OCEANS  
WWF rings alarm  
Calls for treaty to curb menace

AFP, Paris

Plastic has infiltrated all parts of the ocean and is now found “in the smallest plankton up to the largest whale” wildlife group WWF said yesterday, calling for urgent efforts to create an international treaty on plastics.

Tiny fragments of plastic have reached even the most remote and seemingly-pristine regions of the planet: it peppers Arctic sea ice and has been found inside fish in the deepest recesses of the ocean, the Mariana Trench.

There is no international agreement in place to address the problem, although delegates meeting in Nairobi for a UN environment meeting this month are expected to launch talks on a worldwide plastics treaty.

According to some estimates, between 19 and 23 million tonnes of plastic waste is washed into the world’s waterways every year, the WWF report said.

“In many places (we are) reaching some kind of saturation point for marine ecosystems, where we’re approaching levels that pose a significant threat,” said Eirik Lindebjerg, Global Plastics Policy Manager at WWF.

In some places there is a risk of “ecosystem collapse”, he said.

Many people have seen images of seabirds choking on plastic straws or turtles wrapped in discarded fishing nets, but he said the danger is across the entire marine food web. It “will affect not only the whale and the seal and the turtle, but huge fish stocks and the animals that depend on those”, he added.



People are tested at a mobile specimen collection station for Covid-19 in Hong Kong’s Prince Edward district yesterday, as authorities scrambled to ramp up testing capacity following a record high of new infections.

PHOTO: STAR

Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh

Local Government Engineering Department

Office of the Executive Engineer

Barisal

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e-Tender Notice-271-273/2021-2022

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the Procurement of

e-Tender No.	Package No.	Name of work	Last receiving date & time
271/ 2021-22	BJP/BAR/AGA/ DW-242	Improvement of BC road from Baluhar Abu Thaher Sarif’s Mosque to Barohazar Lutfor Member’s Bari road from Ch. 00m-1095m including 01 No. 0.600m x 0.625m U-drain Culvert at Ch. 700m under Agailjhara Upazila, District: Barishal. [Road ID No. 506025110] [Salvage Materials Cost: Tk. 2,08,153.00]. e-ID No. 656294	28-02-2022 Time: 12:00
272/ 2021-22	LGED/Bari/VRP/ Re-hab/21-22/ W-1945	Rehabilitation of Golla Monosha Mondir Connecting Road from Ch. 00m-530m under Agailjhara Upazila, District: Barishal. [Road ID 506025054]-e-ID No. 656569	28-02-2022 Time: 12:00
273/ 2021-22	LGED/Bari/VRP/ Re-hab/21-22/ W-1946	Rehabilitation of Golla Bazar-Rothkhola Bazar-Nonapukurpar-Bhadrapara (Taler Bazar-UZR) Road from Ch. 00m-1718m under Agailjhara Upazila, District: Barishal. [Road ID 506024008]. e-ID No. 656570	28-02-2022 Time: 12:00

National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank’s branches up to 17.00 on previous day of receiving tender.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

GD-241

Executive Engineer  
LGED, Barisal