

Modi unlikely to travel to South Africa

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to be a virtual participant at a summit of BRICS nations in South Africa later this month rather than attend in person, sources in New Delhi told Reuters.

The foreign ministry declined to comment, while the prime minister's office did not respond when asked by Reuters if Modi would be travelling to Johannesburg for the August 22-24 summit of leaders from a bloc that includes Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

President Vladimir Putin has already decided that he will be a virtual participant. China and Russia are keen to discuss expansion of BRICS at the summit, while India has reservations about that idea.

India last month hosted a summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation in a virtual format.



PHOTO: AFP

Says Pakistan PM as a deadly blast at a political gathering near shared frontier kills dozens

Militants behind a spate of suicide attacks in Pakistan were being helped by “Afghan citizens” across the border, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said, days after a deadly bombing at a political gathering near the countries’ shared frontier.

Sharif stopped short of accusing Afghanistan's Taliban government of knowingly allowing attacks from its soil, but he did say Pakistan militants were operating from "sanctuaries" in the neighbouring country.

Islamabad has previously said fighters from the Pakistan Taliban were operating freely from Afghanistan -- a charge Kabul routinely denies.

Sharif's remarks late Tuesday followed a security briefing and a visit to victims of Sunday's blast, which killed 54 people and wounded dozens more at a gathering of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-F (JUI-F) political party workers in Khar.

The attack was claimed by the Pakistan chapter of Islamic State group, who have a bloody rivalry with Taliban.

“The Prime Minister noted with concern the involvement of the

Afghan citizens in the suicide blasts," a statement from Sharif's office said.

It noted there was “liberty of action available to the elements hostile to Pakistan in planning and executing such cowardly attacks on innocent civilians from the sanctuaries across the border”.



Taliban authorities have consistently pledged not to let Afghan territory be used by foreign militants to stage attacks -- a key part of the accord that saw US-led forces leave after a 20-year occupation.

Afghan government spokesman

Zabihullah Mujahid told AFP yesterday that the Khar attack was a "criminal act".

"Such incidents should be prevented where they are happening and being coordinated," he said.

"The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan is very serious about preventing its soil being used against anyone, and we won't allow anyone to create a sanctuary here."

A UN Security Council report in May said Afghanistan's Taliban did not consider the Pakistan Taliban a domestic threat, "but rather as part of the emirate", adding that the group had a "safe operating base" there.

In January, investigators blamed a mosque blast that killed more than 80 police officers on a splinter group of the Pakistan Taliban.

The Islamic State group named, but did not give the nationality of the suicide bomber it said carried out Sunday's attack. Police have not confirmed any details of the bomber.

But investigators said an Islamic State bombing that killed 64 people at a Shia mosque in northwest Pakistan last year was carried out by an Afghan exile who had returned home to prepare for the attack.

Tunisian President Kais Saied sacked Prime Minister Najla Bouden without explanation Tuesday night and replaced her with former central bank executive Ahmed Hachani, whom he tasked with overcoming the “colossal challenges” facing the cash-strapped North African country.

No official explanation was given for Bouden's dismissal, but several local media outlets highlighted Saied's displeasure over a number of shortages, particularly of bread in state-subsidised bakeries.

Saïed “terminated the functions” of Bouden, who had been the first woman to head a government in Tunisia, according to a press release and video released by the presidency shortly before midnight.

Saied immediately appointed in her place Hachani, who until now worked at the Tunisian central bank and studied law at the University of Tunis, where Saied taught, according to Hachani's Facebook profile.

The new head of government, a figure unknown to the general public, was sworn in before the president, according to the presidency video.

4 Nigerians survived 14 days on a ship's rudder

On their tenth day at sea, the four Nigerian stowaways crossing the Atlantic in a tiny space above the rudder of a cargo ship ran out of food and drink.

They survived another four days, according to their account, by drinking the sea water crashing just meters below them, before being rescued by Brazilian federal police in the southeastern port of Vitoria.

Their remarkable death-defying journey across some 5,600 kilometers (3,500 miles) of ocean underlines the risks some migrants are prepared to take for a shot at a better life.

"It was a terrible experience for me," said 38-year-old Thankgod Opemipo Matthew Yeye, one of the four Nigerians, in an interview at a Sao Paulo church shelter. "On board it is not easy. I was shaking, so scared. But I'm here."

Their relief at being rescued soon gave way to surprise.

The four men said they had hoped to reach Europe and were shocked to learn they had in fact landed on the other side of the Atlantic, in Brazil. Two of the men have since been returned to Nigeria upon their request, while Yeye and Roman Ebimene Friday, a 35-year-old from Bayelsa state, have applied for asylum in Brazil.

A Chinese invasion of Taiwan would have “disastrous results” for the world, Foreign Minister Joseph Wu told AFP in an interview yesterday, citing the island’s strategic importance for the semiconductor industry and global shipping lanes. Wu’s warning comes as democratically ruled Taiwan heads towards a presidential election next year, while facing increased military and political pressure from China across the Taiwan Strait. Beijing claims Taiwan as its own territory and has vowed repeatedly to take it one day – militarily, if necessary. Wu said any act of force against Taiwan would have global reverberations. “What we need to do is to explain to the international community that if there’s any conflict involving Taiwan, it’s going to have disastrous results for the rest of the world,” Wu said, pointing to the food and fuel shortages, and spiralling inflation, that resulted from Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. The commercial consequences of a cross strait conflict would be enormous – more than 50 percent of the world’s shipping containers pass through the 180-kilometre (110 miles) wide waterway separating Taiwan from mainland China. Freedom of navigation is therefore one of the “crucial elements of international security and prosperity”, Wu said. Wu is part of the Democratic Progressive Party, perceived as more pro-United States than the opposition Kuomintang Party.

Germany's armed forces are facing major problems in attracting new recruits, the defence minister said yesterday, as Berlin seeks to overhaul its creaking military following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The Bundeswehr has long suffered from a lack of resources and funding but the start of the Ukraine war prompted Chancellor Olaf Scholz to pledge to boost spending. However, a central challenge is recruiting the next generation of soldiers, admitted Defence Minister Boris Pistorius during a visit to an armed forces career centre in Stuttgart. "Everyone is talking about a shortage of personnel in the Bundeswehr -- and no one knows this better than I," he told reporters. "We have seven percent fewer applicants this year compared to the same period last year." During training in the army, there is a dropout rate of about 30 percent, he said.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh			
Office of the Project Director			
Establishment of Four Engineering Colleges at			
Chattogram, Khulna, Rajshahi and Rangpur Divisions Project			
Directorate of Technical Education			
F-4/B, Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka 1207			
Memo No. 57.03.0000.043.07.13.2020-1027			Date: 01/08/2023
Request for Expressions of Interest (EOI) for Individual Consultants (Various Position)			
GENERAL INFORMATION			
01.	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Education/Technical and Madrasah Education Division	
02.	Agency	Directorate of Technical Education	
03.	Name of procuring entity	Project Director, Establishment of Four Engineering Colleges at Chattogram, Khulna, Rajshahi and Rangpur Divisions Project.	
04.	Procuring entity code	N/A	
05.	Procuring entity district	Dhaka	
06.	Expression of interest for selection of	(1) Consultant (Architectural)-01 No. (2) Junior Consultant (Architectural)-02 Nos. (3) Draftsman (Architectural)-01 No.	
07.	EOI Ref No.	57.03.0000.043.07.13.2020-1027	
08.	Date	01/08/2023	
KEY INFORMATION			
09.	Procurement sub-method	ICS (Time Based)	
FUNDING INFORMATION			
10.	Budget and source of funds	GOB (Development Budget)	
11.	Development partner (if applicable)	N/A	
PARTICULAR INFORMATION			
12.	Project/program code	224261500	
13.	Project/program name	Establishment of Four Engineering Colleges at Chattogram, Khulna, Rajshahi and Rangpur Divisions Project	
14.	EOI closing date and time:	23/08/2023 up to 12:00pm	
INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS			
15.	Brief description of the assignment (Details in the TOR)	The consultants will carry out all types of architectural design and architectural related works of the project under the supervision of the Department of Architecture and this works will be done by the Department of Architecture in consultation with the Project Director.	
16.	Qualification, experience & skill required (Details in the TOR)	Consultant (Architectural): The Consultant (Architectural) must have at least Bachelor Degree in Architecture from any Public/Private University: Minimum 3 (Three) years working experience in Auto CAD (2D, 3D) and other engineering related drawing & design software. Must have capability to work individually. Working experience in animation related software will be treated as additional qualification. Junior Consultant (Architectural): The Junior Consultant (Architectural) must have at least Bachelor Degree in Architecture from any Public/Private University: Minimum 2(Two) years working experience in Auto CAD (2D, 3D) and other engineering related drawing & design software. Draftsman (Architectural): The Draftsman (Architectural) must have at least Diploma in Architecture from any Polytechnic Institute with Minimum 1 (one) year working experience or Passed in 2 (Two) years Drafting Course from any Technical Institute with 3 (Three) years working experience. Must have drawing experience in Auto CAD. Experience in 3D will be treated as additional qualification.	
17.	Other details	A copy of the terms and reference (TOR) and necessary forms of the assignment may be obtained from the address below, during 09:00 to 16:00 hours or download from the DTE website at www.techedu.gov.bd . EOI shall be submitted on or before 23/08/2023 at 12:00 Noon in sealed envelope delivered to the undersigned and be clearly marked 'Request for Expression of Interest for Selection of [Name of the post]' or via e-mail (pd4ecp@gmail.com) in pdf format. Necessary documents in support of educational qualifications and experience & skill have to be submitted.	
18.	Phasing of Services	Location	Indicative Start Date (Month/Year)
	Single: Time Based	Dhaka	Indicative Completion Date (Month/Year)
			September 2023
			February 2025
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS			
19.	Name & designation of official inviting EOI	Mohammad Faisal Mufti, Project Director	
20.	Address of official inviting EOI	Room No. 704, Establishment of Four Engineering Colleges at Chattogram, Khulna, Rajshahi and Rangpur Divisions Project, Directorate of Technical Education, F-4/B, Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207.	
21.	Contact details of official inviting EOI	Tel. No. 02-41024589	e-mail: pd4ecp@gmail.com
22.	The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all Request for Expression of Interest (EOI).		