

NIJJAR MURDER

India waits for details on arrests in Canada

REUTERS, Bhubaneswar

India will wait for Canadian police to share information on the three Indian men it has arrested and charged with the murder of a Sikh leader last year, Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar said yesterday.

Canadian police charged the three on Friday over the murder of Sikh separatist leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar and said they were probing whether the suspects had links to the Indian government.

Jaishankar said he had seen news of the arrests and said the suspects “apparently are Indians of some kind of gang background... we'll have to wait for the police to tell us.”

The trio, all Indian nationals, were arrested in the city of Edmonton in Alberta on Friday, police said.

UK LOCAL POLLS

Labour’s Sadiq Khan wins third term as London mayor

AGENCIES

London’s Labour Mayor Sadiq Khan yesterday won a record third term after easily defeating Conservative challenger Susan Hall, UK media said after all the capital’s districts reported their results, reports AFP.

The son of Pakistani migrants and the first Muslim mayor of a Western capital when first elected in 2016, Khan, 53, becomes London’s first leader to secure three terms since the post was created in 2000.

Voter turnout was 40.5 percent in the mayoral contest, down 1.5 percent overall from 2021.

So far, Khan has won in the Lambeth and Southwark, Barnet and Camden, City of London and East, Merton and Wandsworth, Greenwich and Lewisham, Enfield and Haringey and North East, all of which he won at the last contest in 2021.

He gained West Central from the Conservatives, with a 5.2 percent swing to Labour from the Tories and South West from the Tories with a 2.7 percent swing, reports BBC.

Hall has held outer London boroughs of Havering and Redbridge, Croydon and Sutton, Bexley and Bromley, Ealing and Hillingdon and Brent and Harrow.

People eating ‘grass, peanut shells’ in Darfur

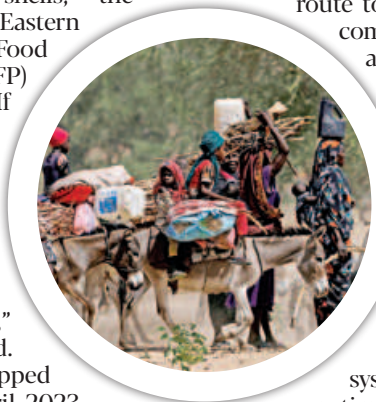
Warns UN agency as hunger crisis engulfs war-ravaged Sudan

CNN ONLINE

Time is running out to prevent starvation in Darfur, in western Sudan, a UN agency has warned, as escalating violence devastates the African nation.

People have been forced to consume “grass and peanut shells,” the regional director for Eastern Africa of the World Food Programme (WFP) said on Friday. “If assistance doesn’t reach them soon, we risk witnessing widespread starvation and death in Darfur and across other conflict-affected areas in Sudan,” Michael Dunford added.

Sudan has been gripped by civil war since April 2023, when fighting erupted between the Sudanese army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF). It quickly descended into a brutal conflict characterized by reports of sexual and genocidal violence and civilian casualties, triggering an exodus of refugees.



An inflatable dinghy carrying migrants heads towards England in the English Channel, Britain yesterday. More than 8,000 people have arrived so far this year on small boats, with many fleeing war or famine and travelling through Europe to Britain.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Rafah assault ‘could lead to a bloodbath’

Warns WHO chief; Democratic lawmakers tell Biden evidence shows Israel restricting Gaza aid

AGENCIES

An Israeli military incursion into Gaza’s southern city of Rafah could lead to a “bloodbath”, the World Health Organization warned Friday, announcing contingency plans.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has vowed to crush Hamas’s remaining fighters in Rafah, where much of Gaza’s population has sought refuge from nearly seven months of Israeli offensive.

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus warned of possible dire implications for the 1.2 million people sheltering in Rafah.

Only 12 of Gaza’s 36 hospitals and 22 of its 88 primary health facilities are ‘partially functional’.

“WHO is deeply concerned that a full-scale military operation in Rafah, Gaza, could lead to a bloodbath, and further weaken an already broken health system,” Tedros said on X, formerly Twitter.

In a statement, the WHO announced contingency efforts, but warned “the broken health system would not be able to cope with a surge in casualties and deaths that a Rafah incursion would cause”.

According to the WHO, most



of the besieged territory’s health facilities have been damaged or destroyed amid heavy Israeli bombardment, reports AFP.

Only 12 of Gaza’s 36 hospitals and 22 of its 88 primary health facilities are “partially functional”, the UN health agency said. “As part of contingency efforts, WHO and partners are urgently working to restore and resuscitate health services,” the statement said.

It added that Rafah’s three currently operational hospitals would become unreachable “when hostilities intensify in their vicinity”.

Instead, the WHO is working to restore south Gaza’s largest hospital, the Nasser Medical Complex in nearby Khan Yunis, and establish additional medical sites.

A military operation in Rafah could spark a new wave of displacement, leading to more overcrowding, limited access to food, water and sanitation and more outbreaks of disease, he added.

Meanwhile, scores of lawmakers from US President Joe Biden’s Democratic Party told him on Friday that they believe there is sufficient evidence to show that Israel has violated US law by restricting humanitarian aid flows into Gaza.

A letter to Biden signed by 86 House of Representatives Democrats said Israel’s aid restrictions “call into question” its assurances that it was complying with a US Foreign Assistance Act provision requiring recipients of US-funded arms to uphold international humanitarian law and allow free flows of US assistance, reports Reuters.

Vietnam temp records tumble as heatwave scorches

AFP, Hanoi

More than 100 temperature records fell across Vietnam in April, according to official data, as a deadly heatwave scorches South and Southeast Asia.

Extreme heat has blasted Asia from India to the Philippines in recent weeks, triggering heatstroke deaths, school closures and desperate prayers for cooling rain.

Scientists have long warned that human-induced climate change will produce more frequent, longer and intense heatwaves.

Vietnam saw three waves of high temperatures in April, according to data published Friday by the National Centre for Hydro-Meteorological Forecasting, with the mercury peaking at 44 degrees Celsius (111.2 Fahrenheit) in two towns earlier this week.

The mark is only slightly below the highest temperature ever recorded in Vietnam -- 44.2 C on May 7 last year.

In all, 102 weather stations saw record highs in April, as northern and central Vietnam bore the brunt of the heatwave, with temperatures on average 2-4 C higher than during the same period last year.

Seven stations recorded temperatures above 43 C, all on Tuesday. The most dramatic sign of the extreme weather hitting Vietnam came in the southern province of Dong Nai, where hundreds of thousands of fish died in a reservoir.

Images showed locals wading and boating through the 300-hectare Song May reservoir, with the water barely visible beneath a blanket of dead fish.

Pakistani leaders praying for Rahul to become PM

Modi tells polls rally in India’s Jharkhand

THE HINDU ONLINE

On his second day on the campaign trail in Jharkhand, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi emphasised that a strong nation requires a strong government. While addressing a public meeting in Palamu, he said, “There was a time when the cowardly Congress government used to go around the world and cry after the terrorist attack. “However, today Pakistan is crying all over the world. The Pakistani leaders are praying to make Sahjada [prince] of Congress as the Prime Minister of India. A strong India wants a strong government and for a strong government we need a Modi government.” He said when he became the prime minister, he acted against terrorism and that Pakistan was shaken after the surgical strike. Addressing a rally in Gujarat, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said Rahul will lose from Rae Bareli by a huge margin. Gandhi filed his papers from UP’s Rae Bareli constituency on May 3.

India FM rejects Joe Biden’s ‘xenophobia’ comment

REUTERS, New Delhi

Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar rejected US President Joe Biden’s comment that “xenophobia” was hobbling the South Asian nation’s economic growth, The Economic Times reported yesterday.

Jaishankar said at a round table hosted by the newspaper on Friday that India’s economy “is not faltering” and that it has historically been a society that is very open. “That’s why we have the CAA (Citizenship Amendment Act), which is to open up doors for people who are in trouble ... I think we should be open to people who have the need to come to India, who have a claim to come to India,” Jaishankar said, referring to a recent law that allows immigrants who have fled persecution from neighbouring countries to become citizens. Earlier this week, Biden had said “xenophobia” in China, Japan and India was holding back growth in the respective economies as he argued migration has been good for the US economy. “One of the reasons why our economy’s growing is because of you and many others. Why? Because we welcome immigrants,” Biden said at a fundraising event.



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