

Israel’s plan to respond to Iran attack is ready: source

CNN ONLINE

Israel’s plan to respond to Iran’s October 1 attack is ready, a source familiar with the matter told CNN, without providing further information.

CNN has reached out to the Israeli ministry of defense for comment.

Israeli officials, including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, have assured the US that a counterstrike on Iran would be limited to military targets rather than oil or nuclear facilities, according to a source.

Iran launched dozens of missiles toward Israel in retaliation for the killing of Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah, Hamas political leader Ismail Haniyeh and others. Netanyahu had vowed Iran would “pay” for the attack.

Meanwhile, Iran’s atomic energy agency spokesperson Behrouz Kamalvandi said yesterday the probability of an attack on Iran’s nuclear sites remains low but any potential damage would be “quickly compensated”.



Palestinian children queue to receive food cooked by a charity kitchen in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday. The UN Palestinian refugee agency is close to a possible breaking point for its operations in the Gaza Strip due to increasingly complicated conditions, its head said yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

SIKH KILLING Clear signs India violated Canada’s sovereignty Says Trudeau

AFP, Ottawa

Canada’s Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said Wednesday there were “clear indications” that India had violated Canadian sovereignty, as the countries row over the killing of a Sikh separatist on Canadian soil last year that Ottawa blamed on New Delhi.

Trudeau’s latest charge came two days after India and Canada expelled each other’s ambassadors as Ottawa alleged that Indian involvement in a campaign against Sikh separatists went beyond what was previously known.

Tensions have soared since Canada accused the Indian government of involvement in last year’s killing outside a Sikh temple of Hardeep Singh Nijjar, an advocate for an independent Sikh state who had immigrated to Canada and become a citizen.

At a hearing on foreign interference on Wednesday, Trudeau addressed Nijjar’s murder, as well as what he termed a broader campaign by Indian government representatives targeting Canadian citizens inside Canada.

Pak calls for expansion of BRI at SCO summit

Indian FM supports regional cooperation but stresses mutual respect as well as territorial integrity

REUTERS, Islamabad

Pakistan’s Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif yesterday called for the expansion of China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) to enhance regional cooperation at a meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in Islamabad.

He was addressing a heads of government meeting of the SCO, a Eurasian security and political group formed in 2001, being attended by officials from 11 countries, including host Pakistan, China, Russia and India.

“Flagship projects like the Belt and Road Initiative of President Xi Jinping... should be expanded focusing on developing road, rail and digital infrastructure that enhances integration and cooperation across our region,” Sharif said in his speech as the chair of the meeting.

The BRI is a \$1 trillion plan for global infrastructure and energy networks that China launched a decade ago to connect Asia with Africa and Europe through land and maritime routes. More than 150 countries, including Russia, have signed up to participate in BRI since Xi unveiled it.

Also in attendance was India’s External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, who is the first Indian foreign minister to visit Pakistan in nearly a decade with ties between the nuclear-armed rival neighbours continuing to be frosty.

No bilateral meeting has been planned, both sides have said, although Sharif and Jaishankar did have a short talk when the Indian official attended a dinner hosted by the premier last night.

Jaishankar, in his speech at the meeting, congratulated Pakistan on the presidency of the SCO’s Heads of Government Council and extended India’s “full support” to Islamabad.

He said India supported regional cooperation but added that mutual respect as well as territorial integrity and sovereignty were essential.

“If activities across borders are characterized by terrorism, extremism and separatism, they are hardly likely to encourage trade, energy flows, connectivity and people-to-people exchanges in parallel,” he said in his speech.



1.4m apply to join army Says North Korea amid tensions with South

REUTERS, Seoul

North Korean state media said yesterday around 1.4 million young people had applied to join or return to the army this week, blaming Seoul for a provocative drone incursion that had brought the “tense situation to the brink of war”.

The fiery rhetoric comes after North Korea last week accused Seoul of sending drones over Pyongyang that scattered a “huge number” of anti-North leaflets. The North then blew up inter-Korean roads and rail lines on its side of the border.

The young people were determined to fight in a “sacred war of destroying the enemy with the arms of the revolution,” the official KCNA news agency said.

Russia launches 130 drones over Ukraine: Kyiv Industrial facility hit

REUTERS, Kyiv

Russia launched one of its largest drone salvos at Ukraine in recent months, targeting Kyiv and other cities and igniting a fire at an industrial facility in the western region of Ternopil, officials said yesterday.

Air defences shot down 51 of 136 drones used in the attack, the air force said in its readout. Twenty drones were still in the air and 60 were unaccounted for, possibly after being intercepted by electronic warfare systems, it added.

Almost 50 firefighters put out a “large-scale fire” in the Ternopil region, the military administration wrote on the Telegram messaging app. “There were no injuries,” it said.

The air force said Russia also fired two missiles at the northern Chernihiv and eastern Donetsk regions, but did say what happened to them. There was no immediate comment from Russia on its latest strike. The drone attack caused a fire at a private residence in the region outside the capital and damaged several other buildings, according to governor Ruslan Kravchenko.



FREEDOM HOUSE REPORT Myanmar, China have lowest internet freedom

AFP, Washington

Myanmar and China have the world’s worst internet freedom, with declines reported in a number of other countries led by Kyrgyzstan, a study said yesterday.

The further deterioration in Myanmar, a Beijing ally where the military seized power in 2021, marks the first time in a decade that any country has matched China for the lowest score in the Freedom on the Net report.

The report by Freedom House, a pro-democracy research group funded by the US Congress but run independently, found that internet freedom fell for the 14th straight year globally, with more countries seeing declines than rises.

In Myanmar, the junta has harshly cracked down on dissent since ending a decade-long experiment in democracy, with systematic censorship and surveillance of online speech.

Freedom House pointed to new measures imposed by the junta in May to block access to virtual private networks (VPNs).

China has developed a sweeping “great firewall” meant to root out content that poses a threat to the ruling Communist Party.

Asked about the report yesterday, Beijing insisted its people “enjoy various rights and freedoms in accordance with the law”.

A firebrand politician falls silent

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She died from a cardiac arrest in a hospital in the capital yesterday at the age of 82.

After earning the moniker “Agni Kanya” (daughter of fire) in the mid-60s due to her rousing speeches during the movements leading up to the Liberation War, Matia had become a household name.

She played a significant role in organising the war, and was also at the forefront in leading the mass uprising against military dictator HM Ershad.

In her six-decade-long illustrious political career, Matia made history by becoming the first female president of a student organisation – the leftist Bangladesh Chhatra Union, backed by the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) – and serving as a general secretary of the Dhaka University Central Students’ Union (DUCSU).

She switched from the Marxist National Awami Party (NAP) to the nationalist Awami League, and became a lawmaker and a cabinet member later on.

Throughout her life, she remained uncompromising in her integrity and maintained a reputation for honesty. Even amid the toxic political culture of the country, Matia commanded

respect within her party as well as from the opposition.

The Awami League and Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal have expressed their sorrows at her demise.

Matia Chowdhury was born on June 30, 1942 in Pirojpur. Her father was a police officer.

She became a member of Chhatra Union when she was a student at Eden Mohila College. She completed her graduation from Dhaka University.

She was married to Bazlur Rahman, legendary editor of the daily Sangbad, a freedom fighter, and a former leader of the CPB. He passed away in 2008.

Matia was the DUCSU general secretary from 1964 to 1965.

After the Chhatra Union split that year due to the division in the international communist movement, she became president of the organisation and led the “Pro-Moscow” group.

Named the “Matia group”, it played an active role in organising the movement against Pakistani military dictator Ayub Khan, the mass upsurge of 1969 and the Liberation War of 1971.

She was imprisoned at least four times under the Pakistani regime.

After the war, Matia joined NAP and was later made the organising

secretary. Her speeches helped significantly in garnering support for the party during the first general election in 1973.

She then joined the AL in late 1979.

As part of the party, she played an integral part in various movements, including during the anti-Ershad protests; the demands for the formation of a caretaker government; and during the party’s political change over in 2007-2008.

She also had to face imprisonment under various military governments.

From 1983 to 1990, she was arrested at least eight times.

During the 1991-1996 BNP rule, a photograph published in national dailies showed Matia, during a protest, being beaten with sticks by law enforcers. The photograph stirred the nation.

At the time, she was a lawmaker. She was also elected MP in the 1991 election from a constituency in Sherpur, but had resigned along with other AL MPs in 1994.

She was then elected MP in 1996, 2008, 2014, 2018 and 2024, from the same constituency.

Matia was made agriculture minister when AL came to power in 1996, and held the same post again for three consecutive terms from

2009 to 2019.

Matia and a few others played a significant role in keeping AL politics afloat in 2007-2008, when the party chief Sheikh Hasina and some other top leaders were behind bars.

Mujahidul Islam Selim, former president of CPB, said the first 25 years of Matia’s political career was as a member of a progressive force and the remaining 45 was spent as an AL leader.

He added that many do not know that she was an underground member of the communist party when she was a NAP leader. “She changed her political stance when she joined the Awami League.”

Selim, also a former president of Chhatra Union, said, “As a person, Matia was honest. Corruption and greed never touched her. But people also evaluate a person based on their party identity.”

In this world of unabashed adulteration and pretentious leaders, Matia Chowdhury remained authentic – a true politician and a trailblazer.

Matia’s body was kept at the hospital morgue and she will be buried at her husband’s grave in the capital’s Mirpur Martyred Intellectuals’ Graveyard today after a namaz-e-janaza, family sources said.

Five police units

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Despite the major reshuffle in the top positions, the Special Branch, Industrial Police, and Tourist Police are functioning without Addl IGPs who head the units.

The Special Branch is without a chief as Shah Alam retired on October 3. The Industrial Police has

been without a head since August 22 when Mahbubur Rahman was sent into forced retirement. The Tourist Police has been without a boss since September 2 when Mir Rezaul Alam was asked to retire.

The Highway Police had been without a chief since October 9 when Shahabuddin Khan was forced to retire.

AL says it’s bid to kill spirit

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The state apparatus is being misused to suppress pro liberation forces, and mass arrests are being made in false charges,” the statement read.

It stated that the greatest achievement of the Bangalees is the establishment of an independent and sovereign Bangladesh under the leadership of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The contributions of his trusted colleagues, his family, and the freedom-loving people to this end are immense.

“But we can see that individuals

and institutions related to the liberation struggle are being subjected to the government’s vengeance. In continuation of that, the government is excluding the national days related to the father of the nation and national history. The party strongly condemns such decisions.

“The nation rejects any attempt to erase the history of Bangalees by creating division ... Imbued by the spirit of the Liberation War, the people will unite to give a fitting response to such actions,” the statement added.

Egg prices dip slightly

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market resumed sales on Tuesday night after a two-day pause.

Wishing anonymity, a staffer of Al Amin Traders, an egg wholesale outlet, yesterday said that they would not sell eggs during the day for fear of being fined by mobile courts.

“The leaders of the Tejaon Egg Merchants’ Association have instructed us to sell eggs only between midnight and early morning,” the staffer told The Daily Star.

The shop, however, was selling eggs exclusively to its regular customers.

Another shop, Alamgir Traders, was seen selling 100 eggs for Tk1,250-Tk 1,400, up from the government-fixed rate of Tk1,100.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Mohammad Amanat Ullah, former president of the Tejaon Egg Merchants’ Association, said they

could not sell eggs at the government-fixed prices due to high purchase costs.

“We sold 100 eggs for Tk 1,220-1,230. We have reached a consensus with four major farms, the government, and the other stakeholders on bringing down the prices. As per the consensus, the two farms will supply 20 lakh eggs to the wholesale egg markets every day – 10 lakh to Tejaon and 10 lakh to Kaptan Bazar,” said Amanat Ullah.

He said the supply is supposed to begin within a day or two. “Once we receive the supplies, we will start selling eggs at the prices fixed by the government.”

Stating that the daily demand for eggs in the capital is about 1 crore, Amanat Ullah said 12 more companies have promised to supply eggs to the wholesalers.

Shakib to return today for his Test swansong

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adviser Asif Mahmud and the Bangladesh Cricket Board showing a more welcoming approach, eventually culminating in Shakib being named in the 15-member squad for the opening Test which was announced yesterday.

Selector Hannan Sarkar informed that they have picked Shakib only for the first Test, and not for the second Test, which will start in Chattogram on October 29.

“We all know that Shakib will retire from the Mirpur Test. There is nothing

more about the second Test,” Hannan told The Daily Star yesterday.

Later, in a video message, Hannan expressed hope that the talismanic all-rounder, who has served Bangladesh for more than 18 years, would make his mark in his farewell Test.

“We know that there was a government issue as well as an issue of the cricket board. We tried to take clearance from everywhere before selecting him. When the cricket board gives clearance that a player is available, then we make the selection

procedure,” Hannan said. “It’s a matter of great joy that such type of a cricketer can retire from Mirpur, which we also call ‘home of cricket’.

It’s a great moment for him as a player and for the people of Bangladesh.”

It will be the first homecoming of Shakib since the fall of the Awami League government on August 5.

The last time Shakib came to Bangladesh was after the end of the T20 World Cup in late June but after a short stay, he left for USA on July 2.

The all-rounder then travelled

to Pakistan in August to represent Bangladesh in a two-match Test series, which the Tigers won by 2-0 margin. Shakib flew from the UK to India last month for a two-match Test series against the hosts, where he announced his retirement plans and spoke of his security concerns before the second Test.

The all-rounder, who played 71 Tests, scoring 4609 runs and taking 246 wickets so far, left India for the USA after a 2-0 defeat in the Test series.