

Modi calls on Israeli Prez, discusses ways to boost ties

JERUSALEM, July 5 /-/- Prime Minister Narendra Modi today called on Israeli President Reuven Rivlin and discussed ways to strengthen bilateral ties and how Israel's cutting edge technology could help the 'Make in India' initiative. Describing Israel as a real friend, Modi recalled Rivlin's visit to India in November. Hailing the ties between the two nations, Modi said: "...today it is to land for I. When I say I for I, I don't mean the popular saying in that I mean is India with Israel, India for Israel". Modi, who arrived in Tel Aviv yesterday for a three-day visit, met Rivlin at his residence here. "The President of Israel welcomed me so warmly, he broke protocol. This is a mark of respect for the people of India," Modi tweeted. "It is a privilege to meet the President Rivlin again today."

I fondly recall his visit to India last November when he charmed us with his affable manner and desire to do more with India. Modi wrote in the guest book at the President's residence. "President Rivlin is admired in India for his unstinting belief and common good of mankind. I thank him for his friendship and his warm hospitality," wrote Modi, who is the first India prime minister to visit Israel. Modi said during his visit to India, Rivlin started a phrase 'Make with India' and 'I feel since my arrival yesterday that has been echoed by many people and I think what you have said is now percolated to all levels'. Rivlin on his part described Modi as one of the greatest leaders in the world.

"We have a lot in common and doing a lot in common. We understood very well about your thought about the need to help partners who will 'Make in India'," Rivlin said. "I am doing a lot in order to fulfill your ideas about 'Make in India,'" the Israeli President said. "We only suggested some projects that we believe can do with India and I know that you have accepted that and appreciated that very much," he said. Rivlin said there was a scope for cooperation between universities and industries of India and Israel. "The...people in Israel are trying to find ways to invest in India and to make mutual projects together," he said. (PTI)

Iraqi commanders says 300 IS fighters holed up in Mosul

MOSUL, July 5 /-/- An Iraqi commander says he believes some 300 Islamic State fighters remain in the small patch of territory still controlled by the group in Mosul's Old City. Lt. Gen. Sami al-Arifi of Iraq's special forces said today that the militants are confined to a 500 square meter (600 sq. yard) area. He spoke the day after Iraq's Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi congratulated the armed forces on a "big victory" in Mosul, despite ongoing clashes. IS captured Mosul in a matter of days when it swept across northern and central Iraq in the summer of 2014. Iraqi forces backed by a US-led coalition launched a major operation to retake the city in October (Agencies)

Trump, world leaders head to G20 Summit under N Korea shadow

BERLIN, July 5 /-/- US President Donald Trump meets other world leaders at Germany's G20 summit from Friday, with North Korea's first successful test of an intercontinental ballistic missile casting a long shadow over the gathering at the heavily fortified venue. The rising global threat posed by Pyongyang is likely to see conflicts over climate and trade take a back seat as regional neighbours China, Japan and South Korea gather with Trump and Rus-

sian strongman Vladimir Putin in Hamburg. "Testing an ICBM represents a new escalation of the threat to the United States, our allies and partners, the region, and the world," US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said, confirming North Korea now possessed a weapon capable of reaching US territory. Russia and China condemned yesterday's test and the European Union may consider additional sanctions. Allies led by Trump, who had vowed North Korea's goal of

possessing an ICBM 'won't happen' and has repeatedly pressed China to rein in its truculent neighbour. In the most anticipated moment of the G20, Trump will meet Putin, the ex-KGB agent accused of having aided, with hackers and fake news, the surprise rise into the White House. The moment they shake hands is sure to see "an Olympian level of macho posturing between the two leaders, who both understand the importance

of symbolism and the perception of being tough," said Derek Chollet of the German Marshall Fund of the United States. Trump ruffled other leaders at a G7 meeting in Italy in May and has steered the economic and military superpower on an isolationist 'America First' course. His counterparts are bracing for fresh surprises after Trump stunned the world by pulling out of the 2015 Paris climate pact, questioned long-standing NATO alliances and dismissed free trade princi-

ples. Trouble is also brewing at the conference table at a time when the West and Europe are deeply divided, the post-Cold War order is fraying and China and Russia are asserting themselves on the global stage. "There is a danger that the summit will lead to polarisation between the US and other countries" on climate change and other issues, warned Oxford Analytics economist Adam Slater. Trade war loom as Trump has demanded Ger-

many and China reduce their huge surpluses and threaten other countries with punitive measures in battles over steel, natural gas and hormone-treated beef. The year's gathering of the Group of 20 big industrialised and emerging economies, the biggest diplomatic event outside the UN, will also provide a stage for other world leaders muscling for power and regional influence. Chinese President Xi Jinping will meet regional rival Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe,

at a time when both are worried about North Korea. Also looming over the summit will be the bloody conflict in Syria and the frozen one in Ukraine -- both involving the US. The struggle for Mideast dominance between Saudi Arabia and Iran. Then there is Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, whose crackdown on alleged coup plotters, civil society and Kurds after a 2016 putsch attempt has poisoned relations with Germany. (AFP)



Prime Minister Narendra Modi calls on the President of Israel Reuven Rivlin, in Jerusalem, Israel.

German police use water cannon on G20 protestors

HAMBURG, July 5 /-/- Riot police used water cannon to disperse several gatherings of protestors ahead of the G20 summit in Hamburg. Police first dislodged protestors who had set up tents in a park in the western district of Altona, according to police and media reports. "This is not a legal rally but unauthorised camping," said a police spokesman. A little later,

shortly before midnight, police used water cannon and pepper spray to disperse rallies of several hundred people who had started blocking roads in various locations, in particular the Sankt-Pauli neighbourhood. One person was arrested and a passerby, who was not involved in the demonstration, was slightly injured, according to a police message on Twitter.

On Sunday police used pepper spray as they cleared tents set up by some 600 activists on the banks of the Elbe river. Anti-G20 protest organisers and the city-state of Hamburg have for weeks sparred in the courts over whether activists could set up tent cities. Courts have found that while such a protest camp would in principle be a legitimate political demon-

stration, police had the right to prohibit overnight camping on public lands. More than 100,000 anti-capitalist demonstrators, including several thousand left-wing extremists, are expected to descend on the northern city ahead of the summit which opens on Friday. About 20,000 police will be deployed to protect leaders attending the two-day meeting. (AFP)

India registers protest against Burhan Wani rally in UK

LONDON, July 5 /-/- India has planned to file a UK report to protest against a rally to mark "Burhan Wani Day" in Birmingham on Saturday, questioning how the British government can allow the "glorification of terrorists" on its soil. The Indian High Commission in London wrote to the UK Foreign Office to register its protest.

The rally is planned by UK-based Kashmiri groups to mark the first death anniversary of the commander of the Hizbul Mujahideen militant outfit killed in a gun battle with Indian armed forces in the Kashmir Valley on July 8 last year. India's security high commissioner, Dinesh Patnaik, sent a "note verbale" on Monday to the Foreign Office including details of Wani's crimes and propaganda of "violence in the Valley."

A rally on Kashmir is a different matter but to glorify and eulogise a terrorist is unacceptable. The UK itself has suffered at the hands of terrorism in the last few months and lives have been overturned as a result. How can law and order allow such a glorification of terrorists and propagation of violence," wrote Patnaik. The senior diplomat also questioned if the UK government would allow the same UK-based protest groups, which have their origins in Pakistan, to organise a rally in favour of Pakistani-origin Khuram Butt and other terrorists involved in the attack on London Bridge last month which claimed eight lives.

If the same people celebrating Wani were to plan a similar glorification of Khuram Butt and the other terrorists, it would be a violation of this country's law and order and that to go ahead as well," he questioned, adding that the joint statement issued following British Prime Minister Theresa May's visit to India in November 2016 had categorically stated joint action against all forms of terrorism. A "note verbale" is an unsigned diplomatic communication prepared in the third person and is used by foreign missions to highlight issues of importance between countries. The UK Foreign Office said the note has been looked at and will be handled by the relevant geographical desk within the department before a response can be issued.

A meeting was held earlier this week in Sparkbrook area of Birmingham to plan for the rally, scheduled to take place outside the Council House in the heart of the city in the West Midlands region of England on Saturday afternoon. Groups such as Tehreek-e-Kashmir Europe are believed to be involved in the organisation of the rally as part of a so-called "Martyrdom Day" call for Wani from Pakistan. The same group were caught on camera waving images of Wani and "We Want Freedom" posters during the India vs Pakistan Champions Trophy match at Edgbaston Cricket Ground in Birmingham on June 4. UK allies planned in the UK rally to demand an investigation into the permission in advance. West Midlands Police said it will "look into" the details of the proposed rally. The latest communication between the Indian high commission in London and the Foreign Office reflects an increasingly outspoken stance being taken by the Indian government over sensitive issues.

The Indian high commissioner to the UK, Y K Sinha, had spoken out last week against what he described as "anti-India" the way the UK permits anti-India activity on its soil, in Delhi people are quite perturbed about that. We are also a democratic society but we do not discuss issues that affect our friends and allies," he had said during the launch of a new book on India-UK ties titled "Winning Partnership". The Indian community in Birmingham is also mobilising to lobby local councillors and MPs to register their protest against the proposed rally. (PTI)

Plane with five aboard reported missing in Indonesia's Papua

JAKARTA, July 5 /-/- A small plane with five people on board has gone missing in Indonesia's easternmost province of Papua. Melkianus Kutta, head of the local search and rescue agency said the aircraft from PT Associated Mission Aviation went missing on a short flight from Wamena, the capital of the mountainous district of Jayawijaya, to Derakma in neighboring Nduga district. He said the Pilatus Porter PC-6 took off at

11:00 a.m. (0400 GMT) and lost contact minutes before it was scheduled to land at around 11:25 (0425 GMT). On board the aircraft were two pilots, one Indonesian and one from the Netherlands, along with three Indonesian passengers. Flying is one of the main transportation means in the mountainous and jungle clad easternmost provinces of Papua and West Papua. (PTI)

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Modi gets glimpse of the Temple Mount or al-Quds al-Sharif

JERUSALEM, July 5 /-/- Prime Minister Narendra Modi today got a glimpse of the Temple Mount, known to Muslims as the al-Quds al-Sharif, from the window of a hotel where he met his Israeli counterpart Benjamin Netanyahu.

"I want to show you something," Netanyahu told Modi in a hillside hotel before the bilateral meeting at the King David hotel here. Netanyahu took Modi towards the window and pointed his finger outside saying, "This is called the old (Jerusalem) city and the Temple Mount is there. It is all very small." The Golden Dome of Moka, also known as Qubbat al-Sakhrah, and the old city of Jerusalem was visible from the window. "This the cradle of our history," the Israeli prime minister said. Modi was seen attentively hearing Netanyahu's narration of the place while looking outside the window. The Temple Mount, a hill located in the heart of Jerusalem, is one of the most important religious sites of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock are part of the site. (PTI)

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Saudi Arabia has 'clear link' to UK extremism: Report

LONDON, July 5 /-/- Saudi Arabia is the chief foreign promoter of Islamist extremism in the UK, a new report has claimed. The Henry Jackson Society said there was a "clear and growing link" between Islamist organisations in receipt of overseas funds, hate preachers and jihadist groups promoting violence in the UK, the BBC reported on Wednesday. The foreign

affairs think tank called for public inquiry into the role of Saudi Arabia and other Gulf nations. The UK's Saudi Arabian Embassy said the claims were "categorically false". Ministers were under pressure to publish a report on UK-based Islamist groups, the BBC reported.

The Home Office report into the existence and influence of Jihadist organisations, commissioned by former Prime Minister David Cameron in 2015, was reportedly still waiting to be completed amid questions as to whether it would ever be published. Critics have suggested it could make uncomfortable reading for the government, which has close and longstanding diplomatic, security and economic links with the Gulf, particularly Saudi Arabia. Wednesday's report said a number of Gulf nations, as well as Iran, were providing financial support to mosques and Islamic educational institutions which have played host to extremist preachers and been linked to the spread of extremist material, the BBC said. At the top of the list, the report claimed, was Saudi Arabia. It listed individuals and

foundations have been heavily involved in exporting what it called "an illiberal, bigoted Wahhabi ideology", quoting a number of examples. In a minority of cases, the report alleged institutions in the UK that receive Saudi funding were run directly from Saudi Arabia, although in most instances the money appeared to "simply buy foreign donors influence". (PTI)

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Four arrested, arms cache found after Brussels terror raids

BRUSSELS, July 5 /-/- Four people have been arrested and an arms cache found after overnight terror raids in Brussels linked to a bikers' club called the Kamikaze Riders, federal prosecutors said today. During one of the house searches, various weapons were found. In all, four persons were arrested and taken in for questioning, prosecutors said in a statement. A spokesman said the raids were linked to the Kamikaze Riders, which has been implicated in terror offences. A source close to the investigation said the raids in the gritty Anderlecht district found at least two Kalashnikov assault rifles while reports spoke of explosives also being discovered. The statement from prosecutors

said the raids were "completely independent" from the probe into the deadly November 2015 Paris and March 2016 Brussels attacks, which were claimed by Islamic State and carried out by jihadist cells based in the Belgian capital. Meanwhile in northern France, a joint Franco-Belgian anti-terrorist operation picked up a man on suspicion of having links to the Kamikaze Riders. The 42-year-old, arrested in a suburb of the northern city of Lille, is suspected of plotting a "violent action", a source close to the case said. The Kamikaze Riders, formed in 2003, are suspected of links to foiled attacks in Brussels in late 2015. In October 2016, two members of the group were convicted of belonging to a terrorist group.



Russian President Vladimir Putin (R, back), Chinese President Xi Jinping (L), Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov (R, front) and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi attend a signing ceremony at the Kremlin in Moscow, Russia.