

Iran, Syria vow to strengthen ties as Raisi wraps up Damascus visit

DAMASCUS: Iran and Syria agreed to boost ties and develop economic relations, with a focus on reconstruction, as the Islamic republic's President Ebrahim Raisi on Friday concluded a landmark visit to Damascus.

Tehran has been a key ally to Damascus throughout Syria's long-running civil war, offering vital economic and military assistance that has helped the Syrian government claw back most of the territory it lost at the start of the conflict.

Iraq security forces seize 12 million benzhexol pills

BAGHDAD: Iraqi security forces said Friday they had seized 12 million pills of the antispasmodic drug benzhexol, used in the treatment of Parkinson's disease but also abused as a hallucinogen.

National Security officers recovered the haul from a warehouse in east Baghdad in an operation in which they also made six arrests.

Iraqi security forces have intensified anti-narcotics operations in recent months, with several high-profile seizures reported.

Outcry over Israeli plans to seize 70 buildings of Palestinian residents in Hebron

RAMALLAH: Seventy buildings owned, lived in and used by Palestinians in Hebron city for decades are likely to be confiscated and have their ownership transferred to Israeli settlers in the city, according to human rights activists.

Palestinian human rights sources expressed to Arab News their concern about the alleged Israeli government plan, which will apparently be carried out under the supervision of the Israeli army.

At least 400 women reportedly on second week of hunger strike in notorious Iraqi jail

DUBAI: Hundreds of women convicted of being members of Daesh and serving long jail terms in a high-security prison in Iraq have reportedly been on hunger strike since April 24.

At least 400 female prisoners, jailed for between 15 years and life in Baghdad's notorious Rusafa prison, are said to be refusing food in protest against their convictions and poor prison conditions, the BBC reported on Friday.

Lebanon's finance minister questioned in Central Bank probe

BEIRUT: A European judicial team questioned Lebanon's caretaker finance minister on Friday in an investigation related to corruption probes of the country's Central Bank governor, officials said.

The questioning is part of a probe by a delegation from France, Germany, and Luxembourg, now on its third visit to Lebanon to interrogate suspects and witnesses in the case. Central Bank Gov. Riad Salameh is being investigated abroad over several financial crimes and the laundering of some \$330 million.