

Arab, Turkish foreign ministers call for urgent Gaza ceasefire during Canada visit

LONDON: A delegation of Arab and Turkish foreign ministers on Saturday reiterated the importance of an immediate ceasefire to return security and stability to the Gaza Strip during a visit to the Canadian capital. The delegation, headed by Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan, was received by Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in Ottawa, before beginning an official round of talks with Foreign Minister Melanie Joly, the Kingdom's Foreign Ministry said.

Yemen's Houthi militia threaten Israel-bound Red Sea ships

SANAA: Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels threatened on Saturday to attack any vessels heading to Israeli ports unless food and medicine were allowed into the besieged Gaza Strip.

The latest warning comes amid heightened tensions in the Red Sea and surrounding waters following a series of maritime attacks by Houthi rebels since the start of the Israel-Hamas war on October 7.

In a statement posted on social media, the Houthis said they "will prevent the passage of ships heading to the Zionist entity" if humanitarian aid is not allowed into Hamas-ruled Gaza.

'Bring them home': Israelis call for hostages' release

TEL AVIV: Hundreds of Israelis gathered in what has come to be known as Hostages Square in Tel Aviv on Saturday to call for the release of nearly 140 people still being held captive by Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

As speakers took to the stage, those in the crowd held placards bearing messages like "they trust us to get them out of hell," and "bring them home now."

Ruby Chen, the father of 19-year-old hostage Itai Chen, said from the podium: "We are asking the Israeli cabinet, the war cabinet, to explain what exactly is on the negotiating table."

Tunisia says it has intercepted 70,000 Italy-bound migrants in 2023

TUNIS: Close to 70,000 migrants were intercepted trying to cross the Mediterranean from Tunisia to Italy this year, more than double the 2022 figure, the Tunisian National Guard told AFP on Saturday.

Tunisia, alongside Libya, is the principal departure point for thousands of migrants hoping to reach Europe.

The number intercepted by Tunisian authorities was 69,963 for the first 11 months of 2023, compared to 31,297 in the same period last year, according to data from the National Guard.

Foreigners made up 78 percent, while the rest were Tunisians.

Lebanon border clashes intensify despite peace efforts

BEIRUT: Confrontations between Hezbollah militants and the Israeli army intensified on Saturday as talks continued in an effort to end the conflict on Lebanon's southern border.

The Supreme Islamic Council, which includes Sunni figures in Lebanon, expressed concern about Israeli targeting of villages, towns, and farms in southern areas of the country.

The council met in Dar Al-Fatwa, chaired by the Grand Mufti of Lebanon, Sheikh Abdul Latif Derian.