

## Five kidnapped Iraqis found dead as US accuses Iran

AFP, Baghdad

Iraqi forces have found five bullet-riddled bodies of government employees abducted two days ago as the top US military chief in Iraq accused Iran of fomenting terror in the war-torn country.

The bodies of the five industry ministry employees, believed to be Shiites, were found at Mishada, north of Baghdad and brought to Kadhimiyah hospital in the capital, an interior ministry official said Friday.

More than 60 employees of factories owned by the ministry were kidnapped Wednesday by masked gunmen as they were heading home after work at Taji, 30 kilometers north of Baghdad.

The kidnapers on Thursday released almost half of the hostages who were Sunnis, highlighting the crime's sectarian nature.

The remaining hostages are believed to be Shiites from Baghdad's Sadr City and the Shiite neighborhoods of Shu'ala and Hurriyah.



An Iraqi stands near the site where a suicide car bomb exploded in the southern city of Basra yesterday. At least 10 people were killed and 18 others wounded the attack, as authorities imposed a curfew in Baghdad from 2:00 pm (1000 GMT) Friday to 6:00 am (0200 GMT) Saturday to thwart any attacks in the capital on the Muslim day of prayers.

## 7 arrested in apparent terror plot in Chicago

AFP, Miami

The US Justice Department was expected Friday to provide details of an alleged plot to attack the Chicago Sears Tower skyscraper, in which at least seven people were arrested in Miami.

The arrests on Thursday by the FBI together with federal, state and local authorities were "part of an ongoing investigation into a terrorist-related matter," the US attorney's office in Miami said in a statement.

Media reports citing unnamed officials said seven people -- five US citizens and two foreigners, including a Haitian -- were arrested for plotting to attack the 110-story, 442-meter (1,450-foot) Sears Tower, the world's third tallest building, as well as other buildings in Miami.

Another person was arrested in Atlanta, Georgia, as well, according to television reports. ABC television said the group

had been infiltrated by a Federal Bureau of Investigation agent posing as an Islamic radical.

"The individuals arrested posed no immediate threat to our community," the US attorney statement said.

FBI director Robert Mueller told CNN television Thursday that operations were still under way.

"I can tell you that we do have an ongoing operation in Miami. We are conducting a number of arrests and searches, and we'll have more about that when the operation is concluded, probably (Friday) morning," Mueller said.

"Because it's an ongoing operation, I really can't get into details. But whenever we undertake an operation like this, we would not do it without the approval of a judge. We've got search warrants and arrest warrants and the like," Mueller said.

The Justice Department was planning to announce details of the

plot at a news conference later Friday. Law enforcement officials quoted Friday by The Washington Post said the plotting was in its early stages and that no weapons or explosives had been seized as of late Thursday from the searched locations.

The arrests took place in Liberty City, a poor neighborhood north of Miami, according to local and national media.

Residents said that the men who were arrested appeared to be part of a cult of at least a dozen people, sleeping in a warehouse, dressing in military-like clothing and doing exercises.

CNN late Wednesday interviewed a member of the organization in Liberty City.

Brother Cory, as the black man with dreadlocks called himself, said he belonged to "Seas of David," repeatedly denying it was a terrorist group or that it had any ties to Al-Qaeda.

## Hunt begins to find historic Mandela handgun

AFP, Johannesburg

A historian is leading a search for a handgun that Nelson Mandela buried at a farm outside Johannesburg before his arrest by apartheid police in 1962, the owner of the site said Friday.

Nicholas Wolpe, the founder of the Liliesleaf Trust -- named after the farm where Mandela and other African National Congress (ANC) stalwarts met regularly in the 1960s -- said the gun was of tremendous historical value.

"It was a gun he got from an Ethiopian colonel Biru Tadesa just before his military training there was cut short after he was called back," Wolpe told AFP.

The gunist thought to be a Makarov made in the former Soviet Union.

"It was probably one of the first pieces of hardware given to the ANC," he said. "That and the fact it was gifted to Mandela makes it very special."

## India, Pakistan fail to reach pact on water

IANS, Islamabad

Pakistani and Indian officials ended their two-day talks on Friday without reaching an agreement on the ongoing dispute over a barrage that India is constructing on the river Jhelum in the Kashmir region.

After the talks in Islamabad, India's Secretary Water J. Hari Narayan and his Pakistani counterpart Ashfaq Mehmood, however, described their meeting as "constructive".

The talks had provided a "better understanding of each other's view", a joint statement issued after the meeting said.

India started building the Wullar barrage in its part of Kashmir in 1984, drawing strong protest from Pakistan, which termed it a violation of the Indus Water Treaty they had signed in 1960 to resolve disputes over water-sharing.

The treaty allocates waters of three western rivers -- the Indus, Jhelum and Chenab -- to Pakistan while India has rights over three eastern rivers -- Ravi, Sutlej and Beas.

## Ahmadinejad's growing popularity after a year

AFP, Tehran

He may be viewed in the West as a pariah figure, but Iran's hardline President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad continues to enjoy a strong stature at home, analysts say.

In the year that has followed his shock election win last June, the austere hardliner has stood up to Western demands to limit his country's nuclear programme, called for Israel to be "wiped off the map" -- or moved as far away as Alaska -- and dismissed the Holocaust as a "myth".

But inside Iran, he has roused nationalist sentiment and pushed through a populist economic agenda -- and for the time being there appears to be no threat to his position as the Islamic regime's number-two behind supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

"In the provinces, everybody turns out for his appearances," an

Iranian political observer commented on the president's rock festival-style rallies across the country.

"The government's loans for marriages or rents represent a lot of money for the poorer classes in the countryside or small towns," said the analyst, who preferred not to be named.

"He's definitely been growing in confidence and stature," added an Iranian newspaper editor. "We don't have presidential approval ratings in Iran, but if we did, Ahmadinejad would certainly look very comfortable."

After winning the June 24, 2005 vote -- and trouncing the veteran moderate conservative cleric and favorite Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani -- Ahmadinejad promised a "new Islamic revolution".

"The era of oppression, hegemony, tyranny and injustice is ending," he declared, vowing "the wave of the Islamic revolution will

soon strike the whole world."

He has certainly had an impact on the nuclear case, he has positioned himself alongside other entrenched hardliners who resist international demands to halt uranium enrichment activity -- which Iran says it wants to use to make reactor fuel and not weapons.

In April, he announced that Iran had "joined the world's nuclear club" by managing to enrich uranium, and has since shrugged off any threat of US military action.

"The Iranian people are generally very supportive of the nuclear programme," said the newspaper editor, who also preferred not to be named.

"Ahmadinejad has been drumming up national pride, and this is working. Even many Iranians who are hostile to him are in favour of the nuclear programme -- and this means the regime is extremely confident in its hardline position."

## Taliban behead four Afghans accused of being US spies

AFP, Kandahar

Taliban militants beheaded four Afghans they accused of spying for the US military in southern Afghanistan, a local government official and the insurgent group said Friday.

The beheaded corpses of the men were found Thursday in Shajoy district of insurgency-hit Zabul province where the rebels launch almost daily attacks on US troops and government targets, the official said.

The men were kidnapped from their homes Tuesday, local administration spokesman Gulab Shah Alikhil said. Two were found in one village and two in another.

Purported Taliban spokesman Yousuf Ahmad told AFP via satellite telephone that the movement had killed the men because they were spying "for the US military and (Afghan President Hamid) Karzai's government."



Residents collect their belongings from the ruins of their house in Sinjai, South Sulawesi yesterday, four days after floods and landslides hit six districts. Indonesian rescue workers trawled through remote villages and scoured islands for bodies and survivors from floods and landslides in South Sulawesi as the death toll rose to 216.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Prime Minister's Office  
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Jiban Bima Tower (13 & 14<sup>th</sup> Floor)  
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No. Tender Notice No. 02/2006 Date: 23 May, 2006

### Sub: International Tender Notice for Sale of State Owned Enterprise

International tenders are hereby invited from local and foreign buyers (Individual, Company, Co-operative body, Employees' Association) for sale of the following state owned enterprise on as is where is basis:

Sl. No.	Name of the enterprise for sale	Brief information	Comments
1.	National Sugar Mills Ltd, Kishoreganj	The mills is situated 02 (two) kilometer away from the Kishoreganj Town. Saleable Land: More/less 32.41 acres. The mill is under control of ministry of industries and operated by Bangladesh Sugar & Food Industries Corporation. Land is the real asset of the organisation.	The land of the organisation has to be used only for establishing of industry.

**Terms and conditions:**

- As long term liabilities including restructured loan (where applicable) liabilities of the State Owned Enterprise, buyers will not have to assume any liability whatsoever;
- Tender has to be submitted now in accordance with the revised tender document. Intending buyers will have to submit tender in prescribed forms duly filled in along with all other required documents;
- A rebate of 20% on the total sale price (quoted price) will be granted if the buyer pays off the 75% of the sale price within 30 days of the issuing of Letter of Intent. Similarly, a rebate of 35% on the total sale price (quoted price) will be allowed if the buyer pays off the total amount of sale price at a time within 30 days of issuing of the Letter of Intent (LOI). An additional rebate of 5% on the total sale price that is a rebate of 40% of the quoted price will be granted as rebate if the buyer pays off the price at a time in freely convertible foreign currency;
- The buyer shall not use the land of the enterprise for the purpose of establishing real estates or constructing commercial or residential plots.
- After the publication of this tender notice, interested foreigners, Bangladeshi citizens living abroad, overseas commercial firms etc., willing to procure the tender forms may contact Bangladesh High Commissions/Embassies in London, Washington, Ottawa, Brussels, Kuala Lumpur, Riyadh, Abu Dhabi, Islamabad, New Delhi, Tokyo, Singapore, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain and Seoul and Consulate General at New York and Jeddah;
- Tender forms and other related papers can be procured from the Secretary, Privatisation Commission on all working days during office hours on cash payment of Tk. 5,000/- (Taka five thousand only) or US\$ 100 (one hundred) or £ 70 (seventy) only which is non-refundable;
- Tenders must be dropped in the tender boxes kept at the office of the Privatisation Commission, Jiban Bima Tower (14<sup>th</sup> Floor), 10, Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka-1000 and at the office of the Federation of Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Federation Bhaban, 60, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000 respectively;
- The tender documents and other related papers can be procured from the Secretary, Privatisation Commission on the above terms and mentioned above on or before July 09, 2006. The tender boxes will be closed at 12:00 noon on July 10, 2006 and will be opened at 12:30pm on the same day in the presence of tenderers (if any);
- Tenders found incomplete or otherwise faulty shall stand cancelled;
- The Privatisation Commission reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever; and
- Necessary information regarding this enterprise will be available at the Website of Privatisation Commission: www.pc.gov.bd.

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## Earth's temp at 400-year high

AP, Washington

The Earth is the hottest it has been in at least 400 years, probably even longer. The National Academy of Sciences, reaching that conclusion in a broad review of scientific work requested by Congress, reported Thursday that the "recent warmth is unprecedented for at least the last 400 years and potentially the last several millennia."

A panel of top climate scientists told lawmakers that the Earth is heating up and that "human activities are responsible for much of the recent warming." Their 155-page report said average global surface temperatures in the Northern Hemisphere rose about 1 degree during the 20th century.

This is shown in boreholes, retreating glaciers and other evidence found in nature, said Gerald North, a geosciences professor at Texas A&M University who chaired the academy's panel.

The report was requested in November by the chairman of the House Science Committee, Rep. Sherwood Boehlert, R-NY, to address naysayers who question whether global warming is a major

threat.

Last year, when the House Energy and Commerce Committee chairman, Rep. Joe Barton, R-Texas, launched an investigation of three climate scientists, Boehlert said Barton should try to learn from scientists, not intimidate them.

Boehlert said Thursday the report shows the value of having scientists advise Congress.

"There is nothing in this report that should raise any doubts about the broad scientific consensus on global climate change," he said.

Other research Thursday showed that global warming produced about half of the extra hurricane-fueled warmth in the North Atlantic in 2005, and natural cycles were a minor factor, according to Kevin Trenberth and Dennis Shea of the Commerce Department's National Center for Atmospheric Research. Their study is being published by the American Geophysical Union.

The Bush administration has maintained that the threat is not severe enough to warrant new pollution controls that the White House says would have cost 5 million Americans their jobs.

## Sonic booms cause panic in Sri Lanka's capital

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's capital Colombo was thrown into panic Friday after sonic booms caused by jet fighters were mistaken for bomb blasts off the coast, the military and police said.

Defence Ministry spokesman Prasad Samarasinghe said Israeli-built Kfir jets were on a training mission and may have broken the sound barrier causing people on the ground to hear loud blasts.

"The jets were on a training mission going from the north of Colombo to the south," Samarasinghe said, adding that booms had been heard in several places.

"In the wake of threats posed by Tamil Tiger terrorists, many civilians in the coastal areas panicked and gathered on coastal areas," the defence ministry said in a statement.

With radio stations broadcasting reports of explosions, mobile phone networks were jammed with people calling each other in a frenzy.

## Search for survivors in Indonesia

AFP, Jakarta

Indonesian rescue workers Friday trawled through remote villages and scoured islands for bodies and survivors from floods and landslides in South Sulawesi as the death toll rose to 216.

The disaster hit Tuesday after heavy rains lashed six districts across the province earlier in the week, and workers have been struggling to search for bodies and survivors since, hindered by landslides and the remote location.

The death toll in worst-hit Sinjai district stood at 196, while 60 people were still missing, said Eki Basuki, an official at the local disaster relief center.

The state Antara news agency said 20 more people died in five other districts, lifting the toll across the province to over 200.

The UN children's agency UNICEF said that one-third of the victims were children. It also said in a press statement that 7,500 people had been left homeless.

The agency also said it was airlifting emergency supplies of hygiene equipment and water

containers to the affected areas.

Workers meanwhile were also airlifted into mountainous villages in the damaged areas in a desperate effort to uncover more bodies, said Ibrahim, another relief official in Sinjai.

"The search and rescue team arrived in Sinjai Borong Thursday but communication is difficult so we don't know if there are more victims," he told AFP.

The airforce had dropped emergency food and medicine supplies, but little was known about the condition of the survivors in the mountains as mudslides had blocked road access to the region, he said.

Navy teams were still hopeful they could recover more bodies and were combing the sea around the Pulau Sembilan islands off the coast of Sinjai, as well as the Sinjai coast, said Ibrahim.

"The navy is still looking along the coast from Sinjai until Bone, but they haven't found anything this morning," he said.

Iswan, another official in Sinjai district, said rescue workers were searching into the night.



East Timorese President Xanana Gusmao (C) stands with the protesters in Dili yesterday. Thousands of East Timorese rallied to demand the resignation of their prime minister, as supporters of Xanana urged him not to follow through on a threat to step down. Xanana, revered as a national hero after leading East Timor's guerrilla resistance against Indonesia for most of its 24-year occupation, threatened to resign unless Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri did instead.

## Thousands in East Timor demand PM's ouster

AFP, Dili

Thousands of East Timorese rallied Friday to demand the resignation of their prime minister, as supporters of President Xanana Gusmao urged him not to follow through on a threat to step down.

Gusmao, revered as a national hero after leading East Timor's guerrilla resistance against Indonesia for most of its 24-year occupation, threatened Thursday to resign unless Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri did instead.

The president wants Alkatiri to take responsibility for the crisis that enveloped East Timor last month when rival security forces battled on the streets and gangs rampaged, leading to at least 21 deaths.

More than 2,000 foreign peacekeepers were called in to restore calm but East Timor's political leaders have failed to agree on how to move forward, and the embattled Alkatiri -- whose sacking of 600 soldiers touched off the violence -- has refused demands to step down. In the late afternoon, about

2,000 protesters reconverged outside the government palace.

Some cruised Dili's streets in trucks urging people to join the protest.

Catholic nuns on a jeep with Gusmao's poster taped to the windshield passed by to show support, while rock music blared from two huge speakers on a makeshift stage outside the palace.

"The president should not step down," said one of the protest organisers, Agosto Junio. "Mari Alkatiri is the one to blame for the trouble. He is a communist, a criminal."

"We want to take back the people's parliament," Junio added.

One protestor among the crowd, many of whom were singing and dancing, carried a banner proclaiming: "We are ready to die in this place if Xanana resigns!"