

Bomb blast in bus kills 32 in Philippines

OSAMIS, Philippines, Feb 25: At least 32 people were killed and scores injured when a bomb exploded today in a bus traveling on a ferry in the southern Philippines, officials and witnesses said, reports AP.

Bus driver Mario Labour said the bomb, which was planted four seats behind him, exploded as the ferry was about 20 meters from the pier at Ozamis port.

At least 50 badly burned victims were taken to various hospitals, said Morpheus Agot, a member of the Misamis Occidental provincial board.

A Catholic church-run radio station, DXDD, quoted an amateur radio operator as reporting that a second bomb exploded in another bus owned by the same

company in Rizal town in nearby Zamboanga deal Norte province, injuring an undetermined number of passengers.

Provincial police officials could not immediately be reached to confirm the report.

Witnesses on the pier said passengers on the ferry, which carried about 20 vehicles, jumped into the sea in panic after the blast.

The explosion triggered a fire, which firefighters extinguished after the skipper of the ferry managed to dock the vessel. The ferry and seven vehicles were damaged, witnesses said.

Earlier Mayor Benjamin Fuentes said 16 people — 13 adults and three children

— died of serious burns.

Local officials appealed over radio stations for help from burn specialists since the city had none. They also asked for help from the military to airlift some of the burn victims to larger cities.

The bus, owned by the Super Five Express bus company, originated in Cagayan de Oro city in Misamis Occidental province. It picked up passengers along the way to Kolumbo town in nearby Lanao deal Norte province, where it boarded the ferry to cross Pangul Bay to Ozamis, about 770 kilometers south of Manila.

No group immediately claimed responsibility for the bombing.

'Religious riots complicate democratisation in Nigeria'

WASHINGTON, Feb 25: Recent religious rioting in northern Nigeria is complicating the West African nation's transition to democracy, US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said yesterday, reports AFP.

Albright said she and Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo had spoken in the past of the havoc ethnic and religious violence could wreak on reforms and that the United States supported his approach to dealing with it.

"We continue to be very concerned about what is going on and believe that this kind of violence is counter to what President Obasanjo needs to do in order to be able to take his country through this important transition," Albright told reporters.

We are talking to the Nigerians and hope very much that he (Obasanjo) is going to be able to get control of it because it certainly is the kind of conflict that complicates his work," she said.

"We support his overall approach to how he is dealing with the very serious problems in Nigeria."

She noted that the situation in the northern town of Kaduna, where hundreds of bodies were being collected Thursday following this week's three days of riots, had calmed somewhat.

The riots erupted Monday during a demonstration by tens of thousands of Christians against demands by local Muslims for the imposition of Islamic Sharia law in the state.

Vajpayee's allies leading in state elections

NEW DELHI, Feb 25: Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's governing coalition Friday appeared cruising toward major victories in two key Indian states at the expense of main opposition Congress party, reports AP.

Staggered voting for the elections in Bihar, Orissa, Haryana and Manipur states was held over the past one week. The state elections are being seen as the first major test for Prime Minister Vajpayee's right-wing coalition since it was voted to power five months ago.

The most spectacular gain for Vajpayee's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the regional ally, the Biju Janata Dal, appeared to be in the east-

ern Orissa state where the combine appeared poised to oust the governing Congress party.

Voters appeared to have dumped the Congress party due to anger over poor relief work during a cyclone last year that killed more than 9,500 people and left millions of poor villagers homeless.

The BJP and BJD were leading in 49 of 80 voting districts from where voting trends were available, according to Star Television network. The governing Congress party was ahead in only 18 districts.

In Haryana, which adjoins New Delhi state, the BJP's ally, the Indian National Lok Dal, was heading toward a victory on its own. The INLD and the BJP were leading in 51 of 82

voting districts. The Congress party was trailing in the third position.

The BJP and the INLD will thus be retaining power in Haryana state.

Political rivals faced a keen battle in eastern Bihar state where trends were available in 70 of the 324 voting districts.

The BJP and its allies were leading in 29 voting districts, governing Rashtriya Janata Dal in 17 and the Congress party in seven districts.

The outcome in Bihar state will decide the political future of Laloo Prasad Yadav, whose RJD has been in power for nearly 10 years in the state.

The state is widely considered to be the most lawless in India.

BRIEFLY

Woman executed in Texas: A 62-year-old woman was executed by injection after Gov George W Bush rejected her claim that she killed her fifth husband in self-defense and deserved a reprieve. AP reports from Huntsville.

On Thursday, Betty Lou Beets became the fourth woman to be executed in the United States since the Supreme Court in 1976 allowed the death penalty to resume. She was also the second woman executed in Texas since the Civil War ended in 1865. She gave no final statement as she lay strapped to the death chamber gurney. She made no eye contact with the victim's family, but smiled at relatives on her side.

Accident claims 9 in Vietnam: Eleven people were killed and nine others were seriously injured when a truck crashed head-on into an overloaded minibus in the southern central coastal province of Khanh Hoa, a local police officer said Friday. AP reports from Hanoi.

All of the dead and eight of the injured were in the minibus, while the truck driver also survived the accident Wednesday afternoon, officer Pham Minh Lam said.

2 militants executed in Egypt: Egypt has executed two Muslim extremists who had been convicted of insurgency and extradited from Albania, security officials said Thursday. AP reports from Cairo.

Ahmed el-Sayed Ibrahim el-Naggar and Ahmed Ismail Osman el-Saleh were executed in a Cairo prison Wednesday, the officials said, speaking on condition of anonymity. El-Naggar and el-Saleh belonged to the militant Jihad group.

Vietnam to free 12000 prisoners: Vietnam's President Tran Duc Luong has approved a directive that could free up to 12,000 prisoners on the anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War in April and on Independence Day in September. Reuters reports from Hanoi.

Friday's Lao Dong (Labour) newspaper said Luong signed the decision on Wednesday and prisoners would be released or have their sentences reduced on Victory Day on April 30 and National Independence Day on September 2. It was unclear if any dissidents would benefit from the amnesty. Officials were not available for comment.

Smugglers kill 2 in Italy: Cigarette smuggles making a getaway at a southern Italian port rammed their sports utility vehicle into customs officers' car, killing two officers and seriously injuring two others, AP reports from Rome.

The deaths on Thursday were Italy's sixth and seventh over the past year in collisions with smugglers at the wheel. Dozens have been injured. In August, two newlyweds were killed when an armored van fleeing police knocked them off their motor bike.

Strike cripples Kashmir

SRINAGAR, India, Feb 25: A protest strike by Muslim separatists against alleged state-sponsored terrorism crippled the troubled Indian state of Kashmir today, reports AFP.

Shops, banks, offices and government institutions were closed and civilian traffic stayed off the roads in Srinagar, the summer capital of the state, as well as the rest of the Muslim-majority Kashmir Valley.

The strike was called by the Freedom Conference, an amalgam of Cashmere Muslim separatist groups and political parties to protest against an alleged increase in extra-judicial killings by Indian troops.

Pilot error caused crash of Kennedy Jr's plane

WASHINGTON, Feb 25: Federal investigators have concluded that July 16 plane crash that killed John F Kennedy Jr, his wife, Carolyn Bessette Kennedy, and her sister was caused by pilot error on his part, Fox News Channel reported on Thursday, reports Reuters.

Fox quoted sources close to the investigation as saying that no mechanical problems had been found with the single-engine plane Kennedy was flying, and investigators now believed the crash was caused by his inexperience as a pilot.

The National Transportation Safety Board is investigating the crashing which Kennedy's Piper Saratoga-II plunged into the Atlantic Ocean off Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, killing all three people aboard, but has not released any findings thus far.

Cuba won't pull targeted diplomat back from US

HAVANA, Feb 25: Marking an important date in Cuba's independence fight, a senior communist official defiantly declared that a Washington-based diplomat targeted for expulsion will remain in the United States as long as possible, reports AP.

Despite US allegations of spying, the diplomat, Jose Imperatori, has done nothing wrong, Ricardo Alarcon, the president of Cuba's National Assembly, said Thursday.

"He will remain," said Alarcon, who is President Fidel Castro's top official on Cuba-US affairs. "We have not pulled him back and we are not going to pull him back."

Alarcon challenged US State Department officials to "pre-

sent their alleged proof" and to "not fear debate" on the matter.

"They have the chance to rectify and ask for forgiveness," Alarcon said.

In Washington, US Immigration and Naturalisation Service spokeswoman Maria Cardona said that, if the diplomat has not left the United States by 1:30 PM EST Saturday, "the appropriate agencies will take appropriate action as necessary."

She would not say what that action might be.

State Department officials said earlier that Imperatori's diplomatic immunity could be terminated if he was not recalled, making him subject to US law and possible arrest.

Philippine volcano in lull but danger of blasts remain

LEGAZPI, Philippines, Feb 25: A day after unleashing 14 blasts that shook nearby towns, the Philippines' Mayon volcano appeared to have fallen quiet today, but scientists warned the danger of fierce eruptions remained, reports Reuters.

About 30,000 villagers have fled their homes on the slopes on Mayon after the volcano erupted on Thursday, hurling rocks and clouds of ash 10 km into the sky, blotting out the sun and darkening towns.

"One day of relative quiet is not an assurance that the danger is over," volcanologist Ed Laguerta told Reuters.

"It does not mean the volcano is quieting down. There can be more explosive eruptions, bigger or smaller."

Major Indonesian military reshuffle in the offing

JAKARTA, Feb 25: The Indonesian military is planning a major reshuffle involving at least 44 senior officers, but the changes have yet to be approved at the highest levels, a senior officer was quoted as saying today, reports AFP.

There is a sort of tug-of-war going on in the army over who gets what, Lieutenant General Saadi Marasabesy, the army chief of general affairs, said.

Marasabesy, speaking to reporters at the armed forces headquarters in the city of Cilangkap in East Java, declined to speculate on a date when the changes would be announced.

He said that what was certain was that the head of the powerful Army Strategic Re-

serve Command (Kostrad) would be replaced, the Jakarta Post reported.

The commanders of Central Java, the riot-torn Maluku Islands and remote Irian Jaya province would also be changed, he said, but insisted the reshuffle was "nothing to do with anything political."

Consulting President Abdurrahman Wahid, as supreme commander of the armed forces, was imperative before the changes were finalised, he said.

AP adds: Indonesia's frail President Abdurrahman Wahid missed work today for the second day in a row, aides said.

"He was ordered to stay in his room by the doctors," said one palace official.



India's "Bandit Queen" turned parliamentarian Phoolan Devi (R) shouts anti-BJP slogans as she sits with other MPs in the main entrance of the federal parliament in New Delhi Friday to protest an alleged rise in police atrocities in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh. Devi, a lower-caste Hindu woman, became one of the country's most-wanted outlaws after she was gang-raped by higher-caste Hindus whom she later killed in reprisal. — AFP photo

All parties must disarm says Sinn Fein leader

WASHINGTON, Feb 25: Sinn Fein leader Martin McGuinness said Thursday any successful disarmament process in Northern Ireland must include all parties to the conflict, including Unionists who, he contended, have upwards of 150,000 weapons at their disposal, reports AP.

McGuinness expressed irritation at a news conference that the Irish Republican Army (IRA) is often cited as the cause for recent setbacks to the peace process because it had not begun turning in its weapons.

He said the 1998 Good Friday Accords, which establish the basis for peace in the province, assert that it is the "collective responsibility" of all partici-

pants to work cooperatively to achieve decommissioning, or disarmament.

"People think that the only guns that are causing problems are the guns of the IRA," he said.

"We in Sinn Fein also have concerns about guns," he said, referring to the weapons held by the Unionists and the British troops deployed in the province.

McGuinness served as education secretary of the local government in Northern Ireland that was suspended by the British future prospects for the province. In his appearance, he used such phrases as "deep crisis," "dire straits," and "huge gulf of mistrust" to describe the situation.



Activists from "Citizens in Defence of Democracy" scuffle with police during a demonstration near parliament Friday to protest against extremist Hindu organisations such as the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS-national volunteer corps) that are allegedly causing a polarisation of Indian culture and communities. The RSS has close links with the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). — AFP photo

Bangladesh Power Development Board
 রাত ১১টা থেকে ভোর ৬টার মধ্যে স্টে পাসপ চালান

Invitation of Local Tender

1. Local sealed tenders are invited by BPDB Project Director, 18-Towns Power Distribution Project from renowned manufacturers/agents for the procurement of equipments for 18-Towns Power Distribution Project, as detailed below: The said procurement has the approval from the Board.

SL	Tender Enquiry No & date	Description of equipment/materials	Quantity	Cost of tender document	Tender receiving and opening date
1	PUR-Cox/PD-187/2000 Dt 22.02.2000	a. Good quality latest model window type air cooler, capacity 1.5 ton, made in Japan/USA. b. Good quality latest model colour television (20" size), made in Japan	4 Nos 2 Nos	Tk 200/-	15.03.2000
2	PUR-CZ/PD-187/2000 Dt 22.02.2000	a. Good quality latest model Photocopier machine, made in Japan	1 No	100/-	15.03.2000

2. A complete set of tender documents may be purchased by interested bidders from on submission of written application to the undersigned and upon payment of non-refundable fee of taka as mentioned in column-5 above against the tender in the shape of Bank Draft/Pay Order in favour of Project Director, 18-Towns Power Distribution Project, PDB, Dhaka.

3. A bid bond equivalent to 2.5% of the offered price shall be submitted with tender.

4. Tender will be received in the office of the undersigned upto 11.00 AM and will be opened at 11.15 AM in the prescribed date as mentioned in column-6 above in presence of the intending bidders or their representatives, if any. Tender shall neither be sent by post nor it will be sold on the opening day. Offer send by Post/Telex/DHL/Fax will neither be received nor it will be accepted.

5. Due to unavoidable circumstances selling & receiving date shall be shifted to immediate next working day.

Biddul/Jana-1442(5)/99-2000
 GD-174

Project Director
 18-Towns Power Distribution Project
 PDB, Dhaka

Directorate General Defence Purchase
 Ministry of Defence
 New Airport Road, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1215

Re-Tender Notice

1. Sealed tenders in foreign currency are invited from bonafide manufacturers/dealers/suppliers/indentors (enlisted firms in DGDP) for supply of the following items for Bangladesh Navy.

Sl No	Name of items & qty	Date of selling		Date of opening	Currency	Tender no.
		From	To			
1	Spares for Decompression Chamber(Qty-13 L/I)	05.03.2000	30.03.2000	02.04.2000	F/C	6341/NP-2
2	Spares for Upper Deck DG (Qty-58 L/I)	05.03.2000	30.03.2000	02.04.2000	F/C	6342/NP-2
3	Spares for Diesel Generator (Qty-120 L/I)	05.03.2000	30.03.2000	02.04.2000	F/C	6343/NP-2
4	Spares for Caterpillar Main Engine (Qty-63 L/I)	05.03.2000	30.03.2000	02.04.2000	F/C	6344/NP-2
5	Various sizes of Rope Manila (Qty-30 Coil)	05.03.2000	30.03.2000	02.04.2000	F/C	6346/NP-3
6	Spares for Diesel Generator (Qty-12 L/I)	05.03.2000	30.03.2000	02.04.2000	F/C	6347/NP-2
7	Spares for Ruston Diesel Engine (Qty-281 L/I)	05.03.2000	30.03.2000	02.04.2000	F/C	6349/NP-2

2. Tender schedule with detailed specifications/conditions will be available on payment as per I/T selling rate (not refundable) during office hours between 0800 hours to 1300 hours. The tender can be dropped latest by 1000 hrs and opened at 1005 hours on the specified date of opening in the presence of tenderers (if present).

ISPR/Misc/2000/160
 DFP-3842-20/2
 G-331

Lt Commander BN
 for Director General.

Bangladesh Power Development Board
 রাত ১১টা থেকে ভোর ৬টার মধ্যে স্টে পাসপ চালান

Invitation for Bids

1. The People's Republic of Bangladesh has allocated a cash foreign exchange for the rehabilitation of SCADA of BPDB at Chittagong.

2. The Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) now invites sealed bids from eligible international bidders for complete design, engineering, manufacturing, supply, delivery of the site, construction, erection, testing and commissioning on turn-key basis for the Rehabilitation of SCADA of BPDB at Chittagong.

3. All works under turn-key contract shall be completed with a time period of 14 (fourteen) months from the date of signing of contract.

4. Interested bidders may obtain further information from the office of the Director of Purchase, Bangladesh Power Development Board, 9th floor, WAPDA Building, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

5. A complete set of tender documents will be available for purchase by any intending bidder with effect from February 27, 2000 on the submission of a written application to the Director, Purchase, BPDB, WAPDA Building (9th floor), Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Tk. 10,000.00 (Taka ten thousand) only in the form of Pay Order/Demand Draft favouring the Director, Purchase, BPDB, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh.

6. Interested bidders should visit the above SCADA and sub stations site. The bidders are requested to contact the Superintendent Engineer (C&M) Circle, Chittagong Metro (East) at Biddul/Bhaban (3rd floor), Agrabad C/A, Chittagong for obtaining the necessary permission to visit the above-mentioned sites.

7. A two-stage bidding procedure will be followed:
 (a) The first stage bid will consist of Technical Bid including data sheet, catalogue and all information as required without any reference to prices.
 (b) The second stage bid shall be submitted in one envelope and shall consist of Financial Bid.

8. The Financial Bid will be invited from the technically responsive bidders.

9. All first stage Technical Bids must be delivered to the Director, Purchase, Bangladesh Power Development Board, WAPDA Building (9th floor), Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh not later than 11.00 AM local time on the day of April 10, 2000 and will be opened immediately thereafter in presence of the bidders' representatives, if any.

10. Second-stage bids in one envelope shall be received in the above office at the date and time to be announced when second stage bids are invited from the technically qualified bidders.

11. All first stage bids must be accompanied by bid security equivalent to US\$ 10,000 (US dollar ten thousand) only in the form of an irrevocable and unconditional Bank Guarantee issued in favour of "BPDB" by a scheduled bank in Bangladesh or a foreign bank duly endorsed/authenticated by a scheduled bank in Bangladesh.

12. Bidders may discuss with the SEOM Metro (East), Chittagong for clarification if any.

13. Tender shall neither be sent by post nor it will be sold on the opening day. Offer send by Post/Telex/DHL/Fax will neither be received nor it will be accepted.

Biddul/Jana-1444 (5)/99-2000
 GD-175

Director, Purchase
 Bangladesh Power Development Board.

Government of Bangladesh
 Office of the Executive Engineer
 PWD E/M Division No-IV, Dhaka

Memo No -1423 Dated: 13/2/2000

Notice Inviting Tender No-70 (1999-2000)

Sealed cover tenders are invited in Bangladesh Form No. 2911 for the above-mentioned work from the enlisted PWD 1st class (combined), class-I (E/M) and class-II (E/M) contractors having valid 'A' 'B' 'C' / 'B' 'C' classes of "Contractary" & "Supervisory" licenses. Tender will be received in the tender box kept at the office of the Executive Engineer, PWD E/M Division No-IV/V/VI, PWD Eden Bldg Division, Dhaka on 8/3/2000 up to 12.00 Noon and the tenders will be opened on the same date on 12.30 PM in presence of the bidders who may like to remain present. Earnest money @ 2% (two per cent) of the total estimated cost is to be furnished along with the tenders in the form of CD/B/PO/SDR from any scheduled bank of Bangladesh in favour of the Executive Engineer, PWD E/M Division No-IV, Dhaka.

Name of work : Replacement & renovation of old, unserviceable electric fitting, fixture wiring etc. in 2-storied no. 20 Kotwali Hostel Bldg. at Tati Bazar, Sir Salimullah Medical College, Dhaka (1999-2000).

Estimated cost : Tk. 1,38,982/-
 Earnest money : Tk. 2,780/-
 Time allowed for completion : 20 (twenty) days.

Tender form, schedule, terms & conditions etc. can be purchased from the office of the Executive Engineer, PWD E/M Division No-IV/V/VI & PWD Eden Bldg Division, Dhaka during office hours on cash payment of usual charges (non-refundable) up to 7/3/2000 last. Tender form can be purchased by contractors or his/their authorised representative by showing necessary documents.

The competent authority reserves the right to accept or reject or all the offers without assigning any reason thereof.

Apurba Kumar Roy
 Executive Engineer
 PWD E/M Division-IV, Dhaka
 Tel-9333865

DFP-3690-17/2
 G-336