



PHOTO: AFP
Indian army soldiers rescue villagers using a metal boat in the village of Dhamtola, Nalbari District, some 70km northwest of Guwahati yesterday. The flood death toll in northeast India has risen to 96 as six more people died overnight.

'Iraq's daily death toll much higher than reported'

AFP, Baghdad

No one knows how many Iraqi civilians die every day in the attacks and military errors, which have scarred the country since the US-led invasion last year. Rough tolls have been compiled, but experts say the real figure is likely much higher.

The only way to establish the full extent of casualties is an official commission on civilian deaths, with a clear, published method of working and external verification of the work by an appropriate body independent of the United States or Britain," said John Slobodan, one of the founders of the website www.iraqbodycount.net.

Based on international press reports, Iraqbodycount regularly updates its figures for the number of civilians killed since the war started on March 19, 2003.

Its death toll as of Sunday was between 11,164 and 13,118 people.

The fundamental instability of the country is one of the main reason why it is almost impossible to record every violent death.

Figures produced by the US-led military forces and the Iraqi authorities rarely match up and are often

imprecise.

Last Tuesday, an Iraqi motorist, due to be married in two days, was shot dead by US troops as he overtook a military convoy on his way to the hotel where his wedding was to take place, police and relatives said.

His death was well documented by the many journalists who happened to be staying at the hotel, but what about the minor unrest that happened elsewhere?

"There are families who will bury directly their own dead, especially in hot weather," said Slobodan, adding: "Who will know about that?"

A university professor from Keele in Britain, Slobodan has studied the impact on civilians of Nato's military campaign in the former Yugoslavia and said that badly mangled bodies are rarely taken to hospitals and are therefore not included in hospital death tolls.

In Iraq, "from April 2003 to April 2004 there's no official figure" of the number of people who have died, he said.

But the ministry of health started to collect casualty data from hospitals across Iraq since April.

"We do have information on them (the civilians killed)," Health

Minister Alaaddin Alwan told AFP.

According to these statistics, some 400 Iraqis were killed and 1,600 injured in the escalating violence during June alone, in the build-up to the handover of power by the US-led coalition to an interim Iraqi government.

But independent experts argue that even these official numbers are too low.

"There is such a chaotic situation in the hospitals that you can never be sure," said Raed Jarrar, who heads the Campaign for Innocent Victims of Conflict in Iraq.

"For example during the clashes in Nassiriyah and Najaf some people were taken to small hospitals which do not document the deaths," he said.

"Neither the Iraqi government nor the American forces are interested in getting the exact figures. It's politically against their interests."

Based in the United States, his non-governmental organisation had begun a door-to-door investigation to count the number of civilians killed in Iraq but stopped in the hope that the task could be resumed on a larger scale.

The fencing issue comes in the wake of fears expressed by Bhutanese villagers residing on the border with Assam about separatists trying to enter the kingdom once again.

Assam floods leave millions homeless 40 drown as boat sinks

REUTERS, AFP, Guwahati

At least 40 people packed into a wooden boat drowned in northeastern India after torrential annual rains and swollen rivers set off floods that have left millions homeless, officials said yesterday.

The villagers, including many women and children, were trying to escape to higher ground in the state of Assam on Saturday night when their boat capsized. There were no survivors, a police official said.

All rivers in tea and oil-rich Assam, including the main Brahmaputra, are overflowing after incessant rains in the past week.

"More than two million people have become homeless because of floods," Assam Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi told Reuters.

Military helicopters and soldiers in motor boats were trying to rescue thousands of people marooned across the state, he said.

Floods in Assam caused by heavy rains that lash the state for about seven months from April to October

bring death and destruction each year.

A breach in a dam in Tisat lake in the neighbouring nation of Bhutan had swollen the floods in Assam, a flood control official said.

Flood waters have inundated highways and railway tracks and washed away several bridges in western Assam, said SR Islam, a senior flood control official.

AFP adds: The death toll from floods swamping large portions of northeastern India rose to 96 yesterday as six more people died overnight, officials said.

"Two paramilitary soldiers were drowned in Arunachal Pradesh and four civilians died in two separate incidents of boats capsizing in Assam," a police spokesman said.

Due to incessant rains, the mighty Brahmaputra river continued to cut a swathe through Assam and Arunachal Pradesh displacing up to 2.6 million people.

The situation deteriorated after a dam burst was reported in neighbouring Bhutan.

It was caused by a charge which

Sharon blames Tel Aviv attack on ICJ ruling

Blasts kill 1 in Israel, 4 Palestinians in Gaza

AFP, Tel Aviv

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon pointed the finger yesterday at a world court ruling against his government's West Bank barrier after Palestinian militants carried out their first deadly attack inside Israel in months.

Police and medical services said one woman was killed and 20 people wounded when a bomb placed next to a bus stop in the commercial capital exploded at the start of the morning rush hour on the first day of the working week.

"One woman was killed and we have around 20 people injured," a spokesman for Tel Aviv police told AFP. The fatality was declared dead on arrival at hospital.

Tel Aviv police chief Yossi Setbon said that a device had been concealed in shrubbery.

"It was caused by a charge which

had been placed close to a bus stop, in the middle of bushes," he told reporters at the scene of the explosion. "A bus and nearby buildings were damaged."

The windows of a bus near the stop were blown in by the force of the blast.

Police and firefighters, using sniffer dogs, were searching the area for any other bombs and methodically gathering bolts and screws, which had been packed into the device.

The Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade, a militant group linked to Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's mainstream Fatah movement, swiftly claimed responsibility for the attack in a telephone call to AFP.

A spokesman who declined to give his name said it was carried out to avenge crimes committed by Israeli forces in the West Bank town of Nablus and in the Gaza Strip.

Sharon's government has argued that the recent fall in attacks by Palestinians in Israel is a direct result of the barrier, about a third of which has been built so far.

Meanwhile, four Palestinian militants were killed Saturday as a car exploded near the Jewish settlement of Netzarim in the central Gaza Strip, Palestinian sources said.

Security sources named three armed men killed when their car blew up as Hassan Abu Dalal, Mohammed Abu Zur and Mahmud Abu Namus, all aged around 20.

Five killed in Afghan blast

AFP, Heart

At least five people were killed and 21 others injured yesterday when a bomb ripped through a shopping street in the western city of Herat in the latest attack in a wave of pre-election violence in Afghanistan, a local official told AFP.

The attack comes days after Afghanistan set an October date for presidential polls and coincides with the launch of a disarmament programme in the prosperous city, which is controlled by anti-Taliban fighters and warlord governor Ismail Khan.

The explosion occurred at 9:30 am (0500 GMT) in front of the local police station in the Charsu area of the provincial capital some 625 kilometers (390 miles) west of Kabul, police chief Ziauddin Muhammadi told AFP.

"The time bomb which was placed in a rubbish bin exploded and, martyred, five and injured 21," Muhammadi said.

The bomb was placed in front of shops, the second floor of which is the local police station, in the midst of a crowded area.

"One police officer was also among the 21 injured," the police chief said.

United Nations spokesman Manoel de Almeida e Silva confirmed the blast had taken place and said it happened around five kilometers away from the disarmament ceremony which was being attended by high-ranking provincial officials and US-led coalition representatives.



PHOTO: AFP
Demonstrators calling for the release of Angelo de la Cruz, a Filipino hostage held by militants in Iraq, rally near the Malacanang presidential palace in Manila yesterday. They were denouncing Philippine President Gloria Arroyo, a staunch US supporter, for deploying Filipino soldiers in Iraq.



PHOTO: AFP
Hundreds of HIV and AIDS patients and activists hold banners to demonstrate for better and cheaper treatment outside the conference hall where the 6-day long 15th International AIDS Conference is being held in Bangkok, Thailand is hosting the 15th International AIDS Conference in Bangkok, which is an opportunity for the kingdom to showcase a developing nation's model battle against AIDS.

FALSE CIA CLAIM ON IRAQI WMD 'Damning Senate report won't alter US strategy'

AP, Washington

Now that a Senate committee has concluded the CIA falsely claimed Iraq had weapons of mass destruction, expect more caution on Capitol Hill the next time a president seeks approval for pre-emptive military action. But don't expect America to strike only after an attack.

Even the harshest critics of the Bush administration's policy of pre-emption say the United States must act in the face of a clear threat.

What is a clear threat? Can the public trust what US intelligence says about that threat?

"Iraq was the first case of pre-emptive war by the United States, and we have learned an important lesson that pre-emptive war depends on good, actionable intelligence," said Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif.

"In this case, the intelligence was

both bad and wrong," said Feinstein, a member of the Senate Intelligence Committee, which just released its report on pre-war intelligence about Iraq.

Months before the Iraq invasion in March 2003, the White House published a "national security strategy." It abandoned the Cold War reliance on deterring potential enemies with overwhelming military strength and nuclear weapons.

The Sept. 11 attacks showed that America cannot rely on deterrence and must at times strike to prevent attacks, Bush reasoned.

The public version of the document left unstated the implied threat of using nuclear weapons to strike first against weapons of mass destruction.

"The United States can no longer solely rely on a reactive posture as we have in the past," Bush wrote. "We cannot let our enemies strike first."

President's party wins Lankan local polls

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga's leftist coalition swept key local council elections which were marked by an unusually low turnout, officials here said yesterday.

Kumaratunga's Marxist-backed United Freedom Alliance won comfortably in all but one district that went to the polls Saturday, election officials said as final results were tallied.

They said only about half of the 9.6 million electorate had turned out to vote, making it one of the lowest polling elections in recent years.

Kumaratunga herself stayed away from voting because she was "indisposed," a spokesman for her office said.

The ballot was the second local election since the April 2 parliamentary vote, which was called four years ahead of schedule to settle a power struggle between Kumaratunga and her rival, then-prime minister Ranil Wickremesinghe.

সাধারণ বীমা কর্পোরেশন

সম্পত্তি সংরক্ষণ বিভাগ

প্রধান কার্যালয়

৩৩, দিলকুশা বা/এ, ঢাকা - ১০০০।

জমি বিক্রির পুনঃ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

সাধারণ বীমা কর্পোরেশনের প্রাচীর বেষ্টিত নিম্ন তফসিল বর্ণিত একবিংশ উচ্চ জমি বিক্রি করা হচ্ছে।

আগস্ট ১৭/৭/২০০৪ ইং মোতাবেক ২ শ্রাবন ১৪১১ বাংলা তারিখ হইতে ৩১/৭/২০০৪ ইং মোতাবেক ১৬ শ্রাবন ১৪১১ বাংলা অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে (সাদা কাগজে/প্রতিটানের প্যাডে আবেদন সাপেক্ষে) নিম্ন আক্ষরিকারীর দণ্ডের থেকে টাকা ৫০০.০০ (অফেরত যোগ্য) অদান করিয়া সংশ্লিষ্ট টেক্সার ডকুমেন্ট সংগ্রহ করা যাইবে।

আগস্ট ০১/৮/২০০৪ ইং মোতাবেক ১৭ শ্রাবন ১৪১১ বাংলা দুপুর ১২:০০ পর্যন্ত নিম্ন আক্ষরিকারী কর্তৃক উচ্চ টেক্সার ডকুমেন্ট গ্রহণ করা হইবে এবং এই দিনই উপস্থিতি দরদাতাদের সম্মুখে (যদি কেবল উপস্থিতি থাকেন) দুপুর ১২:৩০ মিঃ থোলা হইবে।

অত্র কর্পোরেশন সর্বোচ্চ দরদাতাদের দরপত্র গ্রহণে বাধ্য থাকিবে না এবং কোন কারণ দর্শনে ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন বা সকল দরপত্র বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

তফসিল

জেলা ঢাকা, উপজেলা-সাভার শহরের আনন্দপুর মৌজাধীন সি.এস টোজি নং ১৭৪৪/৬৬৭। খতিয়ান নং-৪৪, ১ এবং ২৬। দাগ নং-২৬ এবং ২৭। এস, এজ, এল নং-১৮২। খতিয়ান নং-৫ এবং ৪৫। দাগ নং-২৬ এবং ২৭। আর, এস জেল নং ১৭২/৬৭৯। খতিয়ান নং-৮২/কাত। দাগ নং-১৩৬, ১৩৭, ১৩৮ এবং ১৩৯। জমির পরিমাণ : ০.২৯৫০ একর।

(এমদামু হক চৌধুরী)
বাংলাদেশ

Blair in the line of fire

British report on pre-war intelligence to be released on Wednesday

Reuters, New Delhi

India's population stands at over 1 billion and by 2035 it will overtake China as the world's most populous nation if present trends continue, India's census office said.

The final count released to mark World Population Day on Sunday said India's population stood at 1.029 billion on March 1, 2001.

India added 182 million people between 1991 to 2001 which is more than the estimated population of Brazil