

Iran seeks to change terms of nuke freeze

AFP, Vienna

Iran has asked the UN atomic agency to exempt several dozen centrifuges from an agreement with the European Union which went into effect two days ago freezing its nuclear programme, a request the EU rejects, diplomats told AFP yesterday.

Under the terms of a deal hammered out with Britain, Germany and France, Tehran was supposed to suspend all uranium enrichment activities from Monday, a move which is now being verified by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

But a diplomat who covers the IAEA said the Iranians "are trying to convince the IAEA to leave several dozen of the centrifuges unsealed for RD (research and development) purposes in addition to other equipment, which has direct use for enrichment." A Western diplomat said it would be "outrageous" if Iran at the last minute exempted some centrifuges, the machines which enrich uranium, from the suspension, which was meant to be total in order to allay US suspicions that the

diplomat had no comment on what other equipment Iran might be trying to exempt.

Islamic Republic is secretly developing nuclear weapons.

A European diplomat said: "It is not acceptable to us."

IAEA inspectors were Wednesday racing to seal some 1,000 centrifuges in Iran, spread across workshops in three different locations, in time to verify the suspension for a meeting in Vienna Thursday of the IAEA's 35-nation board.

A diplomat close to the IAEA said the agency was not negotiating with Iran over the suspension since the agreement was with EU negotiators Britain, France and Germany.

"It is up to Iran to define what it wants the IAEA to do or not to do," the diplomat said.

The IAEA "will report on what it has reached" in terms of verification, the diplomat said.

The diplomat refused to say exactly what sort of research Iran wants to carry out with the centrifuges but said it would probably be for testing and not actual enrichment of uranium.

The diplomat had no comment on what other equipment Iran might be trying to exempt.



Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh (R) and Pakistani Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz (L) walk following a meeting at the Hyderabad House in New Delhi yesterday. Aziz began talks with his Indian counterpart Singh after the rival nations agreed to push ahead with peace talks over disputed Kashmir, an official said.

Pak PM fails to unite Kashmiri separatists

Aziz holds 'very friendly' talks with Natwar

AFP, New Delhi

Pakistani Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz held marathon meetings deep into the night with the hardline and moderate factions of Kashmir's main separatist alliance but failed to unite them, India's media said yesterday.

Aziz, on a two-day visit to New Delhi, sat separately with the groups from the All Parties Hurriyat Conference way beyond midnight Tuesday to try to persuade them to shelve their differences for a resolution of the Kashmir dispute.

However, his efforts foundered because he was unable to satisfy the Kashmiris that they would be included as a third party in the ongoing India-Pakistani peace dialogue over Kashmir, various newspapers reported.

"While Aziz reiterated the need for unity and assured them that they would be involved in any solution, he maintained a diplomatic silence on when and how," the Indian Express said, quoting a source close to the talks.

It added the chairman of the moderate faction of the Hurriyat,

Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, was keen on unity but his gestures were cold-shouldered by the leader of the hardline faction, Syed Ali Shah Geelani.

Geelani's faction has the backing of Islamic militants who have been fighting Indian rule in the disputed Himalayan region for 15 years.

Prominent separatist leader Shabbir Shah said that Kashmir was a "tripartite" issue and the people of the region needed to be involved in the India-Pakistan peace talks over the region, the Press Trust of India news agency said.

"Unity is our internal matter and one day hopefully we will speak in one voice," Shah was quoted as saying.

India and Pakistan each hold part of Kashmir but claim it in its entirety. The Himalayan region has been the cause of two of their three wars since independence from Britain in 1947.

Separatists want independence for Kashmir or for the region to be incorporated into Pakistan.

Geelani's faction demands the holding of a plebiscite while Farooq's moderates say they are willing to discuss various "road

maps" with India and Pakistan.

Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf has suggested that Kashmir could be divided into seven regions, any one of which could be demilitarised and either placed under United Nations mandate or joint control or given independence.

However, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has rejected redrawing borders as a solution.

Meanwhile, India and Pakistan committed themselves Tuesday to continuing dialogue on Kashmir during a meeting between Pakistan's Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz and Indian Foreign Minister Natwar Singh that was described as "very friendly".

"It was a very friendly, positive and forward-looking meeting," Indian foreign ministry spokesman Navtej Sarna told reporters after the talks.

The tone was in marked contrast to a verbal spat between the leaders of the two sides over Kashmir, the main point of dispute.

"Saarc issues were discussed. It was felt that although a good start had been made in Islamabad, there was potential for further regional cooperation," Sarna said.

US Mumbai consulate reopens

AFP, Mumbai

The United States reopened its consulate in India's financial capital of Mumbai yesterday after closing it the previous day saying it had information about a terrorist threat.

Indian officials had dismissed the possibility of an imminent attack.

"Our offices were closed only for a day Tuesday after reports of a terrorist threat to US interests in India. However, we are now back to our normal working," a spokesman told AFP.

The US embassy in New Delhi, which remained open, said the Bombay consulate had been shut "as a precautionary measure in response to threat information."

Indian officials later said the information received by the US was not accurate according to its own investigations.

The US State Department said Monday it had information that "terrorists may be planning attacks on US interests in India in the near future."

"Although not specific, the information suggests an attack could be aimed at US interests in the cities of New Delhi or Mumbai (Bombay)," it said in a notice.

The notice offered few details about the threat information but said targets could include areas where foreigners are known to congregate. It urged US citizens in India to heighten security precautions.

CIA WARNS

'Dirty bomb' within al-Qaeda's reach

AFP, Washington

The al-Qaeda terror network is fully capable of building a radioactive "dirty bomb" targeting the United States and other Western nations and "has crude procedures" for producing chemical weapons, the CIA warned.

In an annual report to Congress on proliferation threats, the US Central Intelligence Agency also repeated Tuesday its insistence that Iran was pursuing an clandestine nuclear weapons program.

But it remained silent about charges made earlier this month by Secretary of State Colin Powell, who accused Iran of seeking to adapt its missiles to carry nuclear warheads.

Instead, the agency used its strongest terms to alert lawmakers to the threat of terrorist organisations using chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials to harm the United States and its allies, saying the danger of such an attack "remained high."

"One of our highest concerns is al-Qaeda's stated readiness to attempt unconventional attacks against us," the report pointed out.

US, Iraqi troops sweep thru 'triangle of death'

Britain joins new pre-polls offensive, parties gear up for polls

AFP, Reuters, Baghdad

US-led forces swept hotspots in a "triangle of death" yesterday in a push to reclaim rebel enclaves ahead of key January polls, as more than 200 political groups threw their hat in the electoral ring.

The launch of the huge operation in the notorious area south of Baghdad on Tuesday came as the international community thrust its weight behind the tight timetable for Iraq's first post-Saddam Hussein elections.

In Washington, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said the United States would add an unspecified number of troops to its forces in Iraq and beef up Iraqi forces ahead of the January 30 vote.

Some 5,000 American, British and Iraqi forces took part in Operation Plymouth Rock that began with raids on villages north of the city of Hillah, the capital of the province of Babylon, the US military said.

The massive coalition force locked set Wednesday to make its

way northwards to the lawless areas blocking access to the capital.

The towns of Latifiyah, Yusufiyah, Mahmudiyah and Iskandariyah lie inside the triangle of death, an area where Sunni Muslim rebels have carried out strings of deadly attacks in recent months.

The operation came hot on the heels of a massive assault on Fallujah, the largest since last year's US-led invasion. The city had been under insurgent control since April and its recapture was seen as essential to organizing the promised January elections.

Meanwhile, British troops joined their US and Iraqi counterparts in a massive new offensive against insurgent strongholds as efforts intensified to restore government control in time for January elections.

The launch of the huge operation Tuesday in the so-called Triangle of Death just south of Baghdad came as the international community threw its weight behind the tight timetable for Iraq's first post-Saddam Hussein elections.

He spoke as thousands of Yushchenko supporters set up tents outside Kiev's presidential administration awaiting a possible showdown with President Leonid Kuchma, who has hand-picked Yanukovich as his successor.

Yanukovich was quoted by ITAR-TASS as telling a cabinet meeting that he was "a law-abiding man" who would only recognize defeat if

commission chief Abdel Hussein al-Hindi told AFP.

With the deadline for presenting full electoral lists only a week away, parties and organisations were in the final stages of discussions to form alliances ahead of the official launch of the campaign on December 15.

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Red Cross pays visit to Saddam

AFP, Amman

The International Committee for the Red Cross said yesterday its staff had recently visited deposed Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, who is in US custody awaiting trial on war crimes charges.

But the ICRC declined to give details about Saddam's state of health, following reports of several problems.

"The ICRC discussed (Saddam's) state of health with the detaining party while underlining the right of every prisoner to medical supervision in accordance with the Geneva conventions," spokesman Mwein Kais told AFP in Amman.

It is the fifth visit by the ICRC to Saddam since his capture by US forces in December last year, but Kais declined to say exactly when it took place.

Lanka arrests 2 Tiger rebels despite truce

AFP, Colombo

Security forces have arrested two suspected Tamil Tiger rebels who tried to kill military intelligence operatives in eastern Sri Lanka despite a truce, officials said yesterday.

Gunmen believed to be from the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) ambushed an army vehicle transporting two officers in the eastern town of Manampitiya Tuesday by opening fire, defence ministry officials said.

Troops fired back and later arrested the two gunmen, officials said, adding that there were no casualties among the military personnel.

The villagers demonstrated as Home Minister Purnima Bahadur Khatai visited the guerrilla-infested area to take stock of the security situation.

Protests against the Maoists are as participants fear retaliation by the guerrillas, according to human rights activists who accuse both sides of atrocities.

The conference is due to be inaugurated by King Gyanendra and attended by scholars, monks and dignitaries from at least 40 countries, organisers say.

Buddha was born in 623 BC in Lumbini, which has been named a World Heritage site by Unesco.

One of the main aims of the conference is to develop Lumbini as the "city of world peace" as well as draw more tourists to Buddha's birthplace and other holy sites in the mostly Hindu area, organisers say.

Upadhyay also renewed an appeal for the Maoists to return to the negotiating table to settle the increasingly deadly conflict that has claimed over 10,000 lives since 1996.

"If Maoists take one step for a peace dialogue, we'll take four steps to help restore peace," Upadhyay said.

An Iraqi man gives a woman registration forms for the coming national elections, in Baghdad yesterday. US-led forces swept hotspots south of Baghdad in a push to reclaim rebel enclaves ahead of key January polls, as more than 200 political groups threw their hat in the electoral ring.

PHOTO: AFP

Nepal declares truce

Thousands of Nepalese defy Maoists, stage demo

AFP, Kathmandu

Nepal Tuesday announced a unilateral ceasefire with Maoist rebels in the area around Buddha's birthplace during a three-day Buddhist conference there starting at the end of the month.

"There will be no military action by the state (in the southwestern Lumbini area) during the World Buddhist Conference," Culture Minister Dip Kumar Upadhyay told

There was no immediate statement from Maoist rebels, battling to topple the monarchy and install communist rule, about whether they would also refrain from attacks in the area during the meeting starting November 30.

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বেসরকারী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় সম্পর্কিত উচ্চ ক্ষমতাসম্পন্ন কমিটির প্রতিবেদন

সম্পর্কে বিভাগিক বক্তব্যের ব্যাখ্যা

বেসরকারী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় পরিচালন করে তাদের শিক্ষাকারী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় পরিচালনার মন্ত্রী সুবিধানি মুল্যায়ন করা হয়েছে। সম্পর্ক এবং সমন্বয় বিভাগিক বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় সম্পর্কে বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় সম্পর্ক সমিতির পরিচালনার মন্ত্রী কমিশনার পরিচালন করা হয়েছে। বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় সম্পর্ক সমিতি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় সমন্বয় বিভাগিক পরিচালনার মন্ত্রী কমিশনার পরিচালন করা হয়েছে। বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় সমন্বয় বিভাগিক পরিচালনার মন্ত্রী কমিশনার পরিচালন করা হয়েছে। বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় সমন্বয় বিভাগিক পরিচালনার মন্ত্রী কমিশনার পরিচালন করা হয়েছে।

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