

Search for WMD in Iraq has ended: Report

REUTERS, Washington

The search for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq ended last month, nearly two years after President Bush sent troops to disarm Saddam Hussein, The Washington Post reported yesterday.

Officials who served with the group charged with hunting banned weapons said the violence in Iraq, coupled with a lack of new information, led them to fold up the effort shortly before Christmas, the newspaper reported.

Charles Duelfer, the CIA special adviser who led the hunt, has returned home, and analysts serving in his Iraq Survey Group (ISG) have returned to CIA headquarters in Virginia, the report said, citing unnamed intelligence officials.

The Post said the findings of an interim report that Duelfer submitted to Congress in September will stand as the ISG's final conclusions, according to a senior intelligence official.

3 Russian human rights advocates win Olof Palme Prize

AFP, Stockholm

Three Russian human rights advocates have been awarded the 2004 Olof Palme Prize, the jury of the Olof Palme Memorial Fund announced on Wednesday.

The prize went to Ljudmila Alexeyeva, the chairwoman of the Russia Helsinki Committee, Sergei Kovalyov, a dissident and critic of Russia's war with Chechnya, and Anna Politkovskaya, a journalist and author.

"The three prize winners are all influential symbols of the long battle for human rights in Russia," the fund said.

Indonesia wants foreign troops out soon

Defends restrictions on tsunami aid workers

AFP, Jakarta

Indonesia yesterday told foreign troops helping tsunami victims to get out of the country soon and defended tough new restrictions on aid workers, while rich nations prepared to freeze Jakarta's debt repayments.

Vice President Yusuf Kalla said foreign troops should leave tsunami-hit Aceh province on Sumatra island as soon as they finish their relief mission, staying no longer than three months, state media reported.

"Three months are enough. In fact, the sooner the better," Kalla was quoted by the state Antara news agency as saying.

The armed forces of Australia, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore and the

United States have all rushed task forces to Aceh in the wake of the December 26 disaster which killed at least 106,000 Indonesians out of a total of more than 158,000 deaths in Asia.

United Nations officials struggling to coordinate a massive relief operation have welcomed their participation, particularly to deliver aid to isolated coastlines accessible only by sea or air.

But their presence in Indonesian territory has been a sensitive issue for the world's largest Muslim-populated nation which has traditionally kept foreign military, particularly the United States and Australia, at arm's length.

The vice president said Aceh in the near future would need foreign medical workers and engineers

instead of military assistance.

"Foreign troops are no longer needed," he said.

Kalla's comments came after the country's military imposed sweeping new restrictions on foreign relief workers operating in Aceh, claiming they were in danger from rebels waging a long-running separatist war.

Analysts have said they believe the move was an attempt to reassert the military's control over the province, an accusation the government has denied.

Senior officials said foreign journalists would also be confined to major towns in the province, closing a post-disaster window of press freedom in the region which was locked down almost two years ago during a military offensive.



Indonesian volunteers carry a dead body from in debris, in Banda Aceh yesterday. Indonesia, hardest-hit by the December 26 walls of water, has now reported 106,523 deaths, with 12,047 people missing, an increase of more than 2,000, the social affairs ministry said.

6 dead, more missing after California landslide

REUTERS, La Conchita

Rescuers who pulled six bodies from the mud and debris of a huge southern California landslide said on Tuesday that 13 people might still be trapped under the rubble.

As heavy rain gave way to clear weather, emergency crews dug mostly by hand a full day after the disaster, racing against the hardening of the massive pack of mud to find spaces where survivors might be found.

But rescue teams reported hearing no sign of life since detecting a faint scratching or tapping noise under the 30-foot mound early on Tuesday.

"This is still a rescue operation. We have not given up hope on any of the people," said Ventura County Fire Chief Bob Roper. "This is tedious work. But it has to be done by hand."

Allawi admits some areas unsafe to vote

AP, Baghdad

Iraqi Prime Minister Ayad Allawi publicly acknowledged for the first time that parts of Iraq probably won't be safe enough for people to vote in the January 30 elections, and he announced plans to boost the size of the country's army from 100,000 to 150,000 men by year's end.

Violence persisted, with at least 20 Iraqis killed in two bombings and the seizure of trucks carrying new Iraqi coins. A US soldier was killed in action in Iraq's volatile western Anbar province, the military said.

The attacks this month have killed more than 100 Iraqis, mostly Iraqi police and security forces, who are seen by the militants as collabo-

rators with the American occupiers.

Allawi discussed preparations for the election by telephone with President Bush on Tuesday, and both leaders underscored the importance of going ahead with the vote as planned, White House spokesman Scott McClellan said.

The prime minister said at a news conference that "hostile forces are trying to hamper this event."

"Certainly, there will be some pockets that will not be able to participate in the elections for these reasons, but we think that it will not be widespread," Allawi said.

Anbar province, a vast area that stretches from west of Baghdad to the Jordanian, Syrian and Saudi borders and the northern city of Mosul have

seen little preparation for the vote because of tenuous security.

The capital also is experiencing an increase in insurgent activity, and residents of some districts may be reluctant to vote for fear of attacks on polling stations.

Others have cited concerns about the balloting. Late last week, Air Force Brig. Gen. Erv Lessel, the deputy chief of staff for strategic communications, said there were two provinces that give the Americans "significant concern": Anbar, which includes the city of Fallujah, and Nineveh, which includes Mosul. He said the Americans were taking "aggressive action" to make sure the vote can be held there.

Violence greets start of Abbas era

4 Palestinians, 1 Israeli dead in West Bank and Gaza

AFP, Gaza City

Four Palestinian militants and an Israeli settler were killed in a rash of violence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, punctuating the optimism that has greeted the election of a new Palestinian leader.

The settlers and two members of the hardline Islamic Jihad organisation were killed in the attack on the isolated settlement of Morag in southern Gaza, one of 21 due to be dismantled later this year, while two other suspected militants were killed in a shoot-out near Ramallah in the central West Bank.

The violence represented the deadliest day since the moderate former prime minister Mahmud Abbas, an outspoken critic of the armed uprising, was elected president of the Palestinian Authority by a landslide on Sunday.

Military sources said that the settler was killed and three soldiers were wounded when militants apparently managed to burrow their way into Morag through a tunnel and then detonate an explosive

device by a jeep.

Jihad, which claimed responsibility for the attack in a phone call to AFP, said that both of its members who had taken part in the operation were killed.

The incident came several hours after the Israeli military said that it had killed two members of the main Islamic militant organisation Hamas at a shoot-out in the village of Qarawat Banzeid, north of Ramallah.

Palestinian sources said that the house belonged to a member of Hamas but added that the identities of the victims could be confirmed until the bodies had been recovered.

Abbas has been trying to persuade Hamas to call a halt to their campaign of anti-Israeli attacks, as well as condemning their frequent rocket attacks unleashed from its Gaza Strip stronghold.

Israel's head of military intelligence, General Aharon Zeevi, said Wednesday Abbas would be unable to fulfill demands to disarm the militants.

"Abu Mazen (Abbas) will not try to confiscate the illegally held weapons, he will not take on Hamas," Zeevi said in comments broadcast on public radio.

"Abu Mazen will try to convince (Hamas) and appeal to Palestinian public opinion to put pressure on the terrorists by explaining that this generation has suffered enough," added Zeevi.

Israeli officials have repeatedly demanded that the Palestinian leadership crack down on the likes of Hamas before it can be considered as a partner in the peace process.

Outgoing US Secretary of State Colin Powell also said that Abbas must crack down on the hardliners if he wants to retain the support of Washington.

"I believe he understands that he now has to take a strong position, an open, vocal, clear position against terrorism," Powell told Fox News.

"But more than just take a position, he has to fight against those forces within the Palestinian community that still think there is a role for terrorism."

Sharon calls Abbas to congratulate

AP, Jerusalem

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon called Mahmoud Abbas on Tuesday to congratulate him for his landslide victory in an election to replace Yasser Arafat, signaling Israel's readiness to work with the new Palestinian team after years of boycotting Arafat.

Both sides said a meeting will take place, but no date was set.

Abbas' election victory on Sunday and Sharon's success this week in putting together a government that favours his plan to pull out of Gaza and part of the West Bank this summer have raised hope the two leaders can break through layers of mistrust built up over four years of Israeli-Palestinian violence.

Alongside the optimism, both sides face internal problems. Palestinian National Security Adviser Jibril Rajoub resigned, and critics in Sharon's own Likud Party complained that his new government cannot survive without support from doves and Arab parties their bitter rivals.

Sharon congratulated Abbas "on his personal achievement and his victory in the elections and wished him luck," said a statement from Sharon's office, adding, "They agreed they would continue talking in the near future."

Kanchi seer out of jail

AGENCIES, Chennai

Kanchi Shankaracharya Jayendra Saraswati was released from the jail exactly two months after he was arrested in connection with a murder case.

The seer walked into the waiting yellow van of the Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam amidst tight security and headed for Kalavai, about 40 kms from Kanchipuram, as he has been barred from the Supreme Court from going to the Kanchi Mutt.

A police vehicle followed his van as the smiling Jayendra waived to his admirers and cameramen without making any comments to waiting newsmen.

Many of the devotees fell at his feet as he waded through the crowd to go to his vehicle.

Earlier, even before being released from Vellore prison after obtaining bail in the Sankararaman murder case, Kanchi Seer Jayendra Saraswati has moved the Principal Sessions Court in Chennai for bail,



PHOTO: AFP

An Indian activist from the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (World Hindu Council) and Bajrang Dal shout slogans as he takes part in a protest against the arrest of Hindu priest Jayendra Saraswati during a demonstration in New Delhi yesterday.

apprehending arrest in a third case.

The case relates to an assault on a temple priest Tirukoshtiyur Mahadevan in the city about two years ago.

The seer is anticipating arrest under IPC sections 424 (dishonest or fraudulent removal or concealment of property) and 304 (culpable homicide not amounting to murder).

The Kanchi seer would stay at Kalavai Mutt, 40 km from Kanchipuram, after his release, where the Paramacharya of Kanchi Mutt late Chandrasekerendra Saraswati often stayed, Manager of Kanchi Mutt Pollachi Mahadevan said.

The Supreme Court granted him bail in the case relating to the murder of a Kanchipuram temple official A Sankararaman in September last year but with the condition that he would not visit the Kanchi Mutt till investigations into the Sankararaman murder case are over.

Barrister -at- Law

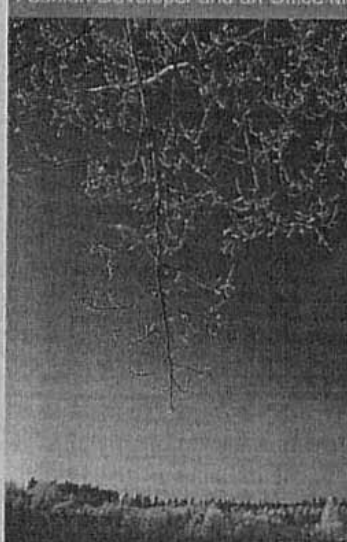


Abdul Mabud Masum, Recently Completed the Course on Criminology and Criminal Justice from University college of London (UCL), before that he has completed, Bar Vocational Course (BVC) from Inns of Court School of Law (ICSL) in June 2004 and LL.B from North London University (UNL) in June 2003. Successfully, He is 4th son of Al-Haj Moulana Mustafizur Rahman, retired teacher of Shiddashawry School and brother of renowned industrialist Abdul Kader Faruk, Chairman of FAR Group and brother Abdul Quyum Mamun Managing Director of FAR Group and also the younger brother of Abdul Qudus Amin, Senior assistant Police Commissioner. He was born in village Tumchar, PS: Hijla, District: Barisal. His present family address is 32/5, Nayatola, Dhaka. He is the 1st Student from Hijla who secured Bar-at-law from England.

He is prayed to all.

CAREER OPPORTUNITY

Fashion Incubator is a Swedish fashion company with plans to create a clothing brand which combines European Quality and Design with South Asian flavor. We are now expanding our horizon and are searching for a Fashion Developer and an Office Manager for Dhaka Office.



Fashion Developer
We are looking for a female under 29 with an open, creative mind and an eye for detail having a related degree and experience in Fashion Designing.
Salary: 16,000 BDT (+)

Office Manager
We are looking for a smart male or female under 25 with a bachelor degree in any discipline (MBA preferable) who can manage the local office and can provide the customer care support. English proficiency and computer literacy is a must.
Salary: 7,000 BDT (+)

Send a complete CV with picture to job@fashionincubator.org or visit www.fashionincubator.org

fashionIncubator

জরুরী নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

ব্যবস্থাপক - উৎপাদন
স্নাতক - প্রতিষ্ঠিত রপ্তানীমুখী পোশাক শিল্প প্রতিষ্ঠানে সংশ্লিষ্ট পদে ৫ বৎসরের অভিজ্ঞতা। বেতন : আলোচনা সাপেক্ষে।
চিকিৎসক (মহিলা)
এম.বি.বি.এস. ১-২ বৎসরের অভিজ্ঞতা সম্পন্ন। বেতন : আলোচনা সাপেক্ষে।
দক্ষ সুইং অপারেটর (২০০ জন)
বেতন : দক্ষতা অনুসারে।

প্রার্থীকে বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের ১০ (দশ) দিনের মধ্যে ওয়ার্ড কমিশনার/চেয়ারম্যান কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত নাগরিকত্বের সনদ, ২ (দুই) কপি রসিদ ছবি ও অন্যান্য প্রয়োজনীয় কাগজপত্রসহ নিম্ন ঠিকানায় যোগাযোগ করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হইলঃ

মানব সম্পদ বিভাগ
কেডিএস গার্মেন্ট ইন্ডাস্ট্রি লিঃ,

১৩৫, গান্ধীবাদ শিল্প এলাকা, চট্টগ্রাম-৪২১১। ফোনঃ ৬৮১২৪১-৪



BAKLADESH INLAND WATER
TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

141-143, MOTIHEEL COMMERCIAL AREA, DHAKA-1000

SECOND EXTENSION OF TIME

OF BID DOCUMENTS

EXTENSION OF TIME OF BIDS FOR BOT CONTAINER TERMINAL AT KHANPUR, NARAYANGANJ, BANGLADESH (REF: INVITATION FOR INTERNATIONAL RE-TENDER WAS PUBLISHED IN THE DAILY NEWSPAPERS ON 17-10-2004 AND 18-10-2004 RESPECTIVELY AND FIRST EXTENSION OF TIME OF BID DOCUMENTS UPTO 15TH JANUARY, 2005 WAS PUBLISHED IN THE DAILY NEWSPAPERS ON 12-12-2004, 13-12-2004 AND 14-12-2004 RESPECTIVELY).

The bid documents for the above-mentioned BOT Container Terminal at Khanpur, Narayanganj may be purchased from Accounts Department of BIWTA, BIWTA Bhaban (9th Floor), 141-143, Motiheel Commercial Area, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh, during office hours every working day at the cost of Tk 30000.00 (Thirty thousand) only per set up to 16th March, 2005 (Wednesday) and the same must be delivered on or before 14-00 hours on 16th March, 2005.

All other terms and conditions will remain unchanged.

Director of Planning
BIWTA, BIWTA Bhaban
141-143, Motiheel C/A, Dhaka-1000
Bangladesh

GD-33

Bush to push for immigration reform: Report

REUTERS, Washington

US President George W Bush said he would spend political capital to force a debate in Congress on his immigration reform proposal and added that it will be a big agenda item in his second term.

"Obviously, we're going to have to work on it, just like Social Security. This will require the expenditure of capital," Bush said in an interview with The Washington Times.

"I think it's high. I think it's a big issue," Bush said when asked where his proposal ranks among the issues he plans to tackle during his second term.

Lawmakers on both sides of the political aisle are split on whether to ease or tighten immigration restrictions.

A showdown is brewing over Bush's proposed "guest worker" programme, which would provide temporary visas to workers from Mexico and other countries.



PHOTO: AFP

Puerto Rican singer Ricky Martin (L) and Thai Foreign Minister Surakiart Sathirathai greet each other prior to their talks at the foreign ministry in Bangkok. Martin met with Thai officials and discussed the fate of children orphaned by the killer tsunami that struck the country's southwest coast. He will visit the devastated region of the kingdom tomorrow.

unicef

Proposal for "Conducting a baseline survey and mapping of Basic Education for Hard to Reach Urban Working Children (BEHTRUWC) project"

UNICEF-Bangladesh requests for proposal from established social research agencies to conduct a baseline survey and mapping of BEHTRUWC project.

Interested agencies, having minimum 5 years experience in conducting survey and research work including mapping using GIS methodology, are requested to collect detailed Request for Proposal (RFP/2005/001) for above-mentioned service from UNICEF, Reception Desk, Third Floor, Right Wing, Dhaka Sheraton Hotel Annex Building, 1 Minto Road, Dhaka-1000 from Thursday, 13 January, 2005 from 14:00 hours (till 25 January 2005).

A briefing session on the requirement of the assignment will be held on Sunday, January 16, 2005 at 14:00 hours at UNICEF-BCO.

The proposal must be submitted at or before 14:00 hours, January 26, 2005 (Wednesday) in the "Tender Box" located in UNICEF HR Section, Fourth Floor, Right Wing, Dhaka Sheraton Hotel Annex Building, 1 Minto Road, Dhaka-1000. D-52

Bata

FOR APPOINTMENT OF CARRYING CONTRACTORS

Sealed Tenders are hereby invited by Bata Shoe Company (Bangladesh) Limited, Tongi, Gazipur from the bonafide carrying contractors for carrying goods from Chittagong Port to both of our Tongi and Dhamrai factories.

Tender Schedule may be purchased from our Tongi Office on all working days between 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on payment of Tk. 500.00 (Taka Five Hundred) only in cash (non-refundable). An earnest money of Tk. 50,000.00 (Taka Fifty Thousand) for each tender must be submitted in the form of Pay Order/Bank Draft from any scheduled bank along with the Tender Schedule.

The successful bidder while signing the yearly job contract must deposit the security money of Tk. 500,000.00 (Taka Five Hundred Thousand) only in the form of Pay Order/Bank Draft from any scheduled bank in favour of Bata Shoe Company (Bangladesh) Limited, Tongi, Gazipur. It may be mentioned that the contract will remain valid for one year only and may be considered for renewal on satisfactory performance.

Tender may be dropped into the tender box kept at the Company's Gate Office, Tongi on all working days between 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The last date of submission of Tender is 17.01.2005 at 2:00 p.m. and it will be opened on the same day in presence of the bidders, if any. The company reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Purchase Manager
Bata Shoe Company (Bangladesh) Limited
Tongi, Gazipur