

BRITISH MUSEUM REPORT Ancient Babylon site wrecked by US force

AFP, London

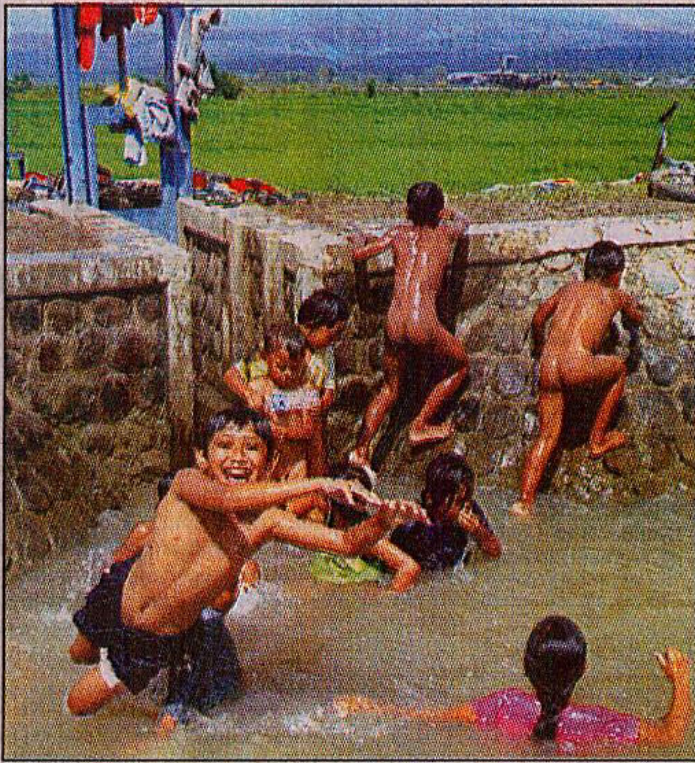
US-led forces in Iraq have caused irreparable damage to the site of the ancient city of Babylon, contaminating the soil and destroying archaeological evidence, according to a British Museum report.

According to John Curtis, curator of the museum's Ancient Near East department, the site has suffered "substantial damage" while being used as a military depot by American and Polish forces for the past two years.

"This is tantamount to establishing a military camp around the Great Pyramid in Egypt or around Stonehenge in Britain," Curtis charged in his report, quoted by the Guardian newspaper.

"The status of future information about these areas will therefore be seriously compromised," he warned.

Curtis has called for an international investigation to be carried out by archaeologists chosen by the Iraqi authorities, to compile a full inventory of damage sustained at the site, 100 kilometres (60 miles) south of Baghdad.



Children play in a pond at a refugee camp near Indonesian military airport (behind) in Banda Aceh yesterday. The killer tidal wave so far claimed more than 110,000 lives in the western Indonesian region of Aceh and left tens of thousands dependant on relief. The United Nations said it would provide emergency tents to house 100,000 tsunami survivors in Indonesia's Aceh province for six months while their homes are rebuilt.

Relief officials worried at disease outbreaks

US military seeks quick exit from tsunami aid work

AFP, Banda Aceh

Aid officials expressed alarm yesterday about outbreaks of sickness in the area worst hit by last month's Asian tsunami disaster as the United States said it wanted to scale down its military relief work.

US Deputy Defence Secretary Paul Wolfowitz said on a tour of the region his country's goal was to alleviate suffering caused by the quake and tsunamis.

But the US military was eager to begin a transitional phase that could see much of its work being handed over to governments, other militaries, non-governmental organisations and aid agencies, Wolfowitz said.

"We'd like to be out of this business as soon as we responsibly can," Wolfowitz said in Thailand before he traveled to Indonesia's Aceh province.

"The US military has a lot of other work to do," Wolfowitz said. "As soon as our military folks can pass these responsibilities on to other

organisations, well, we will," he said without providing a time frame.

Indonesia said recently it would impose a deadline of the end of March for the withdrawal of foreign troops providing relief assistance in Aceh.

The US State Department has said Indonesian Vice President Yusuf Kalla clarified Friday with the American envoy in Jakarta no fixed time limit would be imposed on foreign troops and three months was only an estimate.

But US marines delivering aid to survivors were forced to scale back their presence on shore and move to ships to address sensitivities in Aceh, where government forces have been fighting separatist rebels from the Free Aceh Movement, or GAM.

Wolfowitz said he felt Jakarta was not setting deadlines so much as "setting goals and expressing their own desire to take a responsibility in their own country as quickly as possible."

"We applaud that," he said.

Iraq announces polls day security plan

US forces predict serious violence during polling

AFP, Baghdad

The Iraqi government announced yesterday its election day security plan, declaring a ban on cars by polling centres and admitting the vote would be limited in four provinces troubled by violence.

The Iraqi government will declare a three-day holiday for the January 30 elections and ban cars around the polling stations and impose restrictions on vehicle movement around cities, State Minister Wael Abdul Latif told reporters.

Latif admitted elections would be limited in four provinces in central Iraq where the insurgency threat is at its greatest.

US and Iraqi officials fear the vote turnout could be low with the general population frightened about attacks by insurgents. The elections

will choose a 275-member national parliament, as well as provincial councils.

So far, no voter registration has taken place in the western Al-Anbar province and Iraq's third largest city Mosul, said Abdul Hussein Hendawi, the head of Iraq's Independent Electoral Commission.

"Anbar -- Ramadi (the capital of the province) -- will have secure centres, that's all I can say," Hendawi said.

Voting registration in Anbar province and Mosul will occur on election day, Hendawi said.

Security plans have been put in place district by district in Baghdad, as well as in other provinces, Latif said.

He hinted the general population could very well be barred from traveling outside their city or even neighborhood on election day.

The top Iraqi general for Kirkuk, Anwar Amin, told AFP last week that there would not be travel allowed between towns and cities inside Kirkuk's northern province of Tammim.

In late December, Adel Lami, a ranking officer on Iraq's Independent Electoral Commission, told AFP about 100,000 police and army would be mobilised on election day.

Meanwhile, senior US officials and commanders in Baghdad are bracing for violence on election day, anticipating car bombs, gunfire, mortars and rocket attacks.

"There are places here that are ugly. There are other places looking pretty dog-gone good," Brigadier General Jeffrey Hammond, a deputy commander of US troops in the capital, told reporters Friday.

"Intimidation factor is probably more prevalent in some places than other."

NEPALI ELECTION

Deuba seeks to win over coalition partners

AFP, Kathmandu

Nepal's premier sought yesterday to win the support of coalition partners for calling swift elections but analysts said polls would be disastrous without holding peace talks with Maoist rebels first.

Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba gave Works Minister Prakash Man Singh the task of winning coalition allies' backing for general elections in Nepal, packed by an increasingly brutal and bloody Maoist insurgency, a cabinet official said.

"The prime minister is trying to make other coalition partners agree to the polls," the official, who wished to remain unnamed, said.

But analysts said such a course

would lead to more violence unless the government first holds negotiations with the rebels battling to overthrow the monarchy of the Himalayan nation.

Nepal's stability is of increasing worry to giant neighbour India, which has been arming the Nepali army to help it combat the Maoists.

"We're already heading dangerously towards the brink," said Akhilesh Upadhyay, editor of the English-language news magazine The Nation Weekly.

"Talks are the only solution." Late Friday, the government boosted security spending by nine percent in a bid to crush the revolt in the poverty-stricken nation which has claimed over 11,000 lives since 1996.

It hiked security spending by 18.8 million dollars, adding to the 221 million dollars already earmarked for the anti-rebel offensive in the financial year that began last July. But analysts were doubtful the fight against the rebels could be won on the battlefield.

"No matter how much the defence budget goes up, the fact is the two sides must sit down to talk to solve the insurgency," said Upadhyay. "There can be no military solution."

Right now Nepal's vastly overstretched security forces are present in just 22 of the country's 75 districts, an army official said. Rebels say they control 65 percent of Nepal, a statement the government rejects.

LTTE chief to meet peace brokers

UN official barred from rebel areas

AFP, Colombo

Hopes for peace rose yesterday in Sri Lanka as the elusive Tamil Tigers chief planned to meet Norwegian peace brokers next week amid tension between the government and the rebels over tsunami aid.

Tamil Tigers chief Velupillai Prabhakaran was set to meet Norway's Foreign Minister Jan Petersen as part of Norway's first post-tsunami attempt to salvage Sri Lanka's faltering peace process.

"He is going to meet the Norwegian foreign minister next week," Puleedevan, head of the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) peace secretariat, told AFP in an email.

Petersen and top Norwegian

peace envoy Erik Solheim are due here for talks with Sri Lankan leaders as well as the rebels to try to end a 21-month impasse in negotiations.

Three days before the December 26 tsunamis, the Tamil Tigers rejected Sri Lanka's latest proposal to revive negotiations despite international pressure to save the Norwegian-backed initiative.

Meanwhile, the Sri Lankan government has refused to give clearance to the UN's World Food Program (WFP) director for a visit to the northern rebel-held town of Kilinochchi, a WFP spokeswoman said Saturday.

"We have not been given clearance to go to Kilinochchi" by government officials, spokeswoman Selvi Sachithanandam told AFP.



A Palestinian injured youth is wheeled into the al-Shifa hospital following an Israeli incursion into the Zeitun neighborhood of Gaza City yesterday. Six Palestinians were killed by Israeli fire in the Gaza Strip even as the moderate Mahmud Abbas was sworn in as new Palestinian leader with a pledge to seek an end to the "vicious circle" of violence.

Peace hopes rest on Abbas shoulders

AFP, Ramallah

Mahmud Abbas, who spent the best part of five decades in Yasser Arafat's shadow, formally took center stage yesterday when he was sworn in as president of the Palestinian Authority.

Much hope rests on the shoulders of the moderate former prime minister for the revival of the Middle East peace process, with the international community determined to help strengthen him against the men of violence and translate his condemnation of the armed Intifada into an end to attacks on

Israel. He is not short of good will, including from Israel and the United States, which both refused to deal with Arafat.

However, he is already shackled by Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon having cut off all official contacts with the Palestinians late on Friday, less than 24 hours after a Palestinian attack at a crossing from the Gaza Strip into Israel left six Israelis dead.

Outgoing US Secretary of State Colin Powell has called Abbas "a good man", while President George W. Bush said Washington "wants to

help a government like Abu Mazen's (Abbas), so long as it remains committed to a peaceful resolution of conflict."

Israel's Deputy Prime Minister Shimon Peres, who worked closely with Abbas during the heyday of the peace process in the early 1990s, has said he "will be an uncompromising partner, but he is a wise man, experienced and moderate."

His austere style contrasts with his charismatic predecessor, whose trademark keffiyeh and fiery speeches had made him one of the world's most recognisable figures and a global symbol of resistance.

US should not rule out torture: Ridge

BBC ONLINE

The outgoing head of the US Department of Homeland Security has said torture may be used in certain cases in order to prevent a major loss of life.

Speaking to the BBC, Tom Ridge said the US did not condone the use of torture to extract information from terrorists.

But he said that under an "extreme set" of hypothetical circumstances, such as a nuclear threat, "it could happen".

A spokesman for Ridge said his comments were taken out of context and did not amount to approval of torture.

Ridge's remarks come a day after the US was accused of eroding human rights by campaigners.

A report by Human Rights Watch (HRW) criticised the US over the Abu Ghraib prison abuse scandal in Iraq and the treatment of prisoners at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba.

Space probe finds ice boulders on Titan

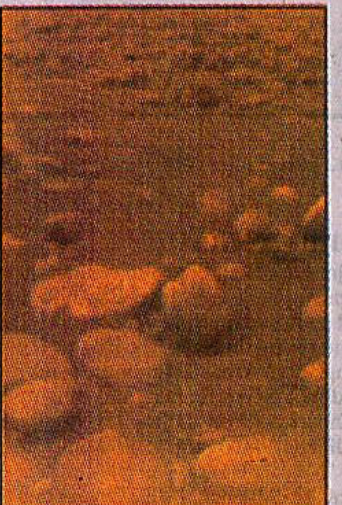
REUTERS, Pasadena

The world's first glimpse of the surface of the Saturnian moon Titan revealed an unexpected mix of icy land and liquid as the Huygens space probe touched down on Friday.

The first three photos of Titan, Saturn's largest moon, beamed back on Friday afternoon, showed what appeared to be boulders of ice, drainage channels, shorelines and islands, reminding scientists of both Earth and Mars.

"I think none of us would have expected ... this kind of unveiling, but it is pretty consistent with the surprises we've seen before," said Al Diaz, NASA's associate administrator for science.

The \$3 billion Cassini-Huygens mission, a joint project of NASA and the European and Italian space agencies, was launched in 1997 from Cape Canaveral, Florida, to study Saturn, its rings, moons and magnetosphere.



This is reportedly one of the first images returned by the ESA Huygens probe during its successful descent to the surface of Saturn's moon, Titan.

Millions of Pak homes face gas shortage after rebel attacks

AFP, Islamabad

Millions of Pakistani households face gas shortages after tribal rebels attacked and damaged a plant in southwestern Baluchistan province, distribution companies said yesterday.

Supplies from the state-run Sui gas plant in Baluchistan have been disrupted since Tuesday when rockets damaged a purification plant.

"We are facing acute shortage of gas supply and are forced to implement a 14-hour load management schedule for gas consumers in Sindh province," said a spokesman for gas distribution company, Sui Southern Gas Pipelines Ltd.

Under the programme gas supply to residential areas in Pakistan's most populous city of Karachi would be suspended for a certain period of time daily, spokesman Inayatullah Ismail said.

Similar cuts would affect other cities and towns in the province, he said.

The central province of Punjab was facing a shortage of 460 million cubic feet in its daily requirement of 1,650 million cubic feet, said Naeem Khan, spokesman for the distribution firm, Sui Northern Gas Pipeline Ltd.

"We have cut off gas supplies to big industrial units like fertilizers and power-houses in order to cope with the shortfall," he told AFP.

Trouble erupted in Sui after a woman doctor working at gas company hospital was gangraped allegedly by security men early this month.

Enraged by the alleged rape tribesmen heavily rocketed the gas complex for several days.

Paramilitary troops searched more houses on Saturday for weapons in villages around the Sui town, but there were no reports of any arrests, officials said.

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Chinese leader Zhao Ziyang in 'deep coma'

AFP, Beijing

Zhao Ziyang, the former Chinese leader who was ousted after sympathising with Tiananmen protests, is in a "deep coma" in a Beijing hospital and may be close to death, a relative said yesterday.

"Zhao Ziyang fell into a coma last night around 7:00pm (1100 GMT), he was rescued. But up until 6:30pm tonight, he was still in a coma," the Hong Kong-based Information Center for Human Rights and Democracy quoted the relative as saying.

"His relative was crying on the phone and calling for people who care for him to pray for him as he might leave this world tonight," it said in a statement.

The Chinese foreign ministry did not immediately comment Saturday and said it was looking into the matter. Telephone calls to his former aide Bao Tong were cut off immediately. Zhao, who served as both the head of the Communist Party and China's prime minister for much of the 1980s, was ousted in 1989 after opposing the military crackdown on the Tiananmen democracy protests.

Following the bloody crackdown, in which hundreds if not thousands of unarmed students and citizens in Beijing were killed, a central government report squarely placed the blame for "counter-revolutionary" turmoil on Zhao.

Key US figure in prison abuse found guilty

US soldier jailed for murder of Iraqi teenager

REUTERS, Fort Hood, Texas

A military jury found US soldier Charles Graner guilty Friday of abusing Iraqi prisoners at Abu Ghraib prison in a scandal that badly damaged America's worldwide reputation following the invasion of Iraq.

A 10-member military jury found Graner, 36, a former civilian prison guard, guilty on 10 charges, many of which were documented by photographs of sexual humiliation of naked male prisoners that shocked the world after they were leaked last year.

Graner stood at attention and looked straight ahead without any visible reaction as the verdict was read. He held his hands tightly clenched.

Because the jury altered one count to a lesser charge of assault, rather than use of force likely to produce death or grievous bodily harm, his maximum sentence was lessened to 15 years from a possible 17 and a half years, a prosecution spokesman said.

Defence attorneys said Graner himself was expected to testify when the sentencing phase of the trial

resumes on Saturday.

In his closing argument, Graner's lawyer said the former Pennsylvania prison guard was following orders of military intelligence officials at Abu Ghraib outside Baghdad as part of a "vital, larger US war effort in Iraq."

"Corp. Graner is a smart guy, professional and he was doing his job in Iraq," defence attorney Guy Womack told the court. "Now the government would ask a corporal, an E4, one of the junior people there, to take the hit for it."

The prosecution argued that Graner and others in his unit acted without orders for their own gratification.

Meanwhile, an American soldier was sentenced on Friday to a year in jail for the murder of a severely wounded Iraqi teenager in Baghdad slum district during a Shia uprising last year, the US military said.

"Staff Sergeant Cardenas Alban was convicted on one count of murder and one count of conspiracy to murder at a court martial at the 1st Cavalry Division courthouse at Camp Liberty today," a military spokesman said.

ইস্ট-ওয়েস্ট মেডিকেল কলেজ
(সরকারী অনুমোদন পাঠ, ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় অধিভুক্ত এবং বিএমডিএস কোর্স কারিকুলাম অনুসৃত)
বাহাড়া # ৩, রোড # ১৩, লেট্টার # ৩, উত্তরা, ঢাকা-১২৩০।
টেলিফোন : ৮৯১৯৮৯৭, ৮৯৫০৫০৪, ৮৯৬৩৭৫৮
১ম বর্ষ এমবিবিএস কোর্সে ভর্তির বিজ্ঞপ্তি
২০০৪-২০০৫ শিক্ষাবর্ষে ১ম বর্ষ এমবিবিএস কোর্সে ভর্তির জন্য দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাইতেছে।
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ছটির দিন সহ প্রত্যহ সকাল ৮টা হইতে বিকাল ৫টা পর্যন্ত কলেজ অফিস হইতে ১০০০/- (এক হাজার) টাকার বিনিময়ে (অফিসিং ফোন্স) ফরম এবং প্রসেক্রেটরস পাওয়া যাইবে।
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ইস্ট-ওয়েস্ট মেডিকেল কলেজ

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