

Journalist freed from US prison after 44 years

AP, Lake Charles

An award-winning black journalist convicted of murder three times by all-white juries in the 1961 death of a bank teller was set free after a racially-mixed jury found him guilty of manslaughter.

Wilbert Rideau, a confessed killer who gained fame for exposes of harsh Louisiana prison life, won his release Saturday after nearly 44 years in state prisons. A manslaughter conviction allows his release for time already served.

Seven whites and five blacks deliberated for nearly six hours before reaching an unanimous decision.

Rideau, 62, showed little emotion as the verdict was announced late Saturday night. His only comment in court was "Yes, sir," when the judge asked whether he wanted, in effect, to be released immediately.

Romanian becomes oldest woman ever to give birth

AFP, Bucharest

A 67-year-old Romanian yesterday became the oldest woman ever known to have given birth, although one of her twin girls died shortly afterwards, Bucharest's Giulesti Hospital said, in a report carried by a TV station.

Adriana Iliescu, a retired university professor, had undergone fertility treatment for nine years before succeeding in becoming pregnant.

Realitatea TV said she had given birth to twin girls, one of whom had died almost immediately. The surviving infant, which weighed 1.4 kilogram (three pounds), was in good health, the TV channel said.



Iraqis, holding up a lantern and pictures of radical Shia Muslim leader Sheikh Moqtada Sadr, take part in a protest in front of the Oil Ministry in Baghdad yesterday against scarcity of fuel and its high prices.

PHOTO: AFP

Americans backed Iraq war at ballot box: Bush

18 executed bodies of Iraqis found

AFP, Washington/Baghdad

The US electorate effectively expressed its support for the war on Iraq by re-electing George W. Bush to a second term as president, Bush said, calling the election an "accountability moment" for mistakes and misjudgments in the justification and execution of the war.

In an extensive interview with The Washington Post published yesterday, days before the start of his second term, Bush was asked why no US official has been held accountable for faulty intelligence about weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, or for underestimating the difficulty of winning the peace

there.

"Well, we had an accountability moment, and that's called the 2004 election," Bush said. "And the American people listened to different assessments made about what was taking place in Iraq, and they looked at the two candidates, and they chose me, for which I'm grateful."

Bush could not say whether the number of US troops in Iraq would be significantly reduced by the end of his second four year term, and said he was "realistic" about the amount of time required for an oppressed society to make the transition to democracy.

"I am realistic about how quickly a society that has been dominated

by a tyrant can become a democracy. And therefore I am more patient than some," Bush said, adding that "we've got to get the Iraqis up and running as quickly as possible, so they can defeat these terrorists."

Meanwhile, Iraq's interim government unveiled a security plan for election day, as the discovery of 18 executed Iraqis on roadsides across the country underscored the insurgency's ability to plunge the vote into chaos.

Thirteen corpses were discovered near Latifiyah, a rebel stronghold south of Baghdad, which the US-led multinational forces swept less than two months ago, witnesses said.

Indonesia scraps foreign troop pullout deadline

Wolfowitz sees closer US, Indonesian ties after tsunami disaster

AFP, Meulaboh

Foreign forces including the US Navy will be able to continue tsunami relief operations in Indonesia beyond a March 26 deadline, the government said yesterday, as the country's confirmed death toll from the Indian Ocean disaster rose to almost 115,000.

The United States, whose military is playing a key role in aiding stranded victims in Indonesia's badly-hit Aceh province, meanwhile pledged to turn a new page in military ties with the world's largest Muslim nation in the wake of the December 26 tragedy.

Indonesian Defence Minister Juwono Sudarsono said an earlier demand by the country's vice president, Yusuf Kalla, that overseas troops quit within three months or "the sooner the better" was "not a deadline for involvement of foreign military personnel".

"It is a benchmark for the Indonesian government to improve and accelerate its relief efforts so that by March 26th the large part of the burden of the relief efforts will be carried by the Indonesian government and authorities on the ground," Sudarsono told reporters in Jakarta.

Sudarsono, speaking after talks with US Deputy Defence Secretary

Paul Wolfowitz and the commander for US forces in the Pacific, Admiral Thomas Fargo, said the overseas military could remain provided they scaled back their presence.

"Foreign military assistance, operations providing relief and rehabilitation, will be allowed to continue, albeit on a reduced scale." Sudarsono acknowledged the US military in Aceh had been "the backbone of the logistical operations, providing assistance to all afflicted".

Armed forces from the United States and several other countries have proved crucial to relief operations in Aceh on Sumatra island.

80 Afghans released from US custody

AFP, Kabul

Eighty Afghan detainees were released from US custody at Bagram air base near Kabul yesterday ahead of the Muslim festival of Eid-ul-Azha as part of an attempt to bring moderate Taliban supporters in from the cold, officials said.

The 80 prisoners, dressed in blue and grey shalwar kameez and unlaced blue sports shoes, arrived at the Supreme Court in two buses last afternoon from the US detention facility at Bagram and were released after a hearing.

Chief Justice Fazl Hadi Shinwari told the court the prisoners had been held at Bagram, contradicting earlier reports that they had been released from Guantanamo Bay in Cuba.

"The prisoners are released. They will be given clothes and money by the government and they will go home," Shinwari added.

Russian forces foiled 'another Beslan'

AFP, Moscow

Russian security forces yesterday combed through the scene of an hours-long gunbattle with suspected pro-Chechen rebels in a southern republic who were reportedly preparing a terror attack like the Beslan school hostage-taking.

Heavily-armed special forces accompanied by bomb disposal experts and sniffer dogs searched the ruins of a two-storey house near the capital of Dagestan, Makhachkala, where five militants were holed up for 15 hours Saturday, NTV television reported.

The head of the FSB security service in Dagestan, Nikolai Gryaznov, said the siege and a separate assault on rebels hiding in a house in Kaspysk on the Caspian Sea -- in which a total of four Russian troops died -- had averted a major terror act.

70 million Arabs still unable to read or write

AFP, Tunis

Although illiteracy rates are generally falling in Arab countries, rising populations mean that the total numbers of people unable to either read or write continue to increase, an Arab League body devoted to education and culture said on Sunday.

The report, by the Arab League Education, Science and Culture Organisation (Alesco) said that some 70 million people aged over 15 in League member countries were illiterate.

It also said that almost half of all women in the countries concerned -- 46.5 percent -- were unable to read or write, as against a rate of 25.1 percent amongst men.

The report noted however that as a percentage of total populations, the number of illiterates had fallen over the past 35 years.

POST-TSUNAMI RECONSTRUCTION

Lanka to arm itself with tough emergency laws

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka is to arm itself with tough emergency laws before a major post-tsunami reconstruction effort backed by unprecedented international financial backing, officials said yesterday.

The laws proposed by President Chandrika Kumaratunga would give the government power to confiscate property and impose tough punishments for tsunami-related crimes, officials and local media reported.

Sri Lanka declared a state of emergency on December 26 hours after mountains of water smashed into three-quarters of its coastline, killing nearly 31,000 people and leaving up to a million homeless.

This allowed the immediate relaxation of laws such as those covering procedures for burying bodies, but the precise form of the emergency depends on the laws that will now be introduced by the president.

"The president brought the new regulations to deal with the reconstruction work. In some places we have to acquire land to prevent people from rebuilding too close to the beach," an official close to the president said.

"To speed up reconstruction, we need these new laws. There is across-the-board support for this. The president has kept the opposition informed about this and they too agree."

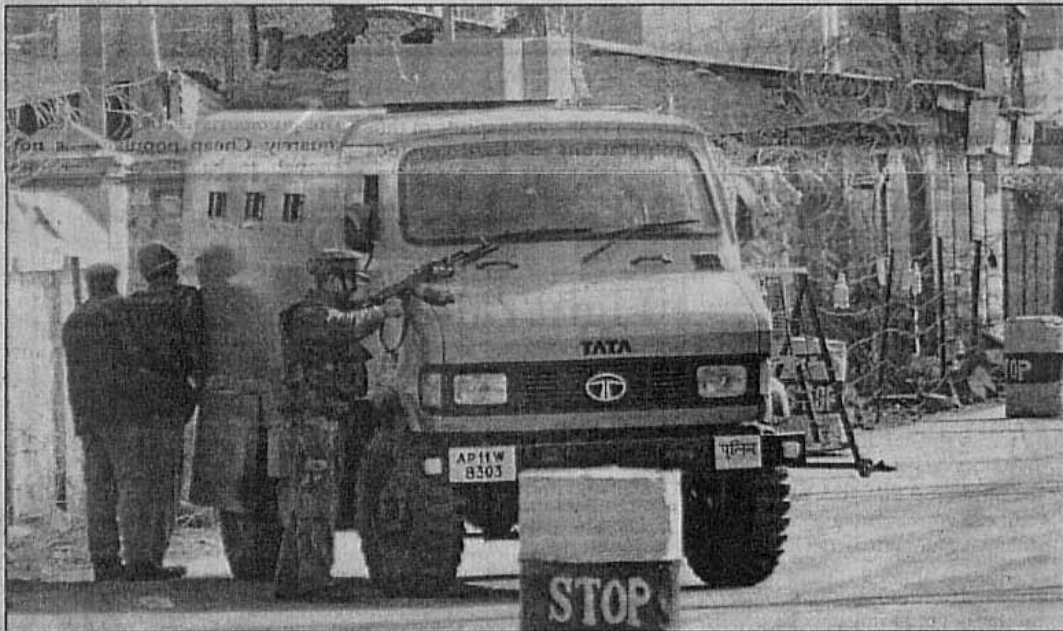


PHOTO: AFP

Indian Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) soldiers take position outside a stadium complex stormed by militants Saturday in Kashmir's main city Srinagar yesterday. Two soldiers were killed as troops resumed an operation early yesterday to flush out militants who had stormed the stadium complex, police said.

Graner abuse sentence too lenient, say Iraqis

REUTERS, Baghdad

Many Iraqis reacted angrily yesterday to news that US soldier Charles Graner had been sentenced to 10 years in jail for his role in prisoner abuse at Abu Ghraib jail, saying he should have faced harsher punishment.

But struggling to cope with daily violence, crime, and fuel and food shortages, and fearing more bloodshed ahead of Jan. 30 elections, most said they had paid little attention to Graner's court martial.

Some said members of Saddam Hussein's regime responsible for torture and killing at the notorious prison west of Baghdad before the US-led invasion should also be brought to justice.

"It's too little. This isn't justice," trader Ali Ahmed, 23, said of Graner's sentence.

"Even capital punishment isn't enough. But since it's forbidden to torture him the way he tortured the prisoners, I would have settled for the death penalty."

A military jury in Fort Hood, Texas, sentenced Graner on Saturday to 10 years' imprisonment for his leading role in the torture of Iraqi prisoners at Abu Ghraib, five years less than the maximum sentence possible.

The sentencing came a day after a jury convicted Graner on 10 counts related to the abuses, many of which were documented in photographs that included naked prisoners stacked into a pyramid and being

forced to masturbate.

But Iraqi newspapers had only limited coverage of the court martial and many Iraqis said they had not been following it.

"As an ex-soldier, I admit that no army is perfect," said 38-year-old meteorologist Ali Mahawi.

"It isn't just the American army that has these things. We had abuse that happened in our army," he said. But he added that he did not think the sentence was sufficient.

"I think 10 years isn't much and a stronger sentence would have produced a more effective deterrent."

Even before the scandal of US abuse at Abu Ghraib erupted, the prison had a grim reputation because many of Saddam's enemies were jailed, tortured and killed there.

Some Iraqis said that should not be forgotten.

"The abuse in Abu Ghraib prison was far worse under Saddam. I don't blame a foreign army ending up abusing Iraqis because they don't care about us, but it hurts me to know that Iraqis were abusing Iraqis with the most horrific torture and it's those I want to see brought to justice," said Salih al-Jubouri, a 33-year-old unemployed man.

He said two of his brothers were tortured during Saddam's rule.

The US prison abuse scandal helped turn many Iraqis who initially welcomed the overthrow of Saddam against the foreign troops who removed him from power.



PHOTO: AFP

Russian special forces soldiers stand behind an APC as they storm a house near the Dagestan capital Makhachkala Saturday. Four Russian security operatives were killed in armed clashes Saturday with rebels under siege in a house in the southern Russian minority republic of Dagestan neighbouring Chechnya, authorities said.

ASHUGANJ POWER STATION COMPANY LIMITED

(An enterprise of Bangladesh Power Development Board)

Ashuganj, B.Baria-3402, Bangladesh

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Company is looking for some energetic and promising candidates for appointment to the following posts on adhoc basis for a period of one year, but likely to be absorbed under the approved set-up of the Company, at emoluments given below:

Sl. No.	Name of the Post	No. of Post	Salary (Consolidated)	Age Limit	Qualification & Experience
01	Deputy Manager (Procurement)	1	Tk. 15,000/=	35 yrs	CA / CMA / BSc Engineer / Masters in any discipline with 5 years post qualifying experience in the field of Purchase/Procurement in a large industrial or commercial organisation
02	Engineer	1	Tk. 15,000/=	35 yrs	BSc Engineer (Electrical) having 5 years post qualifying experience in repair & maintenance of large Sub-Station (230/132/33 KV) equipments including protection, control & signaling system
03	Assistant Engineer (Electrical)	5	Tk. 12,000/=	30 yrs	BSc Engineer (Electrical)
04	Assistant Engineer (Mechanical)	5	Tk. 12,000/=	30 yrs	BSc Engineer (Mechanical)
05	Assistant Engineer (Civil)	1	Tk. 12,000/=	30 yrs	BSc Engineer (Civil)
06	Assistant Manager (Procurement)	1	Tk. 10,000/=	35 yrs	CA / CMA / BSc Engineer / Masters in any discipline (preference will be given to the candidates having previous experience in the field of Purchase / Procurement)
07	Assistant Manager (Labour & Welfare)	1	Tk. 10,000/=	35 yrs	Masters in any discipline (preference will be given to the candidates having previous experience in the relevant fields)
08	Sub-Assistant Engineer	4	Tk. 8,000/=	35 yrs	Diploma Engineer (Electrical) having 5 years experience in large Sub-Station (230/132/33 KV) on repair & maintenance of major equipments including protection, control & signaling system
09	Sub-Assistant Engineer	4	Tk. 7,000/=	30 yrs	Diploma Engineer (Electrical / Mechanical)
10	Junior Assistant	1	Tk. 5,000/=	30 yrs	BA / BSc / BCom having sufficient knowledge in secretarial activities & computer operation

Age limit shall be calculated on 31 January 2005.

Interested candidates may apply with CV to "The Managing Director, Ashuganj Power Station Company Limited, Ashuganj, B-Baria" within 31 January 2005.

N.B. : The incumbents shall have to stay at the site, if appointed.

- Company Secretary



ICDDR,B: CENTRE FOR HEALTH AND POPULATION RESEARCH

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

ICDDR,B : Centre for Health and Population Research invites application from the suitable candidates for the position of Administrative Assistant at Dhaka for Procurement and Materials unit under the Executive Director's Division. The appointment will be made on fixed-term basis for 2(two) years.

Salary : Tk. 162,590/-6,650/-242,620/- per annum inclusive of house rent and conveyance allowances with other admissible benefits.

The primary responsibility of the jobholder is to prepare document of C&F agent, yearly contract, enlistment, hiring of vehicle, rate running contract, tender schedules; responsible to receive and distribute the in-coming and out-going fax, mail and documents ; prepare minutes of meetings, maintain liaison with local and overseas indentors, deal with stock, non-stock and maintenance requisitions, draft letters, memos, etc., and ensure safety of all items.

Requirements: Bachelors' degree in any discipline preferably in commerce. Minimum 3 (three) years' experience in office management and computerized ERP system in a reputed organization.

Ability to work in computer environment with excellent typing and computer skills. Adequate knowledge of written and spoken English and ability to interact with other individuals.

Applications with bio-data detailing experience and other particulars along with a copy of recent passport size photograph and copies of certificates should reach the Manager, Human Resources, ICDDR,B, Mohakhali, Dhaka 1212 by January 30, 2005.

The candidates already in employment should apply through proper channel.

ICDDR,B is an equal opportunity employer and particularly welcomes applications from women candidates.



Dhaka Ahsania Mission

House # 19, Road # 12 (New), Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka-1209. Phone : 8119521-22, 8115909, Fax : 8113010

INVITATION FOR TENDER

Sealed Tenders are hereby invited from the reputed Contractors/Firms for the construction, supply, installation, commissioning of Central Air Conditioning in 12 storied ASHANIA MISSION CANCER & GENERAL HOSPITAL (AMCGH) at Sector-10, Uttara, Dhaka.

- Prescribed forms and Tender documents may be obtained from the office of the President & Chief Executive, Dhaka Ahsania Mission, House No. 19, Road No. 12, (New), Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka-1209, on cash payment of non-refundable Taka 4000.00 (Tk. Four Thousand) only from 18-02-2005 to 27.02.2005 up to 4.30 pm in all working days.
- Reputed Central Air Conditioning Contractors/Firms having experience in Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of minimum Chiller capacity of 400 tons each in at least two projects during the last 5 (five) years in Bangladesh are eligible to participate in the Tender.
- Prescribed completed Documents must be submitted to the office of the President & Chief Executive on 06.03.2005, by 2.30pm and will be opened on the same day at 2.45pm in presence of the Contractors/Firms or their authorized representative(s) if any.
- The work has to be completed in 30 (thirty) months from the date of issuing the work order.
- Pre-bid meeting will be held on 31.01.2005 at 11.00am in the Auditorium (1st floor) of Dhaka Ahsania Mission.
- Tender Security of Taka 20 (twenty) lacs only in the form of Pay Order or Bank Draft or Irrevocable Bank Guarantee, issued by a scheduled Bank of Bangladesh at the option of the Tender in favour of Ahsania Mission Cancer & General Hospital to be submitted with the Tender. The Tender Security Money shall remain valid for 6 (six) months.
- Interested Contractor (s)/ firm (s) may obtain further information from the office of the Engineer-in-Charge.
- Dhaka Ahsania Mission reserves the right to accept any or reject all the Tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

President & Chief Executive
Dhaka Ahsania Mission