

Trains collide in US: 11 die

REUTERS, Los Angeles

At least 11 people were killed and nearly 200 injured on Wednesday when two Los Angeles commuter trains collided after one struck an automobile left on the tracks in what authorities called an aborted suicide attempt by a "deranged" man.

Police and fire officials said the man slashed his wrists and stabbed himself in the chest shortly before parking his Jeep Cherokee on the tracks. But he jumped clear at the last moment and watched as the two high-speed trains smashed together and derailed in a fiery wreck.

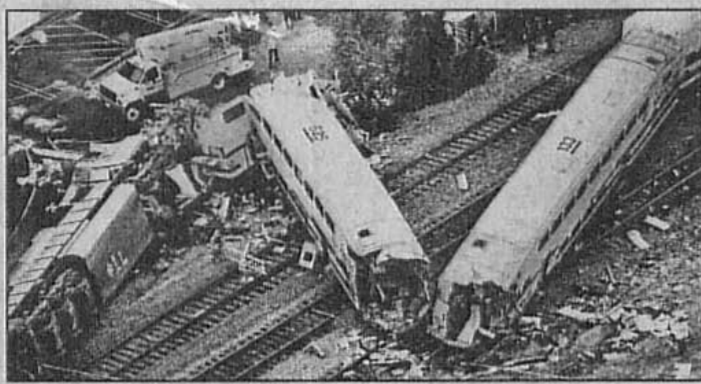
The man was identified by police as Juan Manuel Alvarez, 25. He was found wandering the scene after the pre-dawn accident, muttering, "I'm sorry, I'm sorry," according to a local television report. Police said the man, who was uninjured in the crash, was arrested and would be charged with at least 10 counts of murder.

Los Angeles County District Attorney Steve Cooley said decisions about charging the suspect would be made by Friday.

Glendale Police Chief Randy Adams said Alvarez admitted parking on the tracks with the intention of killing himself, but apparently changed his mind and fled as one of the commuter trains bore down on him.

"He was very distraught and upset and realised that he caused a major disaster," Adams told a news conference.

The commuter trains also struck a parked freight train, sparking a brief fire. The collision occurred just after 6 a.m., near a shopping strip at the edge of an industrial area near Glendale, north of downtown Los Angeles.



A general view shows the wreckage of a commuter train crash on Wednesday in Glendale, California. Eleven people were killed and more than 100 injured in the Los Angeles suburb of Glendale when two commuter trains slammed into each other after one of them hit a car left on the lines by a suicidal man.

About 125 people hurt in the train wreck were hospitalized, and 60 others were treated for minor injuries and released, fire officials said. Ten people initially reported dead included a sheriff's deputy and a train conductor. An 11th body was retrieved from the wreckage in the evening, said Francisco Oaxaca, spokesman for Metrolink.

Metrolink, the Southern California commuter rail service that operates the train tracks, said it was the worst accident in its 13-year history.

The impact sent passengers flying through the trains and landing on top of one another. Firefighters found bleeding passengers walking dazed amid a tangle of twisted wreckage and scattered shoes, briefcases and gravel. Some survivors were pushing others in shopping carts taken from an adjacent

Rice confirmed despite Democrats' criticisms

AP, Washington

Condoleezza Rice won confirmation as secretary of state Wednesday despite blistering criticism from Senate Democrats who accused her of misleading statements and said she must share the blame for mistakes and war deaths in Iraq.

The tally, though one-sided at 85-13, was still the largest "no" vote against any secretary of state nominee since 1825.

Rice was sworn-in seven hours later by White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card in his West Wing office. Her designated replacement as national security adviser, Stephen Hadley, held the Bible. Bush planned to attend a ceremonial swearing-in Friday at the State Department.

Separately, a Senate committee narrowly voted to send Alberto Gonzales' attorney general nomination to the full Senate. Jim Nicholson and Michael Leavitt won confirmation as the new secretaries of veterans affairs and health and human services respectively as President Bush's second-term Cabinet fills out.

Rice, Bush's national security adviser for four years and perhaps his closest adviser on the war and terrorism issues that dominated his first term, becomes the first black woman to be America's top diplomat. She succeeds Colin Powell, a former Army general who clashed privately with some of the strongest hawks in Bush's inner circle.

MALAYSIAN PM TELLS OIC CONFERENCE Parts of Muslim world in 'deep crisis'

AFP, Kuala Lumpur

Many parts of the Islamic world are in "deep crisis" with Muslims suffering more from militancy and terrorism than others, Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said yesterday.

"There are many challenges that we need to overcome. In many parts of our world, we are in deep crisis," Abdullah told some 50 participants from 15 member countries of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC).

"The OIC landscape is a distressing one. Darfur is a humanitarian disaster, two of us are occupied - Iraq completely and Palestine partially," said Abdullah, who currently chairs the OIC.

"Some of the OIC countries are rich and their people affluent. But they are too few and far between. The OIC landscape is littered with nations that are poor and people

that are hungry. "They are largely at the mercy of developed nations and of forces beyond their control."

An estimated 70,000 people have died and 1.5 million have been displaced in fighting between ethnic rebels and government forces and their militia allies in Sudan's Darfur region since February 2003.

Nearly 50 scholars and diplomats from Burkina Faso, Egypt, Iran, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Morocco, Nigeria, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sudan, Turkey and Yemen are attending the three-day meeting of the OIC Commission of Eminent Persons in Malaysia's administrative capital Putrajaya.

"Uppermost in the commission's agenda must surely be the question of how to strengthen the prospects for peace, security and stability in Muslim countries, and between Muslim countries and others," Abdullah said.

Sharon 'pleased' with Palestinian moves Abbas wins US praise

AFP, Jerusalem

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon expressed satisfaction in a newspaper interview yesterday with measures taken by new Palestinian leader Mahmud Abbas to reduce violence.

"There's no doubt that Abu Mazen (Abbas) has begun to work," he told the Yedioth Aharonot daily.

"I am very pleased with what I hear about what is going on the Palestinian side, and I very much want to work with him to make progress."

Abbas has impressed Sharon by his efforts to bring the four-year armed uprising to an end since his election on January 9.

As well as persuading the armed factions to observe a "cooling down" period, Abbas has also deployed thousands of security forces in the Gaza Strip in order to prevent rocket attacks by militants on Jewish settle-

ments or across the border into Israel. Abbas however is urging Israel to reciprocate any ceasefire by groups such as Hamas and al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades by ending its military operations in the occupied territories and releasing prisoners in order

Sharon said he was keen to help Abbas but gave few other details. "I intend to promote the chances of reaching an arrangement with the Palestinians," said the Israeli leader.

Meanwhile, Palestinian leader Mahmud Abbas held his first talks with a senior US official yesterday after winning praise from President George W. Bush and Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon over his efforts to end the armed uprising.

Abbas was meeting Assistant Secretary of State William Burns in Ramallah after the State Department envoy held talks earlier with Palestinian prime minister Ahmed Qorei.

Iraqis deeply divided over election

Shias vow to vote while Sunnis to stay away

AFP, Baghdad

As a metropolis, Baghdad is divided over Sunday's watershed general election, as Shia Iraqis express their determination to vote while Sunni neighbors turn away in disenchantment and fear.

Neighborhood by neighborhood, the capital plays out the national drama of religious and ethnic tension as some laud the poll as their salvation and others as a nail in the coffin.

"If I don't vote in the elections, I will go to hell," says Mohammed Ali Kadumi, 56, a tailor in the bustling, mainly Shia shopping district of Kadamiya.

Shia religious authorities in the holy city of Najaf "issued a fatwa (religious edict) to take part in the elections, so I have to," he says.

Down the street, smartly dressed gold merchant Hassan al-Awadi, 28, says he backs the front-running Shia list, the United Iraq Alliance.

"It's the best for Shias, but I also expect most Sunnis to take part," he says, playing down Sunni leaders' calls to boycott the election.

Like most of Iraq's long-oppressed Shia majority, who make up 60 percent of the country's population, grocer Jawad Qassem, 48, is also optimistic.

"The elections mean democracy and freedom, and it's an order from Najaf to vote, so I will go to the polling station with my sons and my brothers. I hope all the problems will soon disappear."

Across the Tigris river in the mostly Sunni Adhamiya district, however, the mood is more pessimistic.



Filipino leftist group and Muslims display anti-US banners and a mock missile during their protest near the US embassy in Manila yesterday. The protesters are condemning the US-led attack on Iraq and the holding of election in that country later this month.



VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

National Consultants for the ARISE Project (BGD/97/028)

ARISE (Appropriate Resources for Improving Children's Environment) is a UNDP-funded project in Bangladesh being implemented by the Ministry of Social Welfare through the Department of Social Services. The project has the target of working for 60,000 children with a wide range of services, such as non-formal education, vocational training, healthy services, shelter (i.e., drop-in centers), legal aid etc. The ARISE project has the following vacancies to be filled in by short-term consultants. The start-off date for each of the positions is 15 February 2005. Duration of each post is 5 months, with possibilities for extension on the basis of performance. Duty Station is at Dhaka, with requirements for frequent visits to the six administrative divisions. Detailed Terms of Reference are available at www.un-bd.org/undp/jobs.

1. Vocational Skill Specialist (One post) :

Duties : The Vocational Skill Specialist is to support the Senior Deputy Project Coordinator and National Project Director of the ARISE in all respects in order to realize the objectives of the project as contained in the proposal. He/she is also responsible to guide and support the respective Divisional Coordinators at divisional level. His/her main responsibility will be to find out the ways and means to mobilize the community and relevant actors towards the betterment of street children's lives. He/she will develop a strategy for alternative livelihood in consultation with the Program Officer, UNDP project personnel and NGO Management. He/she will have to share with National Project Director and consultants for the sustainable development of most vulnerable children with appropriate vocational training and generation of all possible resources both at divisional/national levels in this connection.

Requirements : i) Bachelor's degree in Engineering or other relevant development areas master's degree in the Social Sciences; ii) A minimum of 10 years of professional experience in designing, implementing and monitoring vocational skill training especially for disadvantaged children is required; iii) Knowledge on FGD, PRA, GOPP and teamwork experience will be preferred.

2. Advocacy Specialist (One post) :

Duties : The Advocacy Specialist is to support the Senior Deputy Project Coordinator and National Project Director in all respect of the ARISE, in order to realize the objectives of the project as contained in the proposal. He/she is also responsible to guide and assist the respective Divisional Coordinators and coordinate with all the actors at the divisional level. His/her main responsibility will be to find out ways and means to mobilize relevant actors at the national level towards the betterment of street children's lives. He/she will develop a strategy for fund raising and direct the work of the Community Mobilization and Awareness Raising Specialist that will work at the district level, in consultation with the Program officer of UNDP, project personnel and NGO Management from time to time. He/she will have to maintain continuous dialogue and linkages with donor agencies and possess an updated information system for the ARISE project. He/she will have to share with the concerned Ministry and UNDP on the policy formulation and necessary amendment of laws concerned with children. He/she will have to share with National Project Director and Consultants for a sustainable development of most vulnerable children with appropriate generation of all possible resources both at Divisional/National levels.

Requirements :

i) Postgraduate degree in Social Science/Mass Communication/Journalism/Law, work on human rights and legal issues would be an additional assets; ii) A minimum of 5 years of professional experience in planning and carrying out advocacy activity at local and national levels, and in organizing workshops and training activities around these issues with government and non-government bodies as well as practical experience in working on human rights, legal and policy issues with disadvantaged communities; iii) Networking skills already acquired working with civil society organizations relevant to promote and protect rights of the target group will be an asset; iv) Strong computer skills in power point/spreadsheet, e-mail, web site maintenance etc; v) Knowledge on PRA, GOPP and use of computer.

3. Research Specialist (One post) :

Duties : The Specialist on Research is to support the Senior Deputy Project Coordinator and National Project Director in all respect of the ARISE. He/she is also responsible to guide and assist the respective Divisional Coordinators and coordinate with all the actors at division level. His/her main responsibility will be to initiate innovative and action research in order to realize the objectives of the project as contained in the proposal. He/she will have to share with National Project Director and Consultants for a sustainable development of most vulnerable children with appropriate research proposals.

Requirements : i) Master Degree in Social Science/Anthropology with minimum 10 years experience in the related field of activities; ii) A minimum of 5 years of professional experience in designing, implementing, monitoring, research and evaluating especially for disadvantaged children is required; iii) Knowledge on FGD PRA, GOPP, and use of computer.

4. Specialist on HIV/AIDS and other Infectious Diseases (One post) :

Duties : The Specialist on HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases is to work with the Senior Deputy Project Coordinator and support the National Project Director to provide technical advice in the health aspect of the ARISE. He / She is also responsible to guide and support the respective Divisional Coordinators & coordinate with all the actors at the divisional level. He/ she will create general awareness among the relevant stakeholders on the prevention of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and vulnerability of the children to contract the virus. He/She will educate the project staff on the issue and develop their capacity addressing and producing coping mechanism to protect street children from contracting STD/AIDS virus and other infectious diseases.

Requirements : i) possess relevant educational background in the Health sector with significant experience in working on HIV/AIDS; ii) Have a strong commitment to participatory process and transfer of knowledge and skills.

5. Legal expert (One post) :

Duties : i) To provide technical and general advice to National Project Director and Senior Deputy Project Coordinator on legal aid, ii) to assist the divisional coordinator and NGOs to support street children, iii) Special training on juvenile justice is required as well as knowledge on participatory process and working experience obtaining legal aid, iv) To train NGOs and most vulnerable children about human rights, children rights, National and International Law; v) Facilitate linkages between the partner NGOs and institutions/associations that can provide legal aid to street children.

Requirements : i) At least LLB and relevant experience in human rights; ii) Minimum 5 years of working in the legal field for the protection of the most vulnerable groups in government and non government organizations; iii) Experience in conducting workshops and training particularly on legal issues and human rights; iv) Good level of both spoken and written English.

6. Documentation and Monitoring Specialist (One post) :

Duties : To provide technical and general advice to National Project Director and Senior Deputy Project Coordinator in monitoring and organizing proper documentation of the project activities. Support the operational and logistic process of the project in a substantive and organizational manner as well as to conduct field visits and continuously interact with the partner NGOs and Divisional coordinators for data collection and monitoring purposes.

Requirements : i) Masters in administration; ii) Minimum 5 years of working experience in the Administrative field; iii) Strong commitment to participatory process and transfer of knowledge; iv) Strong organisational skills; v) Experience in monitoring will be a plus; vi) Good English both written and spoken; vii) Good Communication Skills; viii) Excellent computer skills; ix) Ability to work in team.

7. Community Mobilization and Awareness Raising Specialist (One post) :

Duties : His/her main responsibility will be to find out ways and means to mobilize relevant actors at the local level to support the most vulnerable children. He/She will conduct Regional workshops to advocate the rights of the most vulnerable children and follow up all the recommendations subsequent to the workshops/Seminars. He/She will work under direct supervision of the Advocacy specialist and implement the strategies and plan suggested for fund raising activities at the community level or any other plan to mobilize the community and the relevant stakeholder at the local level. The Community Mobilization and awareness-raising specialist will work on community mobilization of resources and awareness rising to involve the community in supporting and understanding the difficulties, the rights and needs of the beneficiaries.

Requirements : i) Masters in Social Sciences preferred; ii) Substantive methodological skills and capacity to sensitise and mobilize community; iii) Minimum 5 years of working experience with NGO/CBO programme for disadvantaged children; iv) Relevant working experience in networking activities; v) Excellent communication skills; vi) Strong commitment to transfer and disseminate knowledge and capacity building; vii) Fluency in both spoken and written English.

All of the above positions require that the incumbent must i) be willing to work in a team and share knowledge on best practices; ii) possess excellent communication skills in English and Bengali; iii) have ability to set priorities and work independently; iv) have proven experience of working in partnership with local, international NGOs and donor agencies; v) have report writing and oral presentation abilities; and vi) Strong computer skills in power point/spreadsheet, e-mail, web site maintenance etc.

Submission of Application : Applications should be submitted in English and include a covering letter and curriculum vitae and should be addressed, quoting the post title, to the Assistant Resident Representative (Human Resources), UNDP, GPO Box 224, Dhaka, or delivered to the Deposit Box at IDB Bhaban (Ground Floor Reception Centre), E/8-A, Begum Rokéya Sharani, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka c.o.b. 12 February 2005. The post title should be clearly marked on the envelope. Only short listed candidates will be contacted. UN work experience may be advantageous. Any attempt to influence the process of selection will result in automatic disqualification of the recommended candidate. UNDP reserves the right to reject any or all applications without assigning any reason whatsoever. Female candidates are encouraged to apply.

UNDP IS A NON-SMOKING WORK ENVIRONMENT.

ICDDR,B: Centre for Health and Population Research VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

ICDDR,B: Centre for Health and Population Research invites applications from the suitable candidates for the position of Gender Specialist in Human Resources under the Executive Director's Division. The appointment will be made on fixed-term basis for a period of 2 (two) years.

The incumbent will provide overall coordination to the gender focused activities, formulate plans for Gender Policy implementation across the Centre and evaluate impact of Gender Policy on organizational change. The incumbent will keep Director, Human Resources updated on critical Gender Development and bring to the attention on policy issues affecting these areas and recommend appropriate changes in policy. The Gender Specialist will develop initiatives to raise awareness of gender issues and the Gender Policy at all level of the organization and participate in the Gender Committee as member-secretary. S/he will also be responsible to establish and develop gender focal points for all field sites and take initiatives for creating a gender sensitive working environment for increased women's participation and representation in key decision-making positions and bodies guiding organizational and programmatic issues.

Salary Range : Taka 640,620/-26,360/-956,670/= per annum with other admissible benefits.

REQUIREMENTS

1. Master's Degree in Social Science or any other relevant subject
2. Eight years work experience in the similar field, five of which at the senior level
3. In depth understanding of the gender and organizational issues with practical experience preferably in an appropriate health related environment
4. Solid experience in diversity, training and human resources development
5. Innovative problem-solving and demonstrated analytical skills
6. Experience in participatory decision-making and capacity to overcome resistance in implementing changed decisions
7. Ability to work at different levels of organization to support organizational change
8. Maintaining confidentiality with sensitivity and integrity
9. Strong interpersonal and facilitation skills
10. Demonstrated advocacy skills
11. Strong verbal and written Bangla and English skills
12. Excellent computer literacy in MS Office, MS Excel and Power Point is required.

Applicants should submit a current copy of their CV, along with a brief covering letter (not exceeding two pages) listing each of the above twelve points and providing concrete examples of their experiences in those areas to : Director, Human Resources, ICDDR,B: Centre for Health and Population Research, Mohakhali, Dhaka - 1212 to arrive not later than **February 09, 2005**.

ICDDR,B regrets that it will not reply to all applicants.

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