

US TO NEPALI KING

## Restore democracy or face chaos

Search on for missing soldiers, UN asks Maoists to treat captives humanely

BBC ONLINE, AFP, Kathmandu

The United States has warned Nepal's king to return the country to democracy or face a slide towards chaos.

The comments came as the bodies of 40 soldiers killed in fighting with Maoist rebels in the remote western district of Kalikot were recovered.

Nepal's army searched in driving monsoon rains yesterday for 75 soldiers missing after a major attack by Maoist rebels as the UN urged the guerrillas to treat any captives humanely, the military and a report said yesterday.

The army said the poor weather conditions were hampering the search for the missing soldiers and fugitive rebels whose attack on a camp near the northwestern town of

Kalikot claimed at least 66 lives.

"The visibility is very bad -- just 30 meters (yards)," an army official told AFP on condition of anonymity. He said the rebels were making use of the conditions to escape.

Another missing soldier had been traced by Wednesday, the official said, leaving 75 still unaccounted for after Sunday night's attack by hundreds of rebels on the army camp in a remote jungle area.

The army on Tuesday accused the rebels of lining up 40 soldiers and shooting them in the head and of mutilating some of their bodies. The rebels said 26 of their fighters died and that they had captured another 50 soldiers.

ABBC correspondent in Nepal says the fighting seems to be the bloodiest since King Gyanendra seized power more than six months ago.

Unverified claims by both sides suggest the number of people killed in the clash may be much higher.

The US ambassador to Nepal, James Moriarty, accused King Gyanendra of reneging on reforms he had promised to introduce after he dismissed the government and assumed absolute control in February.

"Unless the principles of freedom, civil rights and democracy once again take root through a process of true reconciliation among the legitimate political forces, I fear Nepal will inexorably slide towards confrontation, confusion and chaos," he said.

He was also critical of the Maoist rebels, accusing them of having a "plan to turn Nepal into a brutal and anachronistic state".

The rebels say they are holding

more than 50 of them captive, although this cannot be independently verified.

But a senior official from the UN high commissioner for human rights, Ian Martin, has urged the rebels to treat captured soldiers humanely and respect international human rights laws.

A Nepal army spokesman told the BBC at least 10 soldiers had been killed by rebels after the clashes ended.

Army spokesman Brig Gen Dipak Gurung accused the insurgents of violating international humanitarian law by killing soldiers after capturing them.

There are also allegations that their bodies had been mutilated.

The army camp was set up recently to provide security for the construction of the Karnali highway.



Women activists of Nepali Congress-Democratic (NC-D) party carry empty clay vessels as they take part in a protest demonstration in Kathmandu yesterday against the Royal Commission for Corruption Control's (RCCC) decision to jail former prime minister Sher Bahadur Deuba and ex-minister Prakash Man Singh on corruption charges.

## Rumsfeld accuses Iran of allowing weapons to cross into Iraq

AFP, Washington

US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld accused Iran Tuesday of allowing weapons to be smuggled across its border into Iraq, warning that "ultimately, it's a problem for Iran."

US intelligence believes that a cache of newly manufactured Iranian bombs discovered about two weeks ago in northeastern Iraq came from the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, a US intelligence official told AFP.

"It is true that weapons clearly, unambiguously from Iran have been found in Iraq," Rumsfeld told reporters.

He said he did not know whether there was official Iranian involvement in the weapons smuggling. But he added: "It's a big border and unhelpful for Iranians to be allowing weapons of those types to be crossing the border."

"It's a problem for the Iraqi government. It's a problem for the coalition forces. It's a problem for the international community. And ultimately, it's a problem for Iran," he said.

Pressed on what he meant, Rumsfeld said, "Well, they live in the neighbourhood. The people in that

region want this situation stabilised with exception of Iran and Syria," he said.

Rumsfeld and other senior administration officials have often attacked Syria for allowing Iraqi insurgents to move foreign fighters, money and arms across its borders.

But until now they had been more reserved about the role of Iran, whose Shia regime has been viewed as more closely aligned to Iraq's Shia majority than to an insurgency that has been drawn mainly from the country's Sunni minority.

The tougher line against Iran comes amid a spike in US casualties, including 14 marines and an interpreter who were killed last week when a triple-decker mine went off under their amphibious assault vehicle.

General Richard Myers, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said that bomb was "a relatively small device placed in the road that overturned the vehicle and when it did so, of course, there was no way out of the vehicle once it overturned."



Visiting Pakistani Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz (L) chats with his Japanese counterpart Junichiro Koizumi (R) prior to their talks at Koizumi's official residence in Tokyo yesterday. Aziz is here on a four-day official visit to talk with Japanese political and business leaders. At the centre is an unidentified interpreter.

## Pak PM calls on UK to 'look within' for Islamic extremism

AFP, PTI, Tokyo

Pakistani Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz yesterday called on Britain to "look within" for the roots of Islamic extremism, saying no links had been drawn between his country and the London bombings.

"We have found no evidence whatsoever of any of the incidents which happened in the UK linked to anybody in Pakistan, absolutely none," Aziz told reporters on a visit to Tokyo.

"The truth is that we publicly said the British authorities ought to look within Britain to see what caused this, and we have cooperation with them," he said.

Three of the four suspected suicide bombers in the July 7 attacks in London were British Muslims of Pakistani origin and at least two visited Pakistan prior to the attacks.

## Saudi envoy blasts UK for ignoring terror threat

AFP, London

Saudi Arabia's outgoing ambassador to Britain blasted the British government for ignoring constant Saudi warnings on Muslim extremists, a British newspaper reported yesterday.

Prince Turki al-Faisal, a former chief of Saudi intelligence, told The Times he had been "going round in circles" with British authorities over the threat posed by Saudi dissidents in Britain.

The prince, 60, has been ambassador to London since January 2003 but is soon to transfer to Washington.

He said his warnings had been passed around government departments.

The situation got so bad that crown prince Abdullah, now king, warned British ministers relations between the two nations would be damaged if no action was taken, the ambassador said.

"When you call somebody he says it is the other guy," the prince told The Times.

## 5 GIs killed in Iraq attacks

AP, AFP, Baghdad

Four US soldiers were killed and six others wounded Tuesday when insurgents attacked their patrol in the northern city of Beiji. One US soldier died in a suicide car bomb attack in Baghdad, officials said.

The 10 Task Force Liberty soldiers were on patrol when they came under attack late Tuesday in Beiji, 240km north of Baghdad, a military statement said yesterday.

A suicide car bomber struck a US convoy waiting at an intersection Tuesday in Baghdad, killing seven people including one American soldier and wounding more than 90. More than a dozen others died in scattered attacks across the capital.

Also, a US Marine assigned to the 2nd Marine Division was killed Monday by small-arms fire in Ramadi, 70 miles west of Baghdad, the US military said. The deaths brought the number of US service members killed in Iraq this month to at least 32.

An Iraqi traffic policeman was killed and seven people were wounded Wednesday when a mortar shell slammed into a central Baghdad city square, an interior ministry official said.

A second policeman was among those hurt.

Rebels regularly fire mortar shells at government targets in the city, mostly one at a time to avoid detection of their launching positions.

Violence raged as Iraqi political leaders showed little sign of compromise less than a week before a deadline for approving a new constitution. Faction leaders conferred for about four hours Tuesday night hoping to overcome their differences and produce a charter by Monday.

Participants said the talks focused on Kurdish demands for a federal state and although some progress was made, there was no final agreement on the issue. More talks were set for Wednesday.

## IAEA cancels meeting for more talks on Iran

AFP, Vienna

The UN atomic agency has cancelled a planned formal meeting yesterday on Iran's nuclear programme because diplomats remain locked in closed-door talks on an EU proposal to stop fuel cycle work, a spokesman here said.

The International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) 35-nation board of governors is expected to meet again on Thursday.

"It's off," IAEA spokesman Peter Rickwood said about the day's session of the board, which had begun meeting Tuesday, adding that the diplomats "just need more time."

The European Union, which has been negotiating with Iran on obtaining guarantees that the Iranians are not making nuclear weapons, is trying to win approval for a draft resolution calling on Iran to reverse its decision to push ahead with nuclear fuel work.

A diplomat close to the IAEA said non-aligned nations on the board

"do not want a resolution on Iran", preferring instead the weaker option of a simple statement from the board's chairman. Iran is not on the board but is a non-aligned country.

But, the diplomat said, Western countries "feel the credibility of the board is at stake because Iran has ignored so many of the board's resolutions," including ones last September and November calling on Iran not to make nuclear fuel, which powers civilian reactors but can also be used to make atom bombs.

Iran on Monday lifted the suspension of nuclear work it had honoured since November in order to get talks with the EU started. It began uranium conversion at a facility in Isfahan and Wednesday was to widen this by breaking IAEA seals at the site, according to reports from Tehran.

In Tehran, Iran said yesterday the UN nuclear watchdog has authorised it to remove seals placed on its Isfahan uranium conversion plant, paving the way for a full resumption of the sensitive fuel cycle work there.

## Purported al-Qaeda video threatens troops

AP, Dubai

A purported al-Qaeda-made video shows militants in Afghanistan including Europeans, Arabs and others preparing to attack US troops and showing off what they said was a US military laptop.

The video, parts of which have been shown by Al-Arabiya television, including a segment aired Tuesday, features interviews with a masked man yelling "As you bomb us, you will be bombed!" and shows a group of men packing explosives into bombs.

The authenticity of the videotape could not be confirmed. Air Force Capt. Lennea Montandon, a spokeswoman for US Central Command in Qatar, said the military would not comment because it had not seen the broadcast.

If authentic, the program would be the latest attempt by the al-Qaeda network to use the broadcast media and Internet to promote its cause.

## US releases guide for new immigrants

PTI, Washington

Pay taxes, carry your green card all the time and do not engage in serious crimes like murder, rape and terrorism, these are some of the advices given to new immigrants by the US Citizenship and Immigration Services.

The Department has recently released a manual titled "Welcome to the United States: A Guide for New Immigrants" to help them settle into their lives without much difficulty on their arrival in the country.

It provides an array of information on meeting the ordinary needs of life, like finding a job, paying taxes, minding money and getting health care.

The guide offers information about the responsibilities of being a permanent resident which include carrying proof of status (known as the green card) at all times, informing the Department of Homeland Security of changes of address,

paying taxes.

The document is welcoming to newcomers but also candid in informing non-native residents of the consequence of misdeeds.

"Being a permanent resident is a 'privilege' and not a 'right'. The US government can take away your permanent resident status under certain conditions," it says.

Those conditions include committing serious crimes like murder, rape, terrorism and drug trafficking. The guide also notes consequences for lesser offences like lying, drunkenness and failure to pay taxes or support a family.

With all those warnings, it encourages engagement in civic activity, and provides educational material about US history and government and some instruction on how an individual can become a US citizen with full rights to vote, serve in public office and carry a US passport.



Indian police use water canon to disperse relatives of Sikh men who were killed in the 1984 riots during a demonstration in New Delhi yesterday following the release of the Nanavati Commission report.

## US study equates RSS with al-Qaeda

PTI, Washington

A US-based think tank has clubbed the RSS with al-Qaeda and some other groups as examples of "New Religious Movements".

"NRMs (New Religious Movements) can be found in Hinduism -- the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh or RSS, Israel (Gush Emunim), Christianity (the US-based Identity Movement) and Islam, including al-Qaeda, a global network with a transcendent vision that draws support in the defence of Islam," a new Rand study said.

"Sometimes referred to as cults, NRMs have two defining characteristics -- a high degree of tension between the group and its surrounding society and a high degree of control exercised by leaders over their members," the study said.

"While most are not violent, a few have engaged in ritualised acts of mass suicide and homicide. Notable examples include Heaven's Gate, the Branch Davidians and Aum Shinrikyo."



A member of India's Manipur Students Association holds a placard as she takes part in a peace rally in New Delhi yesterday. The students demanded an end to the economic blockade imposed on the people of Manipur that paralysed the highways connecting Manipur with other states.

## 'Pollution evident from space'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE, Washington

Astronauts normally wax poetic when talking about the wondrous view from outer space of their blue-green-and-white home planet.

But Discovery Commander Eileen Collins, who landed with her six crewmates early on Tuesday in California after a 14-day historic mission, said she was sobered by signs of pollution over Africa.

"One of the things I saw was in Africa, the massive burning taking place in the central part of Africa," Collins told a news conference in California. "I'm not sure why they do that."

In Africa, Madagascar, and elsewhere, she said, "You can see deforestation taking place, you can see it in the rivers and streams".

Collins said that the rivers were brown "instead of blue ... you can see the erosion" flowing out into the ocean.

Many residents of rural Africa cut down sparse tree stands for fuel. This year's Nobel Peace Prize went to Kenyan Wangari Maathai, an environmentalist who for years fought a one-woman battle to plant new trees to prevent erosion.

## India has to play key role in Lankan peace: Expert

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE, New Delhi

It is time India gave up its hands-off policy and played a pro-active role again to help end Sri Lanka's continuing ethnic conflict, says an American academic based in Britain.

Brendan O'Duffy of Queen Mary College in the University of London told a gathering here there were indications the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) was prepared to give up its separatist goal and go in for a political settlement with Colombo.

"For any sustained peace process, it seems natural for India to have some kind of a guarantor's role (in Sri Lanka)," said O'Duffy, a senior lecturer in politics at Queen Mary College.

O'Duffy, who specialises in the study of nationalism, ethnic conflict regulation and European politics, said given the unending uncertainties in the Sri Lankan polity as well as

in LTTE's attitude, the international community had a role to play.

"The role of India is also vital," he said. "The Indian government has to play a very important role."

He made it clear he was not suggesting that New Delhi should militarily intervene in Sri Lanka as it did in 1987-90, taking on the LTTE in the process and losing nearly 1,200 soldiers.

"Intervention is highly unlikely to be attempted and unlikely to succeed."

India should play the role as an external facilitator. Such a role will protect its own territorial integrity by protecting the territorial integrity of Sri Lanka.

"The role Norway is playing is positive although not as effective as it should be."

O'Duffy was presenting findings of his research on Sri Lanka carried out as part of a project of the Social Science Research Council (US) and the Norwegian Institute of

International Affairs. The New Delhi-based Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies played host to Tuesday's event.

India played host to Sri Lankan Tamil militant groups in 1983-87 before undertaking its military intervention. It has adopted a hand-off policy vis-à-vis Sri Lanka since the LTTE assassinated former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1991.

O'Duffy, currently researching peace processes in Northern Ireland, the Middle East and Sri Lanka, said the key question was how the Norwegian-mediated peace process would go ahead in the island nation and what the Tamil Tigers would do since signing a ceasefire agreement with Colombo in February 2002.

"The (LTTE) leadership has been fighting for 20 years. The generational factor is important. They do start to think about life afterwards."

## ANTISIKH RIOTS Jagdish Tytler under pressure, may quit

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE, New Delhi

Union minister Jagdish Tytler is likely to quit after the GT Nanavati Commission has indicted him for instigating the 1984 anti-Sikh riots that followed then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's assassination by her Sikh bodyguards.

Amid growing pressure on the Congress-led government from the opposition, Left parties and members of the Sikh community to remove him, Overseas Indian Affairs Minister Tytler met Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Wednesday afternoon.

The Opposition, Left and even some allies in the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) members criticised the government's action taken report (ATR) that virtually absolved Tytler and other Congress leaders named in the Nanavati panel report.

The Nanavati report and the ATR were tabled in parliament on Monday. Sikh organisations also held a protest demonstration in the capital demanding action against Tytler.