



Former Pakistani prime minister Nawaz Sharif is addressing a public rally in Textla, some 25km from Islamabad Friday as part of the campaign for Feb 18 election.

Sarkozy marries girlfriend Carla Bruni

AFP, Paris

French President Nicolas Sarkozy and his girlfriend Carla Bruni were married at the Elysee palace Saturday, local district mayor Francois Lebel told Europe 1 radio.

Lebel said he had performed the ceremony, which came less than three months after the couple met in the wake of Sarkozy's divorce from his second wife, Cecilia.

"I married two voters of the 8th district who live at 55 rue du Faubourg Saint Honore", Lebel said, giving the address of the presidential palace.

Sarkozy, 53 earlier this week, divorced Cecilia in October after 11 years of marriage, and six months after taking over the French presidency. Bruni, aged 40, is a singer and former model who has a son from a former relationship.

Lebel said it was the first time in the history of the French republic that a president had married while in office.

'UNSC wants more time on Iran sanctions'

AFP, Washington

France said Friday that some UN Security Council members were asking for more time to consider additional sanctions on Iran over its controversial nuclear programme.

Without naming the countries, French envoy to Washington Pierre Vimont said a "few" members wanted to wait for Iran to clear up questions over its nuclear programme with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the UN nuclear watchdog.

In addition, he said, it would take "some time" to get an agreement from some of the council's non-permanent members on the proposed third set of sanctions over Tehran's refusal to halt uranium enrichment.

The Security Council on Monday held informal talks on a third sanctions resolution, a draft of which was

agreed by the five veto-wielding permanent members -- Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States -- plus Germany.

The proposed new measures include an outright travel ban on officials involved in Tehran's nuclear and missile programmes and inspections of shipments to and from Iran if there are suspicions of prohibited goods.

"Some of the members of the Security Council would like to wait to see how the present contacts taking place between Mr (IAEA chief Mohamed) ElBaradei and the Iranian authorities go and how far he will reach a satisfactory agreement on his action regarding the controls he has been asking for," Vimont told a forum of the Middle East Institute in Washington.

Iran was supposed to clear up all outstanding issues related to its past and present nuclear activities with ElBaradei by mid February but

reports say it has sought an extension to the end of February or beginning of March.

Vimont also said, "Not only that we have to get an agreement from the Russians and the Chinese but now we also have to get an agreement among some of the non-permanent members in the Security Council and this may take some time."

The French envoy singled out "new" non-permanent members, saying, "we want to reach consensus among those and there is more work to be done."

The non-permanent members elected to the council in January were Libya, Vietnam, Burkina Faso, Costa Rica and Croatia.

Vimont said that despite the difficulties, "at least if at the end of the day, we get a new resolution by consensus I think the political message addressed to Tehran will still be a very strong one."

3 militants, 2 policemen killed in Pakistan clash

AFP, Peshawar

A seven-hour gun battle between suspected Islamic militants and police in northwest Pakistan yesterday left three extremists and two policemen dead, officials said.

Rebels hurled grenades and fired rockets at police after officers surrounded a house following intelligence reports that extremists with ties to local Taliban were hiding there.

North West Frontier Province police chief Sharif Virk told AFP: "Three militants and two policemen were killed in the prolonged firefight."

He said fighting was over now but did not give any further details other than that two policemen were also wounded in the operation.

A local official added: "They (police) retrieved the dead bodies of militants and then dynamited the house."

Kenya death toll rises after rivals sign peace roadmap

AFP, Nairobi

The death toll from ethnic fighting and a police crackdown in western Kenya rose to 44 yesterday, a day after the feuding political sides agreed to a framework to try to end weeks of violence.

Thirty-four people have died in fresh clashes, police said Saturday, including in western Nyanza province after fighting with machetes and poisoned arrows, and in clashes in Ainamoi, the home village of a

slain opposition MP.

The deaths came after former UN chief Kofi Annan oversaw the signing of a first joint document between representatives of President Mwai Kibaki and opposition leader Raila Odinga since last month's disputed election set off the bloodshed.

The deal marked out a joint roadmap to end, within two weeks, unrest that has claimed nearly 1,000 lives since the December 27 presidential polls.

US fights to rescue Afghan mission

AFP, Washington

The United States intensified Friday its diplomatic drive to recruit more coalition troops for Afghanistan amid fears its allies could abandon a cornerstone of the US-led "war on terror."

Officials revealed that Defence Secretary Robert Gates has written letters to all the Nato allies to ask for more support while announcing that Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice would fly to Britain to discuss the stakes there.

The news came as Canada warned it could withdraw its 2,500 troops from Afghanistan if Nato fails to send reinforcements to the battle-ravaged south, a risk that appeared higher with Germany's refusal to deploy its forces there.

"Nato as an alliance has been looking at what it needs to do and what more needs to be done to fight the Taliban, to permit the Afghan people to have security so that reconstruction can take place," Rice told reporters.

Mentally disabled women used in Iraq bombings

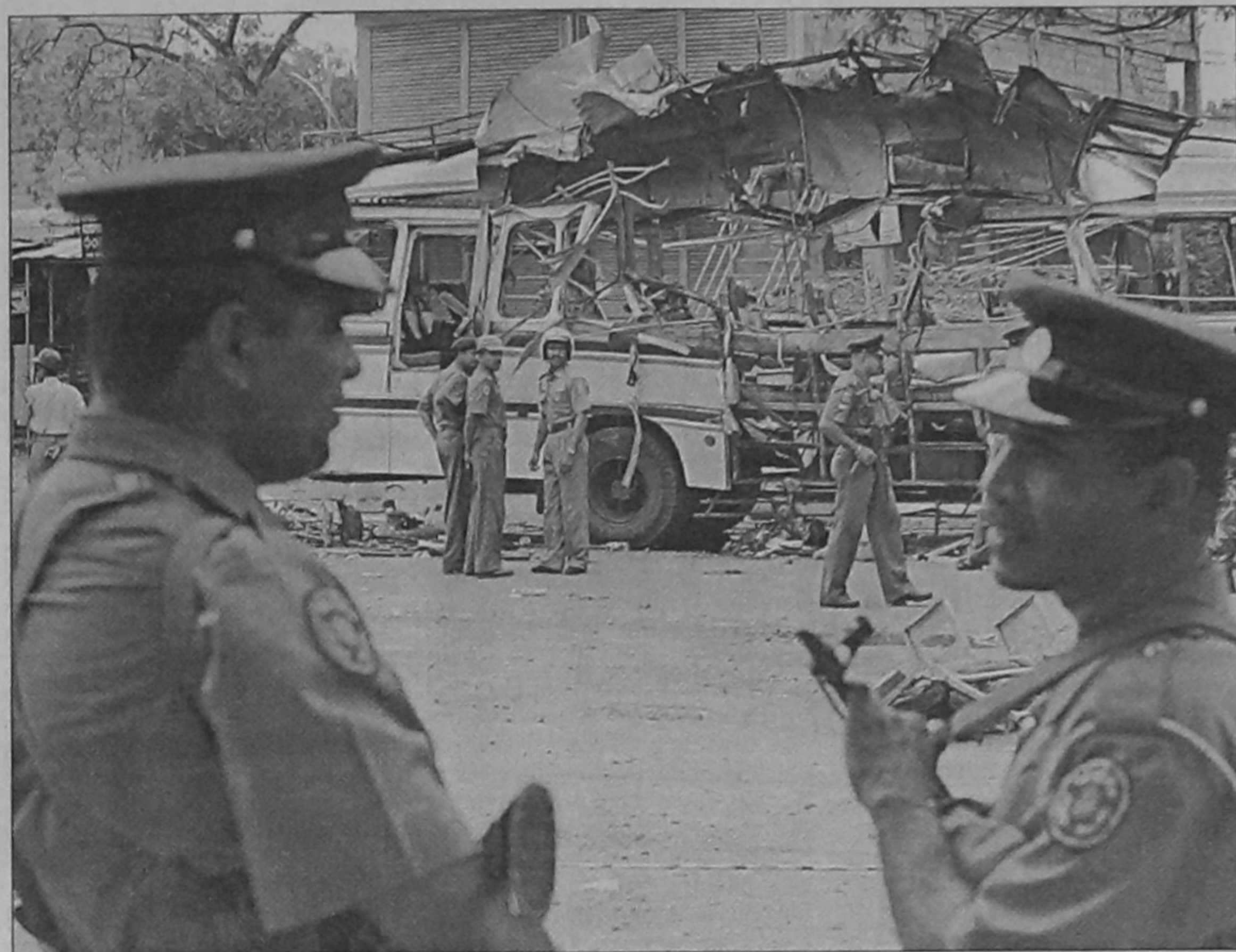
AP, Baghdad

Two women described as mentally disabled and strapped with remote-control explosives and possibly used as unwitting suicide bombers brought carnage Friday to two pet bazaars, killing at least 99 people in the deadliest day since Washington flooded the capital with extra troops last spring.

Brig Gen Qassim al-Moussawi, Iraq's chief military spokesman in Baghdad, said the women had

Down syndrome and may not have known they were on suicide missions, but gave no further details on how authorities pieced together the evidence. He also said the bombs were detonated by remote control.

The coordinated blasts coming 20 minutes apart in different parts of the city appeared to reinforce US claims al-Qaeda in Iraq may be increasingly desperate and running short of able-bodied men willing or available for such missions.



Sri Lankan policemen keep guard at the site where a bomb blast ripped through a civilian bus in the north-central town of Dambulla, 147km north of Colombo yesterday. Suspected Tamil Tiger rebels detonated a bomb on a crowded bus in northern Sri Lanka killing at least 20 people, two days ahead of celebrations marking Independence Day.

Obama gains on Hillary in national polls

AFP, Washington

Democratic hopeful Barack Obama is gaining on his rival Hillary Clinton in their White House tug-of-war with a flood of states to vote next week, a national poll showed Friday.

Obama has narrowed the gap with Clinton, shaving three points off her lead in the latest national Gallup poll, to win the backing of 41 percent of voters compared with 44 percent for the former first lady.

But the result is within the poll's three-point margin of error, and suggests that Obama has picked up more votes than Clinton after former senator John Edwards bowed out of the Democratic nominating race on Wednesday.

"Gallup Poll daily tracking shows Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama as close as they have been since the polling programme started at the beginning of 2008," Gallup said in a statement.

In the last three-day tracking survey to include all three candidates, Hillary Clinton had been ahead with 42 percent, Obama with 36 and Edwards with 12.

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Residents ride three wheeled vehicles as they pass through flooded streets in Tangerang yesterday. Heavy flooding in Indonesia's capital has killed three people and forced nearly 1,500 to evacuate their homes.

All survive after Bolivian plane crash-lands

AP, La Paz

A plane carrying more than 150 people crash-landed in a bog in eastern Bolivia on Friday after fierce storms turned it away from its destination and it tried to reach another airport hundreds of miles away, according to officials and news reports. All on board survived.

Photographs by local media showed the charter Boeing 727, flown by a local airline, in a flooded forest clearing, stripped of at least one wing. A set of landing gear was in the water nearby.

"We noticed the engines went out, and there was this calm," Paolo Bravo, a Bolivian senator who was on board, told the radio network Erbol.

"Then they told us, 'Crash positions! Crash positions!' and it was just another two or three seconds before we hit," he said.

"I think you could call it a belly flop," Bravo added. "The plane fell, the wings broke off, but the fuselage was OK."

The plane took off from the Bolivian capital, La Paz, but severe storms forced it to turn away from its destination in the northern city of Cobija. It then headed some 370 miles south to the eastern lowland city of Trinidad and was three miles short of the runway when the pilot was forced to make an emergency landing.

SOCIAL MARKETING COMPANY NOTICE INVITING TENDERS FOR RAW MATERIALS

Sealed Tenders are hereby invited by SMC for supply of raw materials for manufacturing ORSaline-N®. Tender schedule will be sold to suppliers who have proven track record in supplying raw materials for manufacturing oral saline in Bangladesh. The intending suppliers shall have to apply to the undersigned in their letterhead along with their past experience certificate /documents, agency certificate, for issuance of tender documents. Tender Documents will be issued to eligible parties from the office of the undersigned on cash payment of Tk.500.00 (five hundred) only (non-refundable) on all working days (Sunday through Thursday) during office hours (8:30 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. with a lunch break from 1: 15 p.m. to 2: 00 p.m.) from February 04, 2008 to February 14, 2008.

Earnest money equivalent to 0.5% of the quoted value must be submitted along with the offer in the form of Pay Order/Bank Draft/Bank Guarantee from any scheduled bank in favour of Social Marketing Company without which the tender shall be rejected outright. Any Guarantee from foreign Bank must be endorsed or authorized by a local Bank in Bangladesh. Validity of the Pay Order/Bank Draft/Bank Guarantee should be at least 06(six) month from the date of issue. Completed Tender document along with bid bond to be dropped on February 17, 2008 in the Tender box kept at 1st floor of SMC Tower, 33 Banani C/A, Dhaka-1213 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Tenders will be opened on the same day at 3.30 p.m. in presence of the bidder if any. No Tender shall be received after the above mentioned date and time.

Social Marketing Company (SMC) reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reasons whatsoever.

Md. Luthfur Rahman
Manager Procurement

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