

## Iraq bombing kills three US soldiers

AFP, Baghdad

A bomb attack in Iraq's northern Nineveh province killed three US soldiers hours after a bomb ripped through a council office in Baghdad killing four Americans, the US military said yesterday.

The three soldiers and their interpreter were killed at 10:45 pm (1945 GMT) on Tuesday, the military said without giving further details nor specifying where the attack occurred in the province.

In a separate attack in Nineveh, a car bomb exploded in the provincial capital of Mosul on Tuesday wounding 90 civilians, the military said.

It blamed al-Qaeda in Iraq operatives for the attack in Mosul city, which the military claims is the last urban bastion of the jihadist group.

## India, Russia to cooperate in training mountain troops

PTI, Moscow

Strategic allies India and Russia are set to boost their security ties, including sharing experience in training mountain troops and anti-terrorism efforts.

India, which has highly trained mountain troops, has agreed to exchange experience with Russia, currently in the process of raising mountain brigades in the restive Caucasian region, now the post-Communist nation's external frontiers in the south.

This issue was discussed yesterday during the Indian Army Chief, General Deepak Kapoor's parleys with his Russian host General Alexei Maslov, who is the Commander-in-Chief of the Land Forces.

"Gen. Maslov and his Indian colleague Gen. Kapoor agreed to establish a regular exchange of experience in training mountain troops," Land Forces spokesman Col. Igor Konashenkov said.



People walk to search for their belongings from the rubble of collapsed buildings in the worst earthquake-hit area of Beichuan county in China's Sichuan province yesterday. Local residents have been allowed to recover their belongings from the devastated city.

## China reopens Tibet to foreign tourists

AFP, Beijing

China re-opened Tibet to foreign tourists yesterday after claiming victory over the worst unrest there in decades -- which led Beijing to all but seal off the area from the outside world.

China's crackdown in the wake of violent protests in Tibet in March drew international condemnation, and led to demonstrations in several countries that disrupted the Olympic torch relay ahead of the Beijing Games in August.

On the Tibet government website, spokesman Zha Nuo said the region would be re-opened for tourists -- and that having run the torch through the Tibetan capital Lhasa on Saturday without incident showed things were stable.

"After the quick quelling of the 'March 14' incident in Lhasa, we have realised a great transitional victory in the fight against separat-

ists," Zha said.

"The successful Beijing Olympic torch relay in Lhasa on June 21 further proves that currently social stability in Tibet has been further consolidated."

Zha said two Swedish tourists would arrive in Lhasa on Wednesday, followed by four from Singapore on Sunday.

He did not mention when a ban on foreign journalists to the region would be lifted.

"Tibetan tourism is safe, Tibetans are friendly," he said in Tuesday comments.

Beijing kicked all tourists and foreigners out of Tibet after violent protests against Chinese rule erupted in mid-March, prompting a massive Chinese security clampdown.

China allowed mainland Chinese tour groups back in at the end of April, followed by visitors from Hong Kong and Macau in

May, when it also began allowing tourists from Taiwan -- which China considers part of its territory.

"It is very hard for us to believe that China will allow free access to western tourists," Paul Bourke, the executive director of the Australia Tibet Council, told AFP.

"China has always seemed to go to great lengths to prevent Tibetans from having any contact with foreigners. We will be watching with interest to see how this so called 'opening' develops."

Bourke said he continues to receive reports from Tibet about a huge military presence in the region and an ongoing police and military lockdown on Tibetan Buddhist monasteries.

Foreign tourists would likely to be watched closely and their movements would be restricted, Bourke said, citing what he said was the stage management of Saturday's torch relay in Lhasa.

## African leaders meet on Zimbabwe crisis

Mugabe vows to go ahead with run-off polls

AFP, Harare

Southern African leaders met yesterday for talks on the Zimbabwe crisis as President Robert Mugabe indicated he was open to negotiations with the opposition, but only after this week's run-off election.

The talks in the Swaziland capital opened without South African President Thabo Mbeki, who has been appointed mediator for Zimbabwe by the region and has faced criticism over his quiet diplomacy approach.

South Africa said there was no need for a military intervention in Zimbabwe as the Southern African

Development Community (SADC) defence and security committee -- made up of Angola, Tanzania and Swaziland -- started its meeting in the Swaziland capital.

"President Mbeki is not a member of the troika," said the president's spokesman, Mukoni Ratshitanga, adding he "has not been invited to the meeting."

But Tercy Simelane, a spokesman for Swaziland's prime minister, said though the meeting was of the troika, the "doors were open" for Mbeki to attend "as a facilitator in the Zimbabwe talks."

Zimbabwe's political crisis deepened after opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai announced he

was pulling out of Friday's presidential run-off election saying violence had made a fair vote impossible.

He said he could not ask supporters to cast ballots when it could cost them their lives.

Tsvangirai took refuge in the Dutch embassy in Harare after his announcement and has remained there for more than two days. He planned a press conference for Wednesday, though it was unclear whether he would leave the embassy.

Tsvangirai beat Mugabe in the first round of the election but did not get the majority required to take the presidency from his rival.

Mugabe, in his first direct comments on Tsvangirai's withdrawal, defied international criticism and vowed that the election would go ahead, saying the opposition chief had pulled out because he was afraid of losing.

"Other people can say what they want, but the elections are ours and we are a sovereign state," Mugabe told a rally in Banket, north of Harare, on Tuesday.

"We will proceed with our election."

The state-run Herald newspaper on Wednesday quoted Mugabe as saying he was open to negotiations, but Friday's run-off would be held first.

## al-Qaeda suspect held in Yemen

AFP, Sanaa

Yemeni security forces captured a suspected al-Qaeda operative yesterday in the Hadramut region of southeast Yemen, the interior ministry said.

Haitham bin Saad was identified as a member of the al-Qaeda network and arrested with four bodyguards in the Al-Wadi district, the ministry said on its website, without providing further details.

al-Qaeda's wing in Yemen, which calls itself Jund al-Yemen Brigades, has carried out a series of attacks in recent months targeting the US and Italian embassies and a residential complex which is home to US oil workers.

Yemen, the ancestral homeland of al-Qaeda chief Osama bin Laden and one of the poorest countries on the planet, has battled suspected al-Qaeda militants at Washington's behest since the September 2001 attacks in the United States.

## Israel shuts Gaza crossings after rocket attacks

AFP, Gaza City

Israel shut down border crossings with the Gaza Strip yesterday after Palestinian rocket attacks that tested a fragile truce between the Jewish state and the besieged territory's Hamas rulers.

"We are keeping the Karni, Sufa and Nahal Oz crossings closed for the time being following the firing of rockets in flagrant violation of the truce deal," Israeli military spokesman Peter Lerner told AFP.

He said however that while the goods terminals were closed, the Erez passenger crossing -- used by diplomats, journalists, and sick

Gazans requiring medical care in Israel or abroad -- remained open.

Three rockets fired from the Gaza Strip hit southern Israel on Tuesday, slightly wounding two people and straining an Egyptian-brokered truce.

The rockets were the first to be fired from the Palestinian territory since a truce between Israel and the Gaza Strip's Hamas rulers went into effect on June 19.

Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility for the attacks, calling them a response to the killing of one of its senior fighters in a gunbattle hours earlier in the occupied West Bank, which was not included in the truce.

The group, which regularly fired rockets and mortar rounds at southern Israel in the months leading to the ceasefire, had not agreed to the truce but had vowed not to violate it.

"Any fire from the Gaza Strip is a gross violation of the understanding reached with Egypt," Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's spokesman Mark Regev told AFP, adding that Hamas bore responsibility for any attack from Gaza.

He said the attacks violated "two cardinal points of the understandings reached through Egypt, namely that the truce applies only to the Gaza Strip and not to the West Bank and that it concerns all armed groups."



Activists of radical Sikh organisations block railway tracks demanding immediate arrest of Gurmeet Ram Rahim, the chief of the spiritual organisation Dera Sacha Sauda, during a demonstration near Vallah Mandi on the outskirts of Amritsar yesterday. Sikh organisations blocked railway traffic throughout the state of Punjab following the death of a Sikh in Mumbai who was allegedly shot dead by Ram Rahim's bodyguard on June 20.

## Iraq PM gives new deadline to Shia militants

AFP, Baghdad

Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki yesterday declared an amnesty period of one week to Shia fighters in the southern province of Maysan to surrender themselves amid an ongoing crackdown.

"Prime Minister Maliki has agreed to give a period of seven days starting 10:00 am (0700 GMT) today to gunmen and outlaws to surrender themselves in Maysan," Major General Mohammed al-Askari, spokesman for the Iraqi defence ministry told AFP.

Before the operation was launched on June 19, Maliki had given a four-day deadline for militants to surrender their weapons

and themselves.

Askari said the latest amnesty issued by Maliki was "to ensure that the operation was a success."

He said it was issued because a large number of gunmen had told local tribal chiefs of their desire to surrender but "they were afraid of the punishment."

"So this amnesty is for those who want to surrender themselves but not for those who have the blood of Iraqis on their hands," Askari said.

Since the Maysan crackdown was launched, dozens of militiamen have been detained by security forces, some of them from the movement of radical Shiite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr.

## Rushdie receives knighthood from British queen

AFP, London

Queen Elizabeth II yesterday gave the British author Salman Rushdie a knighthood which caused protests by Muslims around the world when it was announced last year.

Rushdie, 61, was knighted for his services to literature.

When the knighthood was announced in the queen's birthday honours list last June, it sparked condemnation from a number of Muslim countries and organisations.

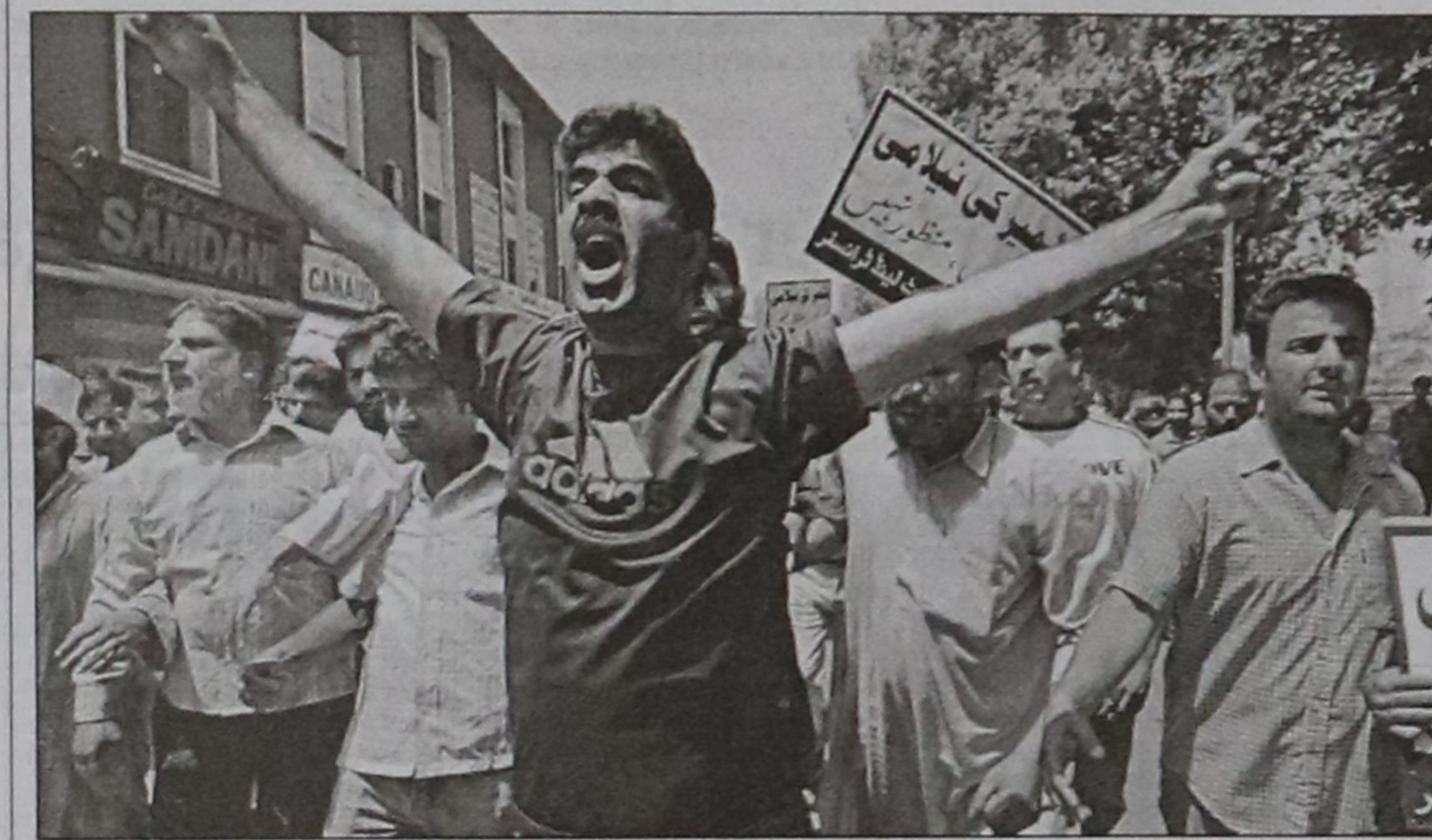
A Pakistani government minister at one point suggested the award justified suicide bombings.

And al-Qaeda's second-in-command Ayman al-Zawahiri warned that the terror network was preparing a "precise response" to Britain's decision to transform Rushdie into "Sir Salman".

In the subsequent furor, British government ministers stressed that they were sorry if people had been upset by the honour, but stressed it was for a lifelong body of work and would not apologise for the award.

"I am thrilled and humbled to receive this great honour and am very grateful that my work has been recognised in this way," Rushdie said after the announcement last year.

The Indian-born writer, who was raised as a Sunni Muslim, has lived since 1989 under the shadow of an Iranian fatwa -- or religious decree -- calling for his death over his controversial novel "The Satanic Verses".



Members of the newly formed Action Committee Against Land Transfer (ACALT) shout anti-Indian slogans during a protest in Srinagar yesterday. The committee held a protest march against a government decision to transfer forestland to a Hindu shrine trust.

## Advertisement regarding banglalink's transmission capacity leasing tariff

### 1. Base price per E1:

Distance	Monthly lease rate (BDT/km)	
	Minimum	Maximum
0 to 50 km	500	840
51 to 100 km	300	480
101 to 200 km	200	360
201 to 300 km	150	240
300 km or more	75	120

### 2. Discount factors:

#### i) Discount based on Segment:

Segment	Segment wise Discount
Cellular Operator	0%
PSTN	20%
Data/DDCSP/ISP/Corporate	24%
Rural Data/ILDTS/SME	28%

#### ii) Discount based on Agreement Terms:

1 year	2 to 5 years	5 years and above
0%	15%	25%
0%	15%	25%
0%	15%	25%
0%	15%	25%

#### iii) Discount based on Capacity (leasing of 10 E1s or more):

Minimum	Maximum
20%	70%

### 3. All charges are excluding VAT

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## USAID Career Opportunity

Smiling Sun Franchise Program (SSFP), the flagship project of USAID-Bangladesh, is moving fast toward, becoming the world's largest health social franchise. In fulfillment of this mission, SSFP has been maintaining a highly motivated and fairly large Franchise Operations Team (FOT) employed by Chemonics International Inc, consisting of vastly skilled professionals from medical, engineering and business sectors. Now, SSFP intends to hire a seasoned, competent and creative team leader to work as the "Franchise Operation Officer," which is one of the senior management positions, in order to guide and steer the highly professional FOT, through his/her dynamic leadership.

### Regular duties include:

- Lead the implementation of a unique social franchise model in over 300 health clinics that are managed by 30 franchisees, ensuring that schedules are attained and outputs are delivered as per planned, business objectives are achieved;
- Plan, design and implement the franchise operational activities and proactively monitor overall progress, resolving critical issues and initiating corrective actions as appropriate;
- Represent the franchise operations team and provide input in project reports and other documents as needed;
- Generate and disseminate the best practices and lessons learned to program staff and franchisees;
- Ensure franchise quality assurance, compliance, and procurement policies are implemented & adhered to;
- Liaison with and maintain close contact with relevant stakeholders;

### Qualifications

- Minimum 12 years of work experience including 7-10 years in senior management positions;
- An MBA in Marketing or a tertiary academic qualification in a related field preferred;
- Demonstrated ability to lead and coach a group of highly skilled and experienced professionals;
- Balanced blend of working experience in commercial business sector, as well as in development sector, preferably in USAID funded project;
- In-depth knowledge of franchise business management is highly desirable
- Excellent communication skill in Bangla and English is a must;

Interested candidates are requested to send their CV in strict confidence, mentioning current salary by emailing to jobs@smilingunhealth.com. Please write "FOT" in the subject line. Closing date is July 2, 2008. Compensation will be commensurate with qualifications and previous working experience.

"Women are especially encouraged to apply"