



Kerala Chief Minister and senior member Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M), VS Achuthanandan shouts slogans against Congress-led UPA government during a protest march to parliament in New Delhi yesterday demanding a halt to alleged discrimination against the Kerala state.

Stormy scenes in Indian parliament as session begins

PTI, New Delhi

Parliament session commenced yesterday amid tempestuous scenes in the Rajya Sabha with BJP vociferously raising issues like terrorism and price rise and Left moving a privilege motion against Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on the Indo-US nuclear deal.

Amidst the din, the Rajya Sabha was adjourned twice -- first during the Question Hour and then for the day -- as determined BJP and Left parties' members, now in the opposition, repeatedly rushed to the well shouting slogans.

Main opposition BJP said the Centre should stop threatening imposition of President's rule in Orissa. The state has witnessed communal violence following the killing of a VHP leader in August.

Agitated Left members said they had moved a privilege motion against the Prime Minister on the Indo-US nuclear deal, arguing that he had not taken Parliament into confidence before inking the agreement as promised.

Lankan troops captures rebel-held town

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lankan troops captured a rebel-held town in the island's north following heavy fighting that killed a large group of guerrillas, the defence ministry said yesterday.

Security forces took the town of Maniyakkulam, 25km southwest of the military's primary target of Kilinochchi, the political capital of the Tamil Tiger rebels, the ministry said.

It did not say how many Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) guerrillas were killed in Thursday's fighting.

The military has previously issued daily statements giving its estimates for the number of Tigers killed and its own casualties. The Tigers have rarely given out casualty figures.

The latest violence forced the return of a food convoy that the

United Nations was trying to escort into the rebel-held Wanni region, the organisation said.

The UN office said in a statement Friday it was sending the convoy once again to the rebel-held area after "renewed assurances from both parties to the conflict that the convoy would be able to proceed... unhindered."

The 50-truck convoy, with 750 tonnes of aid for an estimated 230,000 people, turned back on Thursday afternoon.

The rebels accused the military of bombing bridges in rebel-held areas in a bid to stop food reaching civilians. The military said the guerrillas fired at the convoy.

International aid agencies have left the troubled region after a government order, leaving only the International Committee of the Red Cross.

17 civilians killed in Afghan airstrike

AFP, Kandahar

At least 17 civilians, including women and children, were killed in a military operation in Afghanistan, according to a provincial government official giving the first official death toll yesterday.

Nato's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), which locals accuse of killing the villagers on Thursday in misguided air strikes, said it was trying to establish what had happened.

A spokesman for the government of the southern province of Helmand, Daud Ahmadi, said

villagers had brought 17 bodies to the provincial capital, Lashkar Gah, to show the government.

"Most of the bodies we saw had shrapnel wounds but at this stage we don't know if the shrapnel was from a rocket or a bomb which collapsed a house," Ahmadi said.

He would not say how many of the bodies he saw were women and children. The government was investigating how they were killed, he said.

Residents of Nad Ali district just east of Lashkar Gah said Thursday a military air strike had killed 25 civilians and they had taken the bodies of 16 to the town as "proof".



Sri Lankan pedestrians watch as a convoy of United Nations trucks carrying food and emergency supplies drives through the northern Vavuniya town yesterday. The UN resumed aid supplies to the rebel-held northern areas, after receiving security guarantees for safety of aid workers from the Sri Lankan government and Tamil Tiger rebels.

'Taliban ready to lay down arms'

THE NATION/ ANN, LAHORE

Taliban militants fighting the security forces in tribal areas of Pakistan said they were willing to hold unconditional talks with the Pakistani government.

Maulvi Omar, a spokesman for the militants, said they were also willing to lay down their arms if the military ceased operations against them.

The Pakistani army is conducting operations against militants in the tribal region of Bajaur and the Swat Valley. The operations are said to be a serious effort to eradicate the Taliban. The Army wants them and al-Qaeda to be removed from Pakistan's tribal regions next to the Afghan border.

"We are willing to negotiate with the government without any conditions," Maulvi Omar told the BBC. "We are also willing to lay down our arms, once the military ceases operations against us."

The government has said that it is willing to talk to the militants once they lay down their arms. But it has also said it will not tolerate the presence of any foreigners in the region.

Maulvi Omar said that the local Taliban did not want foreign militants in the region and would help the government to remove them. "We can set up a Shura to liaise with the authorities in removing such people," he said.

Maulvi Omar said it was use-

less to debate the security situation in Parliament without taking the Taliban into confidence. "What is the use of discussing the situation without talking to us?" he asked.

Meanwhile, reacting to a Fatwa issued by Muttahida Ulema Council declaring suicide attacks Haram (illegal) and Najaiz (unlawful), Taliban on Wednesday said they are launching Fidayi, not suicide, attacks aimed at targeting the US and its allied forces.

Talking to the BBC, Swat Taliban spokesman Muslim Khan said they themselves also considered suicide attacks Haram, and there should be a difference between Fidayi and suicide attacks.

Indo-Pak forces strike accord on joint border patrol

THE DAWN, Lahore

Border forces of Pakistan and India decided on Thursday to halt defence-related works on both sides, start joint patrol to curb smuggling and repatriate as early as possible people crossing the border inadvertently.

The decisions were taken during three days of talks between the Pakistan Rangers and India's Border Security Force at the Rangers Headquarters here. BSF additional director-general Shri Uthman Kumar Bansal and Rangers (Punjab) director-general Maj-

Gen Mohammad Yaqoob announced the decisions at a news conference.

The meeting decided that firing on civilians on both sides of the border would be avoided and both sides would jointly strive to eradicate the menace of smuggling and drug trafficking.

People crossing the border inadvertently would be returned as early as possible in order to avoid complicated repatriation procedures. During the meeting, the two sides exchanged lists of such people.

The two sides agreed to provide advance information about 'prac-

tice firing' of small arms at ranges located in close vicinity of the international border to avoid any misunderstanding and untoward incident. They also agreed to issue prior warnings to fishermen violating sea limits.

Pakistan has released 130 Indian fishermen and five prisoners and India 14 Pakistani fishermen and 38 prisoners over the past six months. Rangers officials called for immediate release of 188 Pakistani prisoners and 95 others who had completed their sentence. BSF officials said that prisoners who had completed their sentence would be released soon.

Tehran mayor backs talks with US

AFP, Tokyo

The mayor of Tehran, a possible contender for the Iranian presidency, said yesterday his country would welcome talks with the United States as supported by White House contender Barack Obama.

Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, a harsh critic of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, expressed hope that Obama would make good on calls to hold dialogue with Iran should the Democrat win the November 4 election.

"Senator Obama said in his presidential campaign that he would like to have such a relation-

ship," Qalibaf said.

The mayor said any talks must be to the mutual benefit of the two countries and "without any sense of pressure."

"I think the world community, the Iranian society and the US society would benefit" from such talks, he told reporters during a visit to Tokyo at the invitation of the Japanese government.

Obama has said Washington must engage in "tough, direct diplomacy" with Iran, but that as president he would have the right "to meet with anybody at a time and place of my choosing if I think it's going to keep America safe."

60 killed in violence against Christians

Say Indian bishops

AFP, New Delhi

At least 60 Christians have been killed over the past two months in eastern India in a brutal backlash to the murder of a revered Hindu holy man, a national bishops' body said yesterday.

The figure is nearly double the official toll of 35 given by government authorities in the eastern state of Orissa.

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of India said scores of Christians were still fleeing their homes in Orissa and called for action to stem the religious violence in the coastal state's troubled Kandhamal district.

"Christians are afraid to return to their villages as threats of death have forced many of them to flee to the forest or to live in dehumanising conditions," the organisation said.

"The fear that has driven thousands into the forests for shelter and safety is a living reproach to those who should provide safety and security and not leave the law and order situation to mob rule," the organisation added.

The comments came less than a week after Pope Benedict XVI renewed his condemnation of the attacks on Indian Christians.

There was no immediate reaction to the figures from Orissa state government officials.

EAST WEST UNIVERSITY

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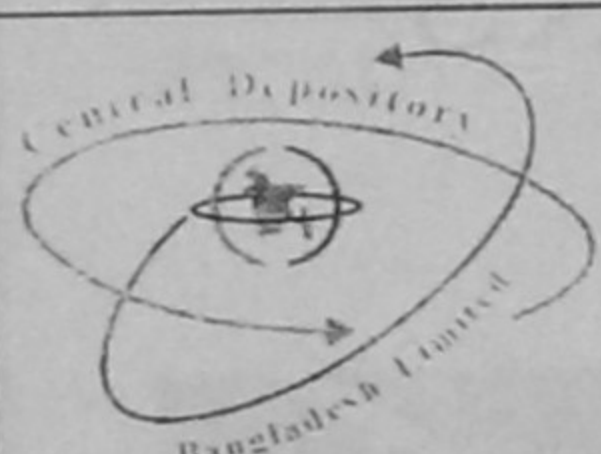
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India deploys warship to police pirate-infested Gulf of Aden

AFP, New Delhi

India said yesterday it is deploying a warship to protect its merchant vessels in the pirate-infested Gulf of Aden off the coast of Somalia.

The move comes after the MT Stolt Valor carrying mainly Indian crew was hijacked on September 17 by Somali pirates in the gulf last month.

"The government has approved the deployment of one warship with immediate effect to patrol the route followed by Indian flagships between Oman and Yemen," a defence ministry official said.

The number of warships could be increased later, he added.

The "anti-piracy patrol" vessel will have helicopters and marine commandos on board, a ministry statement late Thursday said.

The deployment follows weeks of protests by shipworkers and families of the detained crew who have been demanding rescue efforts for the MT Stolt Valor's crew of 22.

Pakistani judge extends detention of US national

AP, Shahbadar

A Pakistani judge yesterday extended the detention of an American who police say was caught trying to sneak into a militant-infested region near the Afghan border.

Judge Nasrullah Khan granted police two more days to question the 20-year-old, who has been identified as Jude Kenan. Police had sought an extra week.

Police had brought Kenan to the court in a town in Pakistan's North West Frontier Province in handcuffs. The bearded suspect was dressed in the long shirt and baggy trousers worn by many Pakistani men.



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APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

All applicants must have at least a Bachelor degree in any field of study. The minimum qualifying point is seven for all applicants. The point determination is laid out in the tables below:

Table A: SSC, HSC or their equivalents

SSC GPA/Div	HSC GPA/Div	O Level GPA*	A Level GPA*	Qualifying Points
>=4.5/1st	>=4.0/1st	>=3.0	>=2.5	3
>=3.5/2nd	>=3.0/2nd	>=2.5	>=2.0	2

- * Applicants who have taken the O Level examination must have passed at least five subjects (including mathematics), with a minimum of grade D in each of these subjects.
- * Applicants who have taken the A Level examination must have passed at least two subjects, with a minimum of grade D in each of these subjects.
- * Letter grades of O Level and A Level subjects are converted to grade points (A = 4, B = 3, C = 2, D = 1). Grade Point Average (GPA) is calculated by averaging the grade points of the five best grades for O Level and the two best grades for A Level.

Table B: Bachelor and Master Program

Certificate/Degree	Class/ Division		
	1 st	2 nd	3 rd
Bachelor Degree (Pass)	4	3	2
Bachelor Degree (Hons.), Bachelor of Engineering, Medicine, or Agriculture	5	4	2
Master Degree	1	1	1

Table C: Four-year Bachelor Program (4.0 point scale)

CGPA	3.5 and above	3.0 to <3.5	2.5 to <3.0
Points	5	4	3

For all other certificates equivalence will be determined by the Equivalence Committee of IBA.

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- * The Application Package will be available at the Curzon Hall Branch of Agrani Bank, University of Dhaka, on payment of Tk. 550 (non-refundable) from Tuesday, October 21, 2008 onwards. The Application Package may also be obtained from the MBA Program Office via mail by enclosing a Bank Draft / Pay Order for Tk. 550 drawn in favour of "IBA Admission, IBA", and a self-addressed return envelope (size 10" x 8") affixed with Tk. 45 postage stamp.
- * The filled-in application form along with required documents must be submitted to the MBA Program Office between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on any working day starting from Tuesday, October 21, 2008. The last date of submission is Tuesday, November 18, 2008. The Admission Test will be held on Friday, November 21, 2008 at 3:00 p.m.

You may also visit IBA website at www.iba-du.edu for information on admission. For any query, please contact the MBA Program Office (Room # 218, 1st floor of IBA), Tel: 9661920-73 Ext.8363.

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