



PHOTO: AFP
Sri Lankan Defence Ministry photo shows troops in the Elephant Pass area following its capture yesterday. Lankan forces were ready to deal a "decisive blow" to the remaining Tamil Tiger positions following the capture of the highly strategic pass.

Blast in India's northeast kills two

AFP, Guwahati

A powerful blast on Friday at a crowded market in the Indian city of Guwahati left at least two people dead, police said.

A bomb went off in Malegaon commercial district in Guwahati, the largest city in the troubled northeastern state of Assam, a police spokesman said, adding nearly 10 others were injured.

Eyewitnesses put the death toll at four.

The attack came a week after serial blasts in Guwahati left five people dead last Friday.

The attack was blamed on Assam's outlawed United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA), an ethnic guerrilla force.

So far, none of several Assam separatist groups have claimed responsibility for the Friday evening attack.

Mumbai attack was India's intelligence failure: Gilani

CNN-IBN, PTI, New Delhi

Pakistan Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani has said 26/11 was India's intelligence failure and blames the international community of playing favourites.

"If anybody thinks that Pakistan is isolated then it is not true. We are not competing with India," he said.

"We want good relations with India," Gilani stated.

"The number of people who died in Palestine are not less in comparison with Mumbai terror attack and the world should not resort to double standards. The world community should react neutrally. When an attack took place on the Marriott, where was the world?" he demanded to know.

"An intelligence failure of India is their internal matter. We don't want them to use the media to demoralise Pakistan. We have a highly professional army and there

is no need to be threatened," Gilani added.

Earlier the US has contended that the dossier given by India to Pakistan on the Mumbai attacks was "credible" but suggested that New Delhi should allow time to Islamabad to act on it.

US Ambassador to India David C Mulford said the dossier contains extensive inputs from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

"From what I have seen it is a very credible material. The FBI is cooperating in Mumbai. It is information which tells and gives a very accurate account of what has happened," he told Karan Thapar's programme Devil's Advocate. Commenting on the Indo-US cooperation in this area, he said the dossier prepared by India extensively used material provided by the FBI. "As far as I see, it (FBI material) was used extensively because the

material was same."

Underlining the credible aspect of the dossier, he said, "As far as the FBI is concerned, they do not deal with non-credible material. It is a truly professional organisation supported by absolutely high-tech techniques." On the Mumbai attacks, Mulford said "there were handlers who were in touch with these people on the ground."

It is a serious problem. This act of terrorism came from Pakistan". When referred to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's view that "official agencies" of Pakistan could have been involved in the terror strikes, the Ambassador said "I think one needs to be very very careful about making those kinds of allegations unless you have very concrete evidence to that degree of specificity."

The US Ambassador said his country cannot get into "that kind of specificity unless there is some justification for it."

US committed to helping Pakistan fight terror

Says Biden

AFP, AP, Islamabad/Kabul

US vice president-elect Joe Biden on Friday assured Pakistan's leaders of the incoming Obama administration's commitment to helping Islamabad fight extremists, the government here said.

Biden, who takes office on January 20 with president-elect Barack Obama, made the remarks in talks with Pakistan's president, prime minister and army chief at the start of a regional tour with Republican senator Lindsey Graham.

Although Biden's office has stressed he is in the region in his capacity as a senator, the trip is likely to be seen as carrying more weight, given Obama's plans to shift the focus in the US-led "war on terror" to South Asia.

An aide to Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari said talks had focused on Islamabad's ongoing contribution to the US-led "war on terror" as

well as strained relations between India and Pakistan following the Mumbai attacks.

Zardari told Biden that "Pakistan was committed to fighting terrorism and extremism in its own interest," the president's office said in a statement.

Biden in turn assured Zardari that the new US administration would support Pakistan's counter-terrorism efforts, adding that Washington recognised Islamabad's "important contribution and sacrifices in the fight".

The Delaware senator, who will soon surrender his seat and his post as chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, reiterated the message in talks with Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani.

Biden said the new administration "fully realised that Pakistan alone could not fight this war and hence would support it in every way possible to succeed," the prime minister's office said.

India should not talk of surgical strikes

Says Musharraf

IANS, Islamabad

India should not talk of "surgical strikes" on Pakistan in the wake of the Mumbai terrorist attack, as forces were ready to "retaliate to any aggression", former president Pervez Musharraf said yesterday.

"India should not talk rubbish like surgical strikes. Our forces are not sitting idle and have full capacity to retaliate to any level of aggression," the former military dictator said before leaving for the US where he is scheduled to deliver lectures at various institutes.

"Why they (Indians) are again and again talking of surgical strikes? Why can't Pakistan say the same," asked Musharraf, considered the architect of the Kargil conflict with India in 1999.

Musharraf said his government had tried its best to develop friendly relations with the eastern neighbour. "I believe relations were going fine with India until the Mumbai attacks," he said.

"The only way to resolve the mystery of the November 26 attacks is to hold joint investigations," he added.

He avoided questions on the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) government's handling of the crisis after the Mumbai attacks that India has blamed on Pakistani elements. He would not comment on the performance of the government and neither would he compare it with his government.



PHOTO: AFP
A Pakistani police officer inspects the site of a bomb explosion outside a theatre in Lahore on Friday. Four low-grade bombs exploded at a popular theatre complex in the eastern Pakistani city causing minor damage to nearby buildings but no casualties.

Georgia, US sign strategic accord

AFP, Washington

The United States and Georgia signed an accord here Friday to bolster defence, trade and energy ties in a new sign of US support for Georgia after its brief war with Russia in August.

The deal shows the way for Washington and Tbilisi to boost "cooperation in defence, trade, energy security" and strengthen Georgia's budding democratic institutions. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said at a signing ceremony.

The Charter on Strategic Partnership amounts to what US officials say is a declaration of intent by President George W. Bush's departing team to deepen US-Georgian cooperation without committing his successor, Barack Obama.

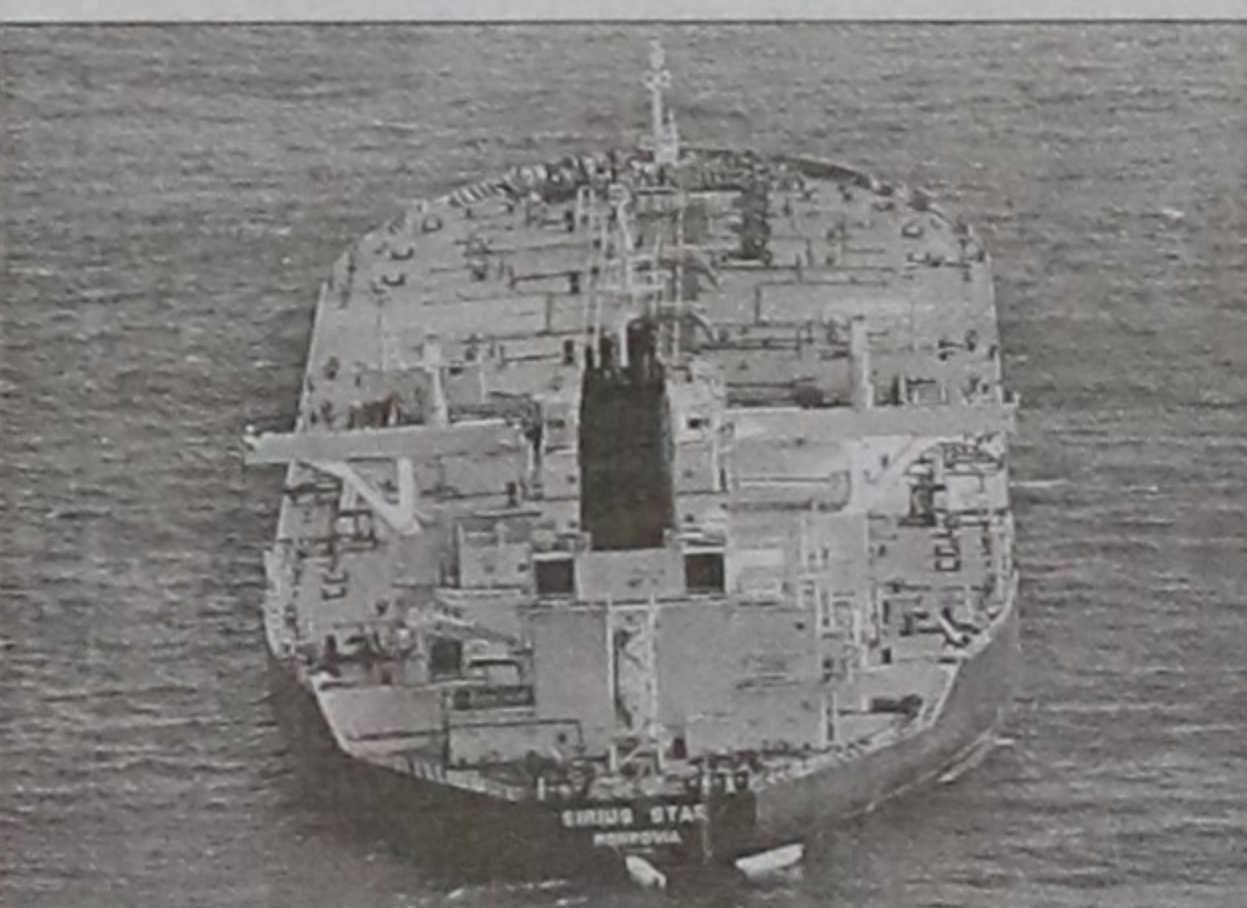


PHOTO: AFP
This US Navy handout photo shows the MV Sirius Star as it is observed at anchor by the US Navy on Friday following an apparent payment via a parachuted container to pirates holding the Sirius Star.

5 Somali pirates drown with ransom share

AP, Mogadishu

Five of the Somali pirates who released a hijacked oil-laden Saudi supertanker drowned with their share of a reported \$3 million ransom after their small boat capsized, a pirate and a relative of one of the dead men said yesterday.

Pirate Daud Nure said the boat with eight people on board overturned in a storm after dozens of pirates left the Sirius Star following a two-month standoff in the Gulf of Aden that ended Friday.

Corruption-tainted governor vows to fight impeachment

AFP, Chicago

The corruption-tainted governor of Illinois vowed Friday to fight impeachment on charges that he abused his power and tried to auction off president-elect Barack Obama's senate for personal gain.

In an added twist to the political saga, a senior Democrat said the US Senate will not seat the man Governor Rod Blagojevich appointed to fill the coveted post.

A defiant Blagojevich dismissed a 114 to 1 vote by

Amnesty dares Obama to mention date for Guantanamo closure

AFP, London

Amnesty International called Friday on US president-elect Barack Obama to announce a date for the closure of Guantanamo Bay, as the US-run prison in Cuba approaches its seventh anniversary.

The rights group called on Obama to name a date as soon as he is sworn in on January 20.

"We are not asking the impossible. Barack Obama has already stated his determination to undo some of the wrongs authorised by the US government in the name of national security and we are asking him to turn this commitment into a reality," said Amnesty's Secretary General Irene Khan.

"The closure of Guantanamo would mark the beginning of a clean break from past detention policies, but only if it is done in a way that fully meets the USA's international obligations," Khan said.

Baltimore mayor indicted on theft, perjury charges

AP, Baltimore

For Sheila Dixon's entire tenure as mayor, a City Hall corruption probe has threatened to overshadow successes that have included a reduction in violent crime.

Dixon, who took office in 2007, has consistently denied wrongdoing, but many political observers wondered when or if an indictment would come from the investigation into her financial dealings as mayor and City Council president.

BPDB's International Tender Notice

1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Power, Energy & Mineral Resources/Power Division.		
2	Agency	Bangladesh Power Development Board.		
3	Procuring entity name	The Director, Directorate of Purchase, BPDB, Dhaka.		
4	Procuring entity code	Not used at present.		
5	Procuring entity district	Dhaka, Bangladesh.		
6	Invitation for	Procurement of Hoister/Fork Lifter.		
7	Invitation for tenders Ref. No.	Pur-213/2008-09/Rev.(CF)		
8	Date	04/01/2009		
KEY INFORMATION				
9	Procurement method	Open tendering method (as per PPR-2008).		
FUNDING INFORMATION				
10	Budget and source of funds	BPDB's revenue budget (cash foreign exchange).		
11	Development partners (if applicable)	Not applicable.		
PARTICULAR INFORMATION				
12	Project/programme code (if applicable)	Not applicable.		
13	Project/programme name (if applicable)	Not applicable.		
14	Tender package No.	GDF-04(FY: 2008-2009)		
15	Tender package name	Procurement of Hoister/Fork Lifter.		
16	Tender publication date	04/01/2009		
17	Tender selling date	07/01/2009 to 22/02/2009		
18	Tender closing date and time	23/02/2009 at 11.00am.		
19	Tender opening date and time	23/02/2009 at 11.30am.		
20	Name & address of the office	Directorate of Purchase, BPDB, WAPDA Building (9th Floor), Motijheel C/A, Dhaka.		
	Selling tender document (principal)	Directorate of Purchase, BPDB, WAPDA Building (9th Floor), Motijheel C/A, Dhaka.		
	Selling tender document (other)	Not applicable.		
	Receiving tender document	Directorate of Purchase, BPDB, WAPDA Building (9th Floor), Motijheel C/A, Dhaka.		
	Opening tender document	Directorate of Purchase, BPDB, WAPDA Building (9th Floor), Motijheel C/A, Dhaka.		
21	Place/date/time of pre-tender meeting	N/A.		
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER				
22	Eligibility of tenderer	Renowned manufacturer/supplier/tenderer.		
23	Brief description of goods or works	Supply of Hoister/Fork Lifter.		
24	Brief description of related services	N/A.		
25	Price of tender document (BDT)	Tk 1000.00 (one thousand) only as Pay-Order (non-refundable) from any schedule bank in Bangladesh in favour of the Director of Purchase, BPDB, Dhaka.		
26	Lot	Identification of lot		
		Location		
		Tender security amount		
		Completion time in weeks/months		
	a) Hoister/Fork Lifter-01 No. (5-Ton Capacity)	BPDB's Central Store, Tongi, Gazipur	BDTk 2,00,000.00	6 months from the date of LC opening
	b) Hoister/Fork Lifter-01 No. (3-Ton Capacity)	BPDB's Central Store, Fauzderhat, Chittagong	US\$ 3,000.00	
	c) Hoister/Fork Lifter-01 No. (3-Ton Capacity)	BPDB's Central Store, Ishurdi, Pabna		
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS				
27	Name of official inviting tender	Md Abduhu Ruhullah.		
28	Designation of official inviting tender	The Director, Directorate of Purchase, BPDB, Dhaka.		
29	Address of official inviting tender	WAPDA Building (9th Floor), Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000.		
30	Contact details of official inviting	Tel:+88 02 9550532, 7120089 Fax:+88 02 7126151		
31	The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any and or all tenders.			

Md Abduhu Ruhullah
Director
Directorate of Purchase
BPDB, Dhaka

Biddiut/Jana-638(4)/6-01-09
GD-134

Furore in Italy over proposed tax on immigrants

AFP, Rome

Proposals by Italy's anti-immigration Northern League to charge immigrants 50 euros (67 dollars) for residency permits and require a 10,000 euro guarantee to set up a business sparked a furore yesterday.

Parliament speaker Gianfranco Fini, head of the right-wing National Alliance, distanced himself from the proposals, calling them "discriminatory," while opposition leader Walter Veltroni said they "smacked of racism."

The proposals are contained in amendments to a draft bill before parliament on measures to address the economic and financial crisis.

Ex-Liberian dictator's son sentenced to 97 years in US jail

AFP, Miami

"Chuckie" Taylor, son of former Liberian president Charles Taylor, was sentenced in a US federal court Friday to 97 years in prison for torturing and killing people in the west African country.

Taylor's mother told AFP Friday that he would appeal the ruling in coming days.

Charles McArthur Emmanuel Taylor, 31, a US citizen also known as "Chuckie," was found guilty in October of crimes committed while he was the head of Liberia's anti-terrorist services during his father's 1997-2003 rule.

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Managing Director, a govt. sector corporation & Bangladesh Commonwealth Scholar

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