



Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh (R) gestures while talking with British Foreign Secretary David Miliband (L) during a meeting in New Delhi yesterday. British Foreign Secretary David Miliband piled pressure on Pakistan to fulfil its promises to root out militant groups operating from its territory.

Obama plans Guantanamo closure order on first day

AFP, AP, Washington

Barack Obama plans to order the Guantanamo Bay "war on terror" detention camp closed on his first full day in office, the New York Times reported yesterday, citing people briefed by Obama transition officials.

However it could take several months to close down the site: US officials will have to transfer some of the remaining 248 prisoners to other countries, then decide how to try the remaining suspects, the transition officials told the Times.

But the order, which one adviser said could be issued as early as Jan. 20, would start the

process of deciding what to do with the estimated 250 al-Qaeda and Taliban suspects and potential witnesses who are being held there. Most have not been charged with a crime.

The Guantanamo directive would be one of a series of executive orders Obama is planning to issue shortly after he takes office next Tuesday, according to the two advisers. Also expected is an executive order about certain interrogation methods, but details were not immediately available Monday.

The advisers spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not

authorised to speak publicly about the orders that have not yet been finalised.

Obama -- who takes office on January 20 -- will likely close the site by issuing an executive order suspending the Bush administration's military commissions system for trying detainees.

The controversial camp is located at the US naval base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

Of the remaining Guantanamo inmates, only some 20 have been charged, including five men accused of helping organise the September 11 attacks of 2001.

Lanka gains ground from rebels

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lankan troops have captured more territory from Tamil Tigers in fierce battles around the rebels' last stronghold in the northeast of the island, the defence ministry said yesterday.

Heavy fighting was reported around guerrilla-controlled Mullaitivu district on Monday, with troops seizing a rebel administration base, a training camp and a bunker line, the ministry said.

"After bitter clashes... troops captured a LITE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) administration base inflicting heavy damages on the terrorists," the ministry said in a statement.

Casualty details on both sides were not known, but the ministry said troops recovered three rebel bodies after the confrontation.

The Tigers in a statement accused govern-

ment forces of shelling internally displaced people, killing a civilian and wounding four others.

The Tigers said a shell had also hit a hospital building and two people there sustained minor injuries.

Claims by both sides cannot be verified as the independent media are barred from travelling to the frontlines.

The LTTE did not comment on Monday's fighting, but the rebels have admitted losing ground in recent weeks -- including the town of Kilinochchi, which they used as their political base for nearly a decade.

Sri Lanka has poured in a record 1.7 billion dollars into this year's war effort as troops push to eject the Tigers from their last stronghold in the jungle and lagoon district around Mullaitivu.

Afghan, Nato forces kill 12 insurgents

AFP, Kandahar

Troops have killed 12 Taliban insurgents in southern Afghanistan and shot dead a would-be suicide attacker apparently planning to attack a patrol, officials said Tuesday.

The insurgents were killed late Monday when troops called in air strikes during a battle in Helmand province, said the Afghan army general in the area, Muhaideen Ghori.

"Nato forces bombed Taliban positions and killed 12 Taliban insurgents," Ghori told AFP.

A Taliban spokesman, Yousuf Ahmadi, claimed several Afghan and Nato

soldiers were killed in the fighting but this was not confirmed by the forces. The insurgents regularly exaggerate their accounts of battle casualties.

In the adjoining province of Kandahar, a man planning a suicide bomb attack against a patrol of Afghan police and international soldiers was spotted and shot dead Tuesday, a police statement said.

The Taliban were in government between 1996 and 2001 when they were driven out by a US-led invasion. They have regrouped to wage a deadly insurgency that last year saw a spike in attacks.

US sanctions Khan, associates linked to his nuclear network

AFP, Washington

The United States on Monday unveiled sanctions against detained Pakistani scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan, 12 associates and three firms linked to his nuclear proliferation network.

The sanctions forbid the 16 from having business dealings with the US government or private US firms in what the State Department says is a renewed bid to make sure the network has been shut down entirely.

"This is a prudent effort on

our part," a State Department official told AFP on the condition of anonymity.

The official said that Washington has had concerns that elements of the network could still be active since Khan, the father of Pakistan's atomic bomb, acknowledged his role nearly five years ago.

Khan has been effectively under house arrest in Islamabad since February 2004, when he confessed on television to sending nuclear secrets to Iran, Libya and North Korea, although he retracted his remarks later.



Former US secretary of state Henry Kissinger (L), former first lady Rosalynn Smith Carter (2nd-L) former US president Jimmy Carter (C) and Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao (R) meet at Zhongnanhai in Beijing yesterday as part of talks marking the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two nations.

N Korea vows not to give up nukes

AP, Seoul

North Korea said yesterday it will hold onto its nuclear arsenal until it is satisfied the US is not hiding atomic weapons in South Korea and Washington establishes diplomatic relations with the regime.

The North has long accused Washington of stationing nuclear weapons on the Korean peninsula for a possible attack on the communist nation. Both the South and the US deny having nuclear weapons in South Korea.

Regional powers have been trying for years to rid North Korea of its nuclear program,

but negotiations have recently stalled. The Foreign Ministry indicated it would consider giving up its nuclear weapons if the US threat is removed and diplomatic relations between the two nations are established.

"We won't need atomic weapons when US nuclear threats are removed, and the US nuclear umbrella over South Korea is gone," the statement said.

The statement comes a week before President-elect Barack Obama's inauguration amid signs that the regime wants good relations with the next US administration. Washington does not have diplomatic ties with the

North, but Obama has said he would be willing to meet with leader Kim Jong Il if it helps resolve the nuclear standoff.

The two Koreas, with the South backed by US-led international troops, fought a bitter war from 1950-53 that ended with a truce, not a peace treaty. The rivals technically remain at war and are divided by a heavily fortified border.

Militants attack Nato truck depot in Pakistan

AFP, Peshawar

Taliban militants launched a rocket attack on a Nato supply depot in northwest Pakistan early Tuesday, torching one truck and damaging three others, police said.

The attack on the outskirts of the city of Peshawar was the first since Pakistan launched a massive military operation late last month in the rugged Khyber tribal region bordering Afghanistan to clear militants from the area.

That offensive was mounted after a series of spectacular

attacks on depots in and around Peshawar in which hundreds of vehicles used to ferry supplies to Nato and US forces in Afghanistan were torched.

"The militants fired six rockets on a Nato terminal during the night. One truck was hit and it caught fire, while three other vehicles suffered minor damage," senior police officer Fida Mohammad told AFP.

Police and paramilitary soldiers tracked down the attackers and a brief gun battle ensued, he said. After about 30 minutes, the militants fled.



The Dalai Lama (Foreground-R) offers prayers along with other Buddhist monks during a meeting for world peace at Sarnath, some 18 km from Varanasi yesterday.

CAREER OPPORTUNITY

Star Particle Board Mills Ltd. located at Kuripara, Madanpur, Narayanganj a unit of Partex Group is looking for candidates for the following positions:

Name of Post	Qualification & Experience
Manager (Costing)	Qualified Cost Accountant. 3 years post qualification experience. Responsible for: Product costing, Tender pricing and preparation of MIS report, monthly product wise cost statement, process loss statement and machine breakdown statement and analysis of data.
Accounts Officer	CA course complete with CA intermediate from a reputed Chartered Accountants Firm.

Attractive salary package with other benefits will be offered to the deserving candidate. Those who have third division in any public examination not to apply for the posts. Applicants are requested to apply with CV and two recent passport size photographs on or before January 22, 2009 to:

Director, HR & Admin,
PARTEX GROUP

Corporate Office: Sena Kalyan Bhaban (16th Floor) 195, Motijheel, C/A, Dhaka-1000

MANARAT DHAKA INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE

Plot No. CEN-16, Road No. 104
Gulshan, Dhaka-1212

CAREER OPPORTUNITY

Applications are invited to fill up following vacancies of Manarat Dhaka International College:

Post	Qualification
Lecturer: Accounting	4 years Hons./Masters (major in Accounting)
Lecturer: Bangla (Male)	4 years Hons./Masters
Arabic Teacher: (Female)	Fazil or Graduation in Arabic
Computer teacher: (Male/Female)	B.Sc. in Computer Science/Engineering (4 years)
Demonstrator: Physics & Biology	B.Sc. (Graduation)
Physical Training Teacher: (Female)	B.P. Ed.
Form Teachers: Play Group to Class-2	Female candidates with 'O'/'A' level will be given preference
Computer Lab Assistant: (Male & Female)	Diploma in Computer Science/ Engineering

* Experience is preferred for all posts. Persons having 3rd division/class in educational career need not apply.

Application along with 2 copies of recent passport size photographs, copies of all educational and experience certificates with Bank Draft of Tk.200/- in favour of Manarat Dhaka International College to be submitted by 27 Jan 2009.

Admin Officer

NEWS ANALYSIS

Afghanistan hostage to its own insecurity

AFP, Kabul

More than seven years and billions of foreign aid dollars after the Taliban were toppled, Afghanistan remains hostage to its own deadly insurgency -- and a nightmare for the incoming US administration.

The massive infusions of aid since the hardline Islamic regime was removed in a US-led invasion in late 2001 have led to some improvements, including an expanded education system, better health care and a freer media.

But the same progress has not been seen on the security front -- by far the most costly part of the international intervention, with tens of thousands of foreign troops deployed here and new bases built across the country.

US president-elect Barack Obama, who takes office on January 20, has vowed to boost development in Afghanistan and shift the focus of the "war on terror" from Baghdad to Kabul, with up to 30,000 new US troops due here by mid-2009.

But experts say he and Afghan President Hamid Karzai face a Herculean task, with insurgent bombings thought to have roughly doubled in number in 2008 from the previous year and civilian and military death tolls spiralling upwards.

"Although Afghan and international leaders face innumerable obstacles to success... leaders will be particularly challenged by the need to balance the rebuilding of the security forces with the demands of fighting an ongoing insurgency," wrote former interior minister Ali A. Jalali.

A key problem is that the weak Afghan army and police have been unable to provide "the space political leaders and development professionals need to initiate comprehensive state-building processes," he argued.

That challenge has been compounded by myriad problems including a weak economic base, a crumbling infrastructure and a culture of corruption, Jalali wrote in "The Future of Afghanistan", a collection of essays.



Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso (L) shakes hands with a lawmaker of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party after the lower house approved an extra budget at the parliament in Tokyo yesterday.

AGNI SYSTEMS LIMITED

Navana Tower, 11th Floor, Suite # A, 45 Gulshan Avenue, Gulshan-1, Dhaka.

BONUS SHARES

This is for information of all concerned that 15% Bonus Shares of Agni Systems Limited were credited to the respective BO (Beneficiary Owner) Account of the shareholders through Central Depository System (CDS).

All the respective shareholders are requested to check their BO Account.

Sd/-

Muhammed Shariful Islam
Company Secretary

NARROWING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE



World Food Programme Bangladesh

QUOTATION FROM INTERESTED BIDDERS FOR THE SALE OF DAMAGED WHEAT FLOUR

The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) intends to sell 641MT damaged wheat flour stored in WFP's Khulna warehouse. According to the lab test report the damaged wheat flour is unfit for human consumption but may be used in terms of manufacturing or hand mixing of compound concentrates for feeding farm animals (cattle, buffalo, goat and sheep) following scientific feed formulae. Interested parties can inspect the wheat flour stored at WFP Khulna warehouse (Address: WFP Khulna Warehouse, Khulna CSD, Baira (Near Boikali Cinema Hall), Khulna)

Bid Bond: Pay Order /Demand Draft in favor of World Food Programme, Dhaka covering 2.5% of the quoted total price of wheat flour to be submitted as bid bond. In the event of failing to sustain the accepted proposal, the bid bond will be forfeited. Bid bond received from unsuccessful bidders will be refunded soon after finalization of the sale proceeds. For successful bidder(s), bid bond will be refunded upon signing of the contract.

Security Money: The successful bidder(s) will have to deposit 5% of the total quoted price as security money in the form of pay order/demand draft or a bank guarantee in favor of World Food Programme, Dhaka at the time of signing of the contract. If the selected bidder fails to take delivery of the wheat flour within one week after the completion of necessary formalities with WFP, the security deposit will be forfeited and WFP will have all the right to cancel the sale agreement.

Mode of Payment: The successful bidder(s) shall make full payment to WFP before taking possession of the damaged wheat flour within 3 days after official notification, in a certified cheque or a bank draft. Failure to do so will result in cancellation of the offer. Any bank charges and transport expenses shall be borne by the successful bidder(s).

The selected bidder will have to provide an undertaking that this damaged will not be used for human consumption.

Interested firms/companies are invited to drop their detailed quotation in sealed envelope marked "Sale Damaged Wheat Flour" in a tender box kept in the Representative's Office on the 17th floor addressed to the Representative, World Food Programme, IDB Bhaban (17th Floor), E/8-A, Rokeya Sharani, Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, by Monday, 19 January, 2009 by 16:00 hrs. If any offer is received by mail, through registry or through other WFP staff, it will be rejected.

WFP reserves the right to cancel the sale proceeds without assigning any reasons thereof.