



A Palestinian teenage girl yesterday reads on the rubble of her home destroyed during Israel's 22-days military offensive in Gaza in Beit Lahia, northern Gaza Strip. Senior UN officials examined the extent of war damage in Gaza as Israel warned that it would strike again if the enclave's Hamas rulers began to rearm through smuggling tunnels.

Iraq ready for early US pullout

AFP, Baghdad

Iraq said yesterday it is prepared for an early reduction of US troops after President Barack Obama asked the American military to draft plans for a withdrawal from

Iraq.

"If the US pullout comes early, our Iraqi forces have prepared for this," defence ministry spokesman Major General Mohammed al-Askari told AFP.

"Our forces have been ready for this mission since last year and we are fully capable of handling security without relying on US forces. We only need US air support and intelligence," Askari said.

On Wednesday, Obama said he had told top military commanders to make the necessary plans for a "responsible" withdrawal of US troops from Iraq.

"I asked the military leadership to engage in additional planning necessary to execute a responsible military drawdown from Iraq," Obama said in a statement a day after being sworn in as president and commander-in-chief.

The president said he issued the instructions in a meeting with the US ambassador to Iraq, the commander for the region and top cabinet and national security officials.

Obama, who opposed the Iraq war, has said he wants to redeploy thousands of combat troops from the country to Afghanistan, where conditions have deteriorated and which he says is the prime front against Al-Qaeda.

However, the top US commander in Iraq, General Raymond Odierno, has pressed to keep a large force in Iraq at least through this year because of fears that security gains there could fall apart.

Ranglai Mro

FROM PAGE 16

"Until we receive papers from the court, we have been ordered to guard him in this way," said a policeman standing before his bed at Ward-6 of the hospital.

DIG (Prisons) Maj Shamsul Haider Siddique said the Dhaka Central Jail authorities did not receive any paper from the court and soon after receiving the papers he would take necessary steps to release the leader.

Bandarban District Jail authorities said they did not get any paper from HC as of yesterday.

Ranglai was arrested on February 24, 2007 and was tortured by law enforcers so severely that he fell ill and was moved to NICVD and kept in the Coronary Care Unit (CCU).

Even though he is in such a critical condition, the jail authorities had not removed his fetters till human rights organisations, Ain O Salish Kendra and the National Human Rights

Commission, intervened.

Director of NICVD Mohibullah said his condition has improved a lot.

"I do not know how much more time it will take," said Ranglai with a tired voice adding that it is very inconvenient for him to move with the handcuffs.

Mro, also chairman of the Sulaok Union Parishad of Bandarban, was arrested in a case filed under the Arms Act in connection with possession of illegal arms. He was convicted in the arms case on June 13, 2007, and sentenced to 17 years' imprisonment.

An HC division bench comprising Justice Mohammad Mozammel Hossain and Justice Afzal Hossain Ahmed issued his bail order on January 7.

Lawyers sought release of Mro on humanitarian grounds and for emergency medical treatment. They also argued that Mro had been falsely implicated in the case.

2005 LONDON BOMBINGS

Man linked to UK bombings arrested

AP, Islamabad

Pakistani police arrested an al-Qaida suspect believed linked to the 2005 London transit bombings as US intelligence agents watched the capture from a nearby car, two Pakistani security officials said yesterday.

Zabi ul Taifi, a Saudi national, was among seven al-Qaida suspects caught in a raid near the main northwest city of Peshawar sparked by a tip-off from the US, the officials told The Associated Press.

They said an unmanned spy plane and three helicopters hovered over the area during the raid on a house on the outskirts of the city, which has long been a hub of militant activity. The officials requested anonymity because they were not authorised to speak to media.

Pakistan's Interior Ministry chief Rehman Malik confirmed seven people had been arrested. He did not identify the detainees or detail their alleged crimes.

The arrests appear to be a fresh blow to al-Qaida in Pakistan, already under fire from stepped-up US missile strikes on militant targets in Pakistani regions bordering Afghanistan.

They also suggested that

Islamabad and Washington are cooperating behind the scenes in targeting al-Qaida and Taliban militants holed up close to the Afghan border, despite tensions over the missile strikes, which Pakistan has routinely protested.

The Afghan border is home to scores of al-Qaida and Taliban militants and is believed to be a likely hiding place for Osama bin Laden and other extremist leaders.

The security officials did not specify what role Taifi is alleged to have played in the 2005 attacks in London, which killed 52 people.

"We have reasons to believe that we got the right man who had played a role in the 2005 attacks in London," said one official, who said he received the information from security agents in Peshawar.

They said the "well planned" raid stemmed from a tip from American intelligence officials, who witnessed the raid in the Bara Qadeem area of Peshawar but did not participate in it.

The US Embassy declined comment. British Embassy spokesman Jennifer Wilkes said only that Britain "was trying to verify" the claim that Taifi was involved in the London attacks.

The suspects were in Pakistani custody and being

questioned Thursday, the officials said.

Britain is home to many people of Pakistani descent and has long been concerned about the spread of terrorism to its shores.

Millions to be spent on British daily

AFP, Moscow

Russian billionaire and ex-KGB spy Alexander Lebedev yesterday pledged to spend tens of millions of pounds to ensure the survival of his newly acquired London Evening Standard newspaper.

"Tens of millions of pounds will be invested over at least two years. I want this newspaper to survive and to be profitable," Lebedev told a news conference in Moscow a day after his shock acquisition was announced.

Lebedev agreed to pay a nominal sum -- reportedly one pound -- to buy a 75.1 per cent stake in the paper from the newspaper's parent company, Daily Mail and General Trust (DMGT).

"It's a civic duty, to entertain people, to help the paper through the bad times and maybe one day it breaks even," said Lebedev.

"But clearly I will not influence the editorial line of the newspaper," he added.

Like other newspapers, the loss-making Evening Standard is struggling against the plethora of free news available on the Internet and in give-away papers which rely on advertising for revenue.



US President Barack Obama (R) shares a light moment with First Lady Michelle Obama as they attend the National Prayer Service in Washington, DC, on Wednesday.

UN calls for durable Gaza cease-fire

AFP, United Nations

The UN Security Council on Wednesday called for the temporary cease-fire in Gaza to be turned into a durable truce with guarantees to prevent arms smuggling and to ensure that all border crossings are permanently reopened.

All 15 council members agreed to a press statement drafted by Britain and France that welcomed Sunday's unilateral cease-fires by Israel and Hamas militants following Israel's offensive aimed at halting years of militant rocket

fire by Hamas on its southern communities and arms smuggling into Gaza.

The council also expressed "grave concern" at the humanitarian situation in Gaza, where some 1,300 people were killed and many buildings and neighborhoods destroyed, and urged the unimpeded delivery of aid.

The Security Council emphasised the need to fully implement the legally binding resolution adopted by the council on Jan. 8 which called for "an immediate, durable and fully respected cease-fire..."

8 small-time 'thieves'

FROM PAGE 16

Anwar Hossain Dewan, Havilder Sayedul Alam and guards Monju Miah, Shamim Ahmed, Shamsul Alam, Mokammel Huq and Monjur Miah. They were produced in court yesterday and placed on a three-day remand each.

Contacted, Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) of the CID Fazlul Kabir said, "We arrested them (security men) on suspicion. If found not guilty, they would be set free."

Talking to this correspondent at the office of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) commissioner, arrested Khokan identified himself as a microbus driver and narrated the break-in.

"I and four others of our seven-member gang entered the building through a window by scaling the western wall at about noon after midnight and stayed there till 4:20 am... Two other two were waiting at Paltan with a microbus by which we fled away with the booty."

They did not take away any files from the office, and they targeted the building where security measures were insufficient, he said.

Khokan also said he got Tk 11,000 and a mobile phone as his share in the booty. He had already spent Tk 6,000, and DB personnel recovered Tk 5,000 from him.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) of the DB (North) Mainul Hasan, when contacted, said Khokan and his accomplices are professional thieves, and he already disclosed names of the six others.

DMP Commissioner Naim

Ahmed said investigation into the case was at a preliminary stage.

"So far, we did not get any information about involvement of any railway person and theft any files... Our interrogation is on and let us see."

Intelligence sources however said if the person arrested by the DB confesses his involvement, there was no necessity of arrest of the railway guards.

The case has been shifted to the DB from the CID. Earlier on Tuesday, it was transferred to the CID from Shahbagh police.

Meanwhile, a probe committees formed by the communications ministry yesterday submitted its report.

Joint Secretary Nasrin Akter, who headed the probe body, said they made some recommendations to strengthen railway security measures.

A probe body formed by the BR authorities, which was asked to submit its report yesterday, did not do so.

Contacted last night, Habib Ahmed, joint director general of the BR, who heads the body, said, "Our investigation is about to end and we are hopeful that the report would be submitted by Sunday."

Meanwhile, criminals broke into 56 rooms of the BR Bhaban and took away valuables and money. The BR authorities suspended seven security personnel for failure and negligence in discharging their duties.

Moreover, a gang took away various documents from the Chittagong office of the BR recently.

Minister, AL MP

FROM PAGE 1

not to participate in electioneering by visiting upazilas scheduled for the polls.

"But a minister was found at a polling station today. There was no need for him to visit that place but he stayed there and created problems in polling. As a result, we were compelled to suspend polling," Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) ATM Shamsul Huda said, referring to Latif Biswas' interference in Belkuchi upazila.

Referring to Bodi, Huda said another lawmaker beat up polling officials.

"Judicial magistrates have already been asked to take legal actions against the two," the CEC said.

"We are waiting for detail investigation reports, receiving which we will take action," he said.

The CEC said usually problems arise centring officials involved in holding election but there was no such problem. "Since polling officials did not pay heed to anyone's dictates, they were intimidated and influenced," the CEC said.

Election Commissioner

Hossain also said Post and Telecommunications Minister Raziuddin Ahmed Razu visited his electoral area.

Local sources said the minister's presence at Raipura upazila of Narsingdi gave advantage to the candidate his party is backing.

Our correspondent in Sirajganj reports: Minister Latif Biswas went to Sirajganj on Wednesday night and stayed at his residence in Kamarpara village in Belkuchi upazila. He attended a meeting at the Belkuchi AL office that night.

Latif visited Meghulla Madrasa polling centre and Kamarpara Primary School centre yesterday morning.

He left Belkuchi at 1:30pm after hearing the news of postponement of the elections at the upazila.

When contacted, Returning Officer Abdul Qayyum said, "We postponed the elections on orders of the Election Commission and we did not get any complaint against the minister."

Abdul Latif Biswas could not be contacted over mobile phone for his comments.

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DETAILS OF QUALIFICATIONS AND APPLICATION CRITERIA ARE AVAILABLE ON THE SHIREE WEBSITE

Only short listed candidates will be invited for interviews. No telephone calls or solicitations in person please. Applications from suitably qualified women are particularly encouraged. Interested applicants are invited to apply via [email](mailto:info@shiree.org) with a CV of no more than 5 pages only (no cover letters please) by 5pm on 8 February 2009 directly to: info@shiree.org.

For further information please visit www.shiree.org

USAID

Job Opportunity

CARE Bangladesh invites applications from qualified candidates for SHOUHARDO program for the following positions, on contract up-to May 31, 2010.

Regional Grants Manager
(Based in Rangpur Region)

Key Responsibilities:

- Preparation of the regional budget.
- Monitor program expenses, analyze variances and recommend corrective actions.
- Prepare cash pipeline for the SHOUHARDO program.
- Review different reports of the sub grantees and resolve problems.
- Preparation of agreement for partnership.
- Lead the program finance team to manage the budget and expenditure of the sub-grantees and CARE's direct delivery activities.
- Coordinate with Regional Office finance team and Headquarter finance team.
- Plan and implement capacity building activities for the CARE and PNGO staff.
- Facilitate audit activities of the program.

Core Qualifications and Competencies:

- Masters' in Finance/Accounting or CA course completed with 5 years experience in similar areas preferable in an international organization.
- Experience on managing donor funds and sub grant management with large number of local NGOs.
- Experience on budgeting and financial report preparation.
- Ability to meet deadlines and respond promptly as necessary.
- Good computer skills on word processing, Excel and spreadsheet, etc.
- Knowledge of USAID Rules and regulations.
- Should have considerable technical knowledge and experience in understanding and grasping financial aspects of PNGOs and community.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills in both English and Bangla.

Compensation: Gross Salary for the position is approximately Tk 48,000.00 per month, plus other admissible benefits as per organizational policy.

CARE Bangladesh invites applications from qualified individuals and the application format can be found on the website at: www.carebd.org. Please note that only applications filled in as per CARE format will be considered. Please email the application to hr.carebangladesh@gmail.com on or before January 31, 2009. For those wanting to send hard copies of the CARE application format please send to: Manager-HR&M, CARE Bangladesh, 20-21, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka 1215. Interested persons may also collect the application format from our Reception desk (9th floor).

Note: Women are particularly encouraged to apply. Any persuasion will disqualify the candidates. Internal and external applicants shall be treated equally in the entire selection process. Applicants who have relatives in CARE are discouraged to apply. Only short listed candidates shall be invited for the interview. Please write the position applied for at the top right hand corner of the envelope. Visit CARE web-site on: www.carebd.org

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