

Pakistan nets 5 suicide bombers

AFP, Quetta

Pakistani authorities raided a house and arrested five would-be suicide bombers in the restive southwestern province of Baluchistan on Friday, a local official said.

The arrests were made in Pashtoonabad, a satellite town of Quetta, where local UN refugee agency (UNHCR) chief John Solecki was kidnapped earlier this month in Pakistan's most high-profile Western abduction in seven years.

"Intelligence agents raided a house and arrested five suspected suicide bombers, along with five suicide jackets and explosive material," a security official told AFP on condition of anonymity.

Civilians flee war zone as Lanka snubs Britain

AFP, Colombo

Thousands more civilians fled Sri Lanka's war zone, the defence ministry said yesterday, as Colombo angrily rejected Britain's appointment of a special envoy to address the island's humanitarian crisis.

Men, women and children from the minority ethnic Tamil community crossed the front lines in the district of Mullaitivu where the army has cornered holdout forces of the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

"The people fled despite a series of barricades imposed by the LTTE to stall the civilian influx," the ministry said in a statement.

Official figures showed 37,420 people had crossed the front lines this year, with

nearly 35,000 making the hazardous journey this month alone to seek shelter with security forces.

The government has accused the Tiger rebels of using civilians trapped by the fighting as "human shields" and of preventing them from leaving the area. The Red Cross says hundreds of non-combatants have already been killed.

The latest flight of civilians came as Britain said it had appointed former defence minister Des Browne as a special envoy to focus on the growing humanitarian crisis in Sri Lanka.

The move by the former, colonial power was swiftly condemned by Colombo.

"It is tantamount to an intrusion into Sri Lanka's internal affairs and is disre-

spectful to the country's statehood," Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama told AFP.

The minister warned of "major repercussions" for relations with Britain.

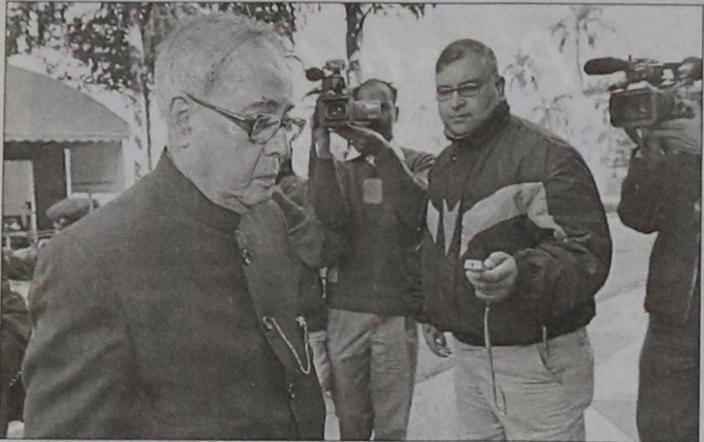
"There is no further discussion with London on the matter," Bogollagama said, after the British Foreign Office had said talks were ongoing to resolve the dispute.

The foreign ministry in a formal statement said the cabinet of ministers rejected the unilateral appointment.

"The government of Sri Lanka categorically states that this appointment is in contravention of the basic principles governing international relations and the requirement for consultation and reciprocity," the statement said.



Lankan Defence Ministry handout photo shows war displaced Tamil civilians sheltering with government forces after escaping from Tamil rebel-held areas in Mullaitivu. International concern for the safety of civilians has mounted with the killing of dozens of people in attacks blamed on Tamil Tiger guerrillas.



Indian External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee (R) arrives in Parliament in New Delhi yesterday. Pakistan must act to eradicate militant camps, India said, a day after Islamabad admitted for the first time that the Mumbai attacks had been partly planned on Pakistani soil.

Indian press euphoric as Pakistan 'blinks'

AFP, New Delhi

Indian newspapers revelled Friday in what they saw as an unprecedented U-turn after Islamabad admitted that last year's Mumbai attacks were partly planned on Pakistani soil.

"Pak blinks, finally" ran the front page banner headline in the Times of India, which confessed to being surprised by the admission and the announcement that Pakistan was holding the alleged mastermind of the attacks and five other suspects.

"The confession surprised many because it came close on the heels of a series of red herrings which suggested that Islamabad ... would point its

finger at organisations not active on its territory," the Times said.

As a result, Thursday's statement by interior ministry chief Rehman Malik has "surpassed India's expectations," it added.

"From Pakistan, Says Pakistan," was the headline of the Indian Express, which said that, following "denial after denial," Pakistan had taken "a first step" towards admitting the facts.

Two of those in Pakistani custody are senior leaders of Lashkar-e-Taiba, the Pakistan-based militant group India has blamed for the attacks on its financial capital in November that killed 165 people.

Pakistan must allay India fears: US intel chief

AFP, Washington

Pakistan holds the key to defusing tensions with nuclear rival India by executing a serious clampdown on Islamic militants, US Director of National Intelligence Dennis Blair said Thursday.

Without such action from Islamabad, President Barack Obama's new chief of intelligence told Congress, New Delhi could feel compelled to ignite a wider conflict in a region already fraught with security risks.

The best efforts of Indian and Pakistani leaders to improve relations "could unravel unless Islamabad takes sustained, concrete, meaningful steps to

allay Indian concerns about Islamabad's support to anti-Indian militant groups."

November's bloody terror attacks on Mumbai had laid bare the danger, Blair said in annual testimony to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.

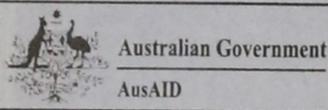
"The attack has convinced many Indians that Pakistani military leaders, in an effort to undercut India's emerging international stature, now favor a strategy of allowing Pakistan-based groups to attack targets that symbolize New Delhi's growing prominence on the global stage or that could undermine India's prominence by provoking religious violence

in the country," he said.

"In the absence of a military response against Islamabad, the Indian public will look for visible signs that Pakistan is actively working to punish those involved and eliminate its domestic terrorist organisations."

More attacks by "Pakistan-based groups ... run the risk of provoking an India-Pakistan conflict," Blair warned.

"In addition, India, which has endured a series of major terrorist attacks without major military response since 2003, is under domestic pressure to make rapid and significant improvements in its counterterrorism capabilities."



Announcement for the Australian Development Scholarships (ADS) 2010 Intake

Under the 2010 Australian Development Scholarships (ADS) program the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) is pleased to invite applications from interested candidates who are committed to contribute towards the development of Bangladesh.

The Australian Development Scholarships (ADS) are the principal mechanism by which Australia provides scholarship assistance for individuals from developing countries to undertake studies at Australian education institutions. The goal of the scholarships program is to help meet the human resource development needs of developing countries. Scholarships also play an important role in fostering and sustaining Australia's relations with developing countries, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region.

Australian Development Scholarships (ADS) are open to candidates from the following institutions:

- Government of Bangladesh* (Application will be received by AusAID, Dhaka)
- ICDDR,B (Applications will be received by ICDDR,B)

* Candidates from all government departments such as autonomous, public service commission, corporate and constitutional institutions are also eligible to apply for the ADS scholarship. All GOB applicants should provide a forwarding letter from the relevant attached Ministry or Government Department with the completed application form.

All female candidates and indigenous candidates from the above organisations are especially encouraged to apply.

NOTE: Public University employees are not eligible to apply for ADS. However, the Australian Leadership Awards (ALA) and other streams of Australian Scholarships are open for ALL. Please visit the Australian Scholarships website <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/scholar> for more details regarding Australian Scholarships.

Eligibility Criteria

- You must be less than 40 years old at the time of the application.
- You must complete a university level qualification which is at least equivalent in standard to an Australian Bachelors degree. Candidates with high level academic results in one or more university level degrees are encouraged to apply.
- You must nominate only one field of study from the list provided in the Australian High Commission website (www.bangladesh.embassy.gov.au). The field of study can not be changed once you have been short-listed.
- You must have at least two years of work experience relevant to the field of study for which you are applying.
- You must submit the results of IELTS Academic Test. The overall test score must be at least 6.5 with no individual band being less than 6.0, and the test date should not be earlier than 1 November 2007. IELTS test taken earlier than 1 November 2007 will not be accepted and the application will be disqualified.

In addition to the above, the short listing process will take into account the following factors:

- Fifty percent of scholarships will be awarded to female candidates and fifty percent will be awarded to male candidates.
- Favourable consideration will be given to candidates with disabilities; candidates from indigenous communities; candidates who have not previously undertaken post-graduate studies abroad; and candidates who are not dual nationals of an OECD country.

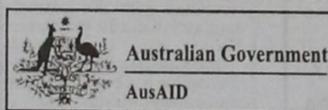
You will not be eligible if you:

- Are holding or have been nominated to receive another scholarship;
- Are a permanent resident or have applied for permanent residency in Australia;
- Are married or engaged to be married to a person who holds or who is eligible to hold Australian or New Zealand citizenship or permanent residence status.

If you meet all the eligibility criteria and are working with any of the organisations listed above, kindly visit the official website of the Australian High Commission: www.bangladesh.embassy.gov.au to download the application form and for detailed information and instructions. Hard copies of the application forms are also available at the Australian High Commission, 184 Gulshan Avenue, Dhaka. Please carefully read the instruction and other relevant information before sending your application.

The deadline for submitting applications is 30 April 2009.

Please Note: The ADS-Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) component for 2010 is also open. Details of the program are available in the newspapers and the Australian High Commission website. The selection process for the ADS-CHT intake is managed by UNDP. Please contact UNDP for further information.



Announcement for the Australian Development Scholarships (ADS) 2010 Intake For Indigenous candidates from the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility/United Nations Development Programme (UNDP-CHTDF) in collaboration with the Australian Government is pleased to invite applications for Australian Development Scholarships 2010 Intake from indigenous candidates of Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) who are committed to contribute to the development of CHT. The purpose of this program is primarily to enhance the human resource capacity of CHT to build essential skills to assume important roles in the region.

Scholarship Conditions:

- At least Fifty percent of the scholarships will be awarded to female candidates.
- Applications from physically challenged people will be considered favorably.
- Preference will be given to those who have not previously been awarded any scholarship abroad.

Eligibility Criteria:

(a) Age:

- Must be less than 40 years old at the time of application for the Master degree courses.
- Must be less than 30 years old at the time of application for the Bachelor degree courses.

(b) Academic:

- For Bachelor Degree:** Completion of a minimum Higher Secondary Certificate/ 'A' level. Preference will be given to the candidates who have minimum 60% marks/CGPA 2.5 in their 1st year exam of undergraduate studies in any university/institution.
- For Masters Degree:** Must have completed a University level qualification which is at least equivalent in standard to an Australian Bachelor degree. Must have at least two years of work experience relevant to the field of study applying for. Candidates with high level academic results in one or more university level degrees are encouraged to apply.
- Must have minimum 2nd division/class and/or minimum GPA 3.0 (out of 5.0) in SSC & HSC level and/or GPA /CGPA 2.25 (Out of 4.0) in Bachelor/Honors/Masters level examinations.

(c) **Field of Study:** An applicant can chose/select only one field of study from the list provided below and it cannot be changed once the applicant has been short-listed.

Study level	Field of Study
Bachelor	Community Development, Communication Studies, Criminology, Development Studies, Disaster preparedness/management, Economics, Education (Early Childhood /Primary/ Inclusive/ etc.), Environmental Science, Finance, Health Sciences, Hotel & Tourism Management, Human Resource Management, Peace/Governance Studies.
Masters	Agricultural Sciences (Forestry/Fisheries/Livestock etc.), Community Development, Development Economics, Development Policy/Research & Advocacy, Disaster/Emergency Management, Dispute Resolution /Peace & Conflict Studies, Education (Special education/ Early Childhood/Primary/ Curriculum development/Education planning & policy etc.), Environmental Science & Management, Human Rights /Law /Governance/Legal Studies, NGO Management, Public Health /Nutrition/ Hospital Management and Public Policy & Management.

(d) English Proficiency:

Candidates are expected to have strong English Language Skills. Candidates must note that IELTS (Academic module) score requirement by Australian Universities is:

- overall 6.5 (at least 6.0 in all individual bands) for Masters level and
- overall 6.0 (at least 6.0 in all individual bands) for Bachelors level.

Please contact UNDP-CHTDF if you require English Language assistance in preparing for the IELTS test. All candidates are encouraged to apply with valid IELTS score. However, if necessary, UNDP-CHTDF will arrange IELTS test for short-listed candidates only. IELTS test taken prior to 30 November 2007 will be considered invalid.

(e) All candidates must be citizens of Bangladesh and have valid passports.

(f) The Following candidates are not eligible:

- Applicants who are not indigenous persons of CHT origin.
- If an applicant is holding or has been nominated to receive another scholarship;
- If applied for permanent residency in Australia or is a permanent resident of Australia.
- Be married to/or a defacto of, or engaged to be married to a person who holds or is eligible to hold an Australian or New Zealand citizenship or permanent resident status.

If you meet all the eligibility criteria, kindly visit the official website of UNDP, Bangladesh http://www.undp.org.bd/projects/proj_detail.php?pid=54 for detailed instructions and to download the application form.

Hard copies of the instruction and application forms are also available at UNDP-CHTDF offices in Dhaka, Bandarban, Khagrachari and Rangamati. Please carefully read the instruction and other relevant information in the website before submitting your application. Incomplete and ineligible applications will be disqualified.

Female candidates and candidates who are physically challenged are especially encouraged to apply for the ADS-CHT scholarship.

The deadline for submission of applications is **30 April, 2009.** Any application received after 4:00 pm on this date will not be considered.