



Pakistani tribesmen collect sacks of wheat beside the wreckage left by a rocket attack by militants in Landi Kotal, the main town in Pakistan's volatile Khyber district yesterday. At least 10 people were killed and 45 others wounded when militants fired rockets into a town in Pakistan's semi-autonomous Khyber tribal area on Thursday night.

PHOTO: AFP

EU offers more aid to battle-scarred Lanka

AFP, Brussels/Colombo

The European Commission on Thursday announced an additional three million euros funding for the Red Cross to help tackle the growing humanitarian crisis in Sri Lanka's strife-torn north.

"I am appalled by the humanitarian catastrophe in the north of Sri Lanka. Thousands of civilians trapped in the conflict zone have died and more are dying every day, not only from

repeated shelling but also from lack of food, water and medical care," said EU Development Commissioner Louis Michel.

"Only minimal humanitarian assistance is being allowed into the area. There is an immediate and urgent need to act, to save lives and prevent further human tragedy," he added in a statement.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is the only international humanitarian organi-

sation allowed into the conflict zone and is working "in desperate conditions" to bring life-saving assistance to the people who are trapped and to evacuate the sick and wounded, the Commission said.

United Nations' human rights chief Navi Pillay has said she fears both sides could be guilty of war crimes in the Sri Lanka conflict and that more than 2,800 civilians could have been killed since January.

India against marking sections of Taliban as 'good' or 'bad'

PTI, United Nations

Cautioning against attempts to draw a line between "good" and "bad" Taliban, India has said that doubts and divergences in the fight against terrorists in Afghanistan would embolden them and weaken the collective will.

Speaking at the UN Security Council, Indian Ambassador Nirupam Sen stressed the need for stability of Afghanistan in the interest of economic progress of the region and asked the interna-

tional community to collectively fight the threat posed by Taliban and al-Qaeda who are out to undermine the country.

"Doubts, hesitation and divergences in the international community in the fight against terrorists would only weaken the collective will and embolden them," Sen warned the Security Council. He cautioned against attempts to distinguish between "good" and "bad" Taliban and asked the international community to get beyond the "unworkable" efforts of sifting the two.



Bernard Mutzberg (2L), German Special Representative for Pakistan and Afghanistan listens to Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi (2R) during a meeting at the Foreign Ministry in Islamabad yesterday. Mutzberg has arrived in Islamabad on an official visit for talks with Pakistani leaders and military officials.

PHOTO: AFP



United Nations Human Rights commissioner Navi Pillay (L) walks with officials after meeting Nepalese Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal, also known as Prachanda at his residence in Kathmandu yesterday. Pillay arrived in Nepal for a five-day visit, during which she will assess the human rights situation in the Himalayan nation after the end of a decade-long insurgency.

PHOTO: AFP

Upcoming Afghan polls must be 'fair and transparent': UN

AFP, United Nations

The UN special envoy to Afghanistan on Thursday urged the Kabul government to reassure its opposition that upcoming presidential polls will be "fair and transparent" amid expectations of stepped-up fighting by Taliban insurgents.

"The Afghan government must demonstrate that it will do its utmost to reassure the opposition that elections will be fair and will be transparent and that the resources of incumbency will not be misused," Kai Eide told the UN Security Council.

The key political challenge now was to resolve the dispute regarding what would happen between May 22 when President Hamid Karzai's current term expires and the next presidential election scheduled for August 20, the

Norwegian head of the UN mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) noted.

Last Friday, UN chief Ban Ki-moon said the UNAMA mandate, which expires next Monday, should be extended for another year to help ensure credible polls that are seen as a key test of Karzai's rule, as well as seven-year-old US- and Nato-led efforts to stabilise Afghanistan.

The 15-member Security Council was expected to approve the mandate extension early next week.

"The United States sees the upcoming election as a key strategic event in Afghanistan," its UN delegate Rosemary DiCarlo told the council. "We support an open, fair election in which the Afghan people can choose their own leaders free from intimidation."

Congress snubs RJD seat offer

ANI, New Delhi/Hyderabad

Congress has said it was deeply hurt by the deal cut out by its old ally, Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), by offering only three out of 40 parliamentary seats in Bihar.

"There is a deep sense of hurt at offering us a paltry three to four seats. Certainly, we as a party are entitled to assert that

we should be given many more seats and certainly we do not accept that figure. I think both those stands are fully compatible," said Abhishek Singhvi, party spokesman.

On Tuesday, the RJD and Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) announced a pact with RJD getting 25 seats and LJP 12.

Lalu, however, has underplayed any rift with the

Congress.

Meanwhile, Nationalist Congress (NCP) said they would not like to have any alliance with the Congress which has been unable to give a seat for a prominent leader in Bihar.

If Congress-RJD combine cannot even accommodate one of topmost leader Lalu Prasad Singh, I don't see any reason why NCP Party

should have any alliance anywhere in this country. I will meet Sharad Pawar and put forward the view," said P.A. Sangma, a NCP leader.

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), who has been fielding questions on internal rift over the appointment of businessman Sudhanshu Mittal, seems to have prepared over the controversy.



Australian Leadership Awards - Scholarships

The Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) is pleased to invite applications under the 2010 Australian Leadership Awards scholarships (ALA) program from interested candidates who are committed to contribute to the development of Bangladesh. The purpose of ALA scholarships is to develop leadership in the Asia Pacific region. The program is an investment in the future of this region, training leaders who will advance reform, development and governance.

ALA Scholarships are academically prestigious awards offered to high achievers from the Asia-Pacific region each year to undertake postgraduate (Masters and Doctoral) study. Scholars also participate in a unique Leadership Development Program. ALA scholars are expected to return to their home country after they have completed their studies. Managed by the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), the ALA awards are highly competitive and targeted primarily towards those who have the potential to assume leadership roles that can influence social and economic policy reform and development outcomes in their home countries and the region. Recipients should also be willing to make a commitment to the exclusive Australian Scholarships alumni programme.

Scholars can apply for the following fields of study for a Masters or a Ph. D degree: Disability, Economic Growth, Education, Environment, Food Security, Gender, Governance, Health, Human Rights, Infrastructure, Regional Stability, Rural Development and Water & Sanitation.

Preference will be given to the following candidates:

- (i) Those who have relevant professional experience in their chosen subject area.
- (ii) Those who are in a leadership role or have the potential to assume a leadership role in the public, private or community sector

Mandatory requirements:

- Must have an IELTS score of **6.5 or above** taken no longer than two years prior to the date of application
- Must have an **unconditional offer letter** from an Australian university for entry into full time studies in the nominated subject area for masters or doctoral studies
- Must have a record of high-level undergraduate or post-graduate academic achievement

You will not be eligible if you:

- (a) Are holding or have been nominated to receive another scholarship;
- (b) Are a permanent resident or have applied for permanent residency in Australia;
- (c) 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.

Applications are now open for commencement at an Australian university from January 2010.

If you meet all the eligibility criteria, kindly go to the website www.ausaid.gov.au/scholar/ala.cfm for detailed instructions. You are requested to apply online or send a hard copy of the application to the address below. Please note that the deadline for receiving hardcopy and online applications is **30 June 2009**.

Scholarships Officer
AusAID
Australian High Commission
184 Gulshan Avenue, Gulshan
Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh

Please read the instructions and other relevant information carefully before sending your application. Incomplete and ineligible applications will be disqualified.

Awards will be allocated equitably between men and women.

Candidates with disabilities and candidates of tribal descent are strongly encouraged to apply.

Closing date for all applications: **30 June 2009**

PPP leaders accept Zardari's proposal to form an alliance with PML-Q in Punjab

ANI, Islamabad

Pakistan President Asif Ali Zardari's proposal of forming an alliance with the Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid in Punjab has been accepted by senior members of the Pakistan People's Party.

According to sources, senior leaders of his party met with Zardari at the Presidency on Thursday, and agreed with his proposal.

The meeting came after Zardari cancelled a meeting of the party's central executive committee and decided to meet senior party leaders, the Daily Times reports.

administration would provide enhanced counter insurgency weaponry to Pakistan military.

However, they added that the attacks would not be extended to the other areas, as claimed by several media reports.

The new strategy also calls for a massive expansion in the US economic and development assistance to Pakistan.

The US is expected to deploy more diplomats and officials to Afghanistan. Two veteran US diplomats Peter Galbraith and Francis Ricciardone Jr. will lead this team.

Last week, President Obama nominated former US military commander Lt. General Karl Eikenberry as the US Ambassador to Afghanistan.

Meanwhile, US officials confirmed

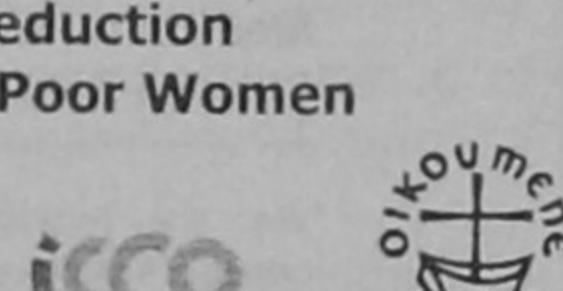
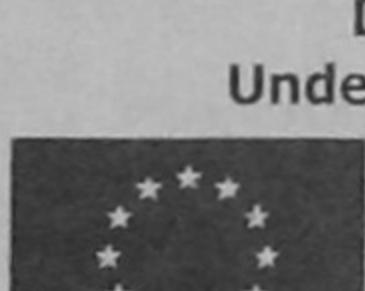
that Pakistan and Afghanistan would be at the top of Obama's agenda when he goes to Europe to consult with America's allies.

Obama is expected to announce his new strategy before he leaves for Netherlands on March 31 to attend a 73-nation meeting on Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Earlier at least 10 people were killed and 45 others wounded when militants fired rockets into a town in Pakistan's semi-autonomous Khyber tribal area overnight, officials said Friday.

One paramilitary soldier was wounded when three rockets fired by militants hit their camp late Thursday, a security official said.

Expression of Interest for Employment with CCDB Disaster Management and Risk Reduction Under Food Security Project for Ultra Poor Women



Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh (CCDB) invites Expression of Interest, for employment with CCDB. Prospective young men and women, having the required experience and willing to work with "Disaster Management and Risk Reduction Programs" under the "Food Security Project for Ultra Poor Women" are encouraged to send their applications along with personal profile by March 31, 2009, to the address given below.

This project is being co-financed by Interchurch Cooperation for Development Cooperation (ICCO), The Leprosy Mission (TLM)-England and Wales, Dark and Light Blind Care and European Commission (EC), for a period of five years.

This project will be implemented in 7 upazila in Gaibandha zila, through 7 national NGOs, including CCDB. CCDB's role is to build the capacities of the 6 implementing partner organizations staff team members and other selected stakeholders and coordinate Disaster Mitigation work that will be implemented in 7 upazilas.

Expressions of Interest for Employment are being sought for the following positions:-

i. **Program Coordinator-Disaster and Risk Management-Requirements:** Masters in Social Science or Management, with 7 to 10 years work experience as Manager or Coordinator at mid-level in large national NGOs, with special focus on Disaster Management. Experience in working in multi-disciplinary work team. Proficiency in speaking and writing in English, to meet the donor partner requirements. Skilled in operating computers. Ability to drive motor cycles and have a valid driving license. Age between 30 to 45 years.

ii. **Field Officers - Disaster and Risk Management - Requirements:** Masters in Social Science or Management, with 3 to 5 years work experience as Program Officer/ Supervisor/Coordinator at mid-level in national NGOs, with special focus on Disaster Management. Experience in working in multi-disciplinary work team. Proficiency in speaking and writing in English, to meet the donor partner requirements. Skilled in operating computers. Ability to drive motor cycles and have a valid driving license. Age between 30 to 40 years.

iii. **Trainers-Disaster and Risk management - Requirements:** Masters in Social Science or Management, with 3 to 5 years work experience as Trainer or Training Officer or Training Coordinator national NGOs, with special focus on Disaster Management. Training and Facilitation skills and ability work in multi-disciplinary work team. Proficiency in speaking and writing in English, to meet the donor partner requirements. Skilled in operating computers. Ability to drive motor cycles and have a valid driving license. Age between 30 to 40 years.

iv. **Finance cum Administrative Officer - Requirements:** Masters in Accounting or Management with accounting and office management experience for 3 to 5 years. Ability to operate Accounting Software like ACCPAC or Tally and maintain financial and official records independently. Age between 25 to 35 years.

Please write the name of the position you are expressing your interest for. Short listed applicants will be called for written and oral tests, for final selection. Address for sending your application and personal profile.

Human Resource Department

Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh

88 Senpara Barata, Mirpur-10, Dhaka-1216