



Pakistani tribesmen search for victims amidst the debris at the site of a suicide blast at a mosque in the town of Jamrud yesterday. A suicide bomber blew himself up in a packed mosque in northwest Pakistan during Juma prayers, killing 48 people and wounding dozens in one of the deadliest attacks in the nuclear-armed nation.

PHOTO: AFP

## US to talk with Kyrgyzstan on retaining key air base

AFP, Moscow

Kyrgyzstan has invited the United States to discuss retaining the Manas air base outside Bishkek that serves as a key supply route to Afghanistan, a senior US official said in Moscow yesterday.

"We've agreed to enter into discussions with the Kyrgyz at their invitation on the possibility of the agreement (on the air base remaining in force)," the official, who asked not to be named, said in Moscow.

Kyrgyzstan on February 20 officially set in motion the process for closing the airbase at Manas, outside the Kyrgyz capital, by handing the United States a 180-day notice to leave the base.

The base is a vital support post for US and Western operations, as it is used for ferrying tens of thousands of troops in and out of Afghanistan each year and also hosts planes used for mid-air refuelling of combat craft.

## US lawmakers welcome Obama's Afghan plan

AFP, Washington

US lawmakers yesterday warmly welcomed President Barack Obama's new Afghan war plan but openly worried about getting more Nato help and doing enough to get Pakistan to crack down on extremists.

"The proposed military escalation in Afghanistan, without an adequate strategy in Pakistan, could make the situation worse, not better," Democratic Senator Russell Feingold warned in a statement.

Feingold, a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said he was "pleased" by Obama's focus on crushing Al-Qaeda terrorists, fighting Afghan corruption, and boosting aid for economic development and the rule of law.

But he worried "the new strategy may still be overly Afghan-centric," and stressed that "we need to fully address the inextricable links between the crisis in Afghanistan and the instability and terrorist threats in Pakistan."

The top Republican on the House Armed Services Committee, Representative John McHugh, urged colleagues to back the strategy but called for deploying another 10,000 troops and urged Obama to win more Nato support.

"All eyes now turn to the upcoming Nato summit and the administration's efforts to sell this strategy to our allies," the lawmaker said in

a statement.

McHugh also warned his colleagues against the political divisions that met then-president George W. Bush's 2007 troop "surge" in Iraq that contributed to the stunning security turnaround in that war-torn country.

"Some will attempt to reach back to the Iraq 'surge' debate, dust off the arguments used to oppose the successful strategy, and apply them to president's new Afghanistan strategy. We cannot allow this minimalist approach to creep into the new strategy," he said.

McHugh said any congressional "benchmarks" to judge the new strategy's success must be "realistic" and not merely a tool "to narrow the president's strategy under the guise of accountability."

"Congress has to ensure the strategy is fully funded, resourced and executed," said McHugh, who urged Obama to meet a top US general's request for about 10,000 more soldiers on top of the currently planned deployments.

Top Afghanistan commander US General David McKiernan said earlier this year that he envisioned a need for 30,000 more troops. Obama has already announced he is sending 17,000 additional soldiers and was to unveil plans Friday to send 4,000 more to train Afghan security forces.

# UN, US, UK urge pause in Lankan fighting

## Fresh fighting rages in north

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka stepped up a drive to dislodge Tamil rebels from a narrow patch of land yesterday amid fresh international calls for a truce to save thousands of civilians trapped in the war zone.

Security forces were engaged in heavy fighting and poised to overrun another Tamil Tigers defence line near Puthukkudirippu in northeastern Mullaitivu district, the defence ministry said.

"Military operations are in progress at north of Puthukkudirippu as troops are steadily approaching the fourth earth-bund built by the LTTE (Liberation Tigers

of Tamil Eelam) terrorists," the ministry said in a statement.

It said troops had killed an estimated 29 Tiger rebels and recovered the bodies of 13 of them.

The statement came as the United Nations, backed by Britain and the United States, pressed for a "humanitarian pause" in the fighting and blamed Tamil rebels for the plight of tens of thousands of trapped civilians.

UN humanitarian chief John Holmes told reporters in New York after an informal UN Security Council briefing that his main concern was "the civilian population trapped in the combat area and not being allowed out by the LTTE."

He added that he was pressing for urgent humanitarian access to the combat area in Sri Lanka.

"We suggested the idea of some kind of humanitarian pause to allow that to happen and to allow the civilian population to leave," he said.

"This is an extremely worrying situation and therefore, our first appeal is to the LTTE to let the civilians out in a safe and orderly fashion."

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

## Maoists planning to target VIPs in Chhattisgarh

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE, Raipur

Maoists are looking to target VIPs and VVIPs in Chhattisgarh in the run-up to the Lok Sabha poll to get global publicity, a senior police official said Friday, citing fresh intelligence inputs.

Maoists, who have announced a boycott of the polls and asked people to stay away from the election process, have stepped up violence since filing of nominations began in the state March 23. According to a senior official at the police headquarters here, the leftist insurgents are keen to target important political figures coming to the state next month to campaign.

## India, Israel sign \$1.4b deal on air defence system

PTI/Jerusalem

India has signed its biggest defence deal with Israel for the purchase of a state-of-the-art air defence system at a whopping cost of USD 1.4 billion (Rs 7,042). Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) has officially acknowledged that the defence deal between the two countries was inked on February 27 under which Israel will develop and manufacture seaborn and shore-based systems against missile attack on India, business daily 'Globe' reported.

The signing of the deal comes as India is in advance stage of testing of its own anti-missile shield.



Members from Indian political party National Akali Dal shout slogans during a rally in New Delhi yesterday protesting comments attributed to Varun Gandhi, a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader and grandson of former Indian prime minister Indira Gandhi.

PHOTO: AFP

# BJP intensifies attack on Manmohan

PTI, CNN-IBN, New Delhi

Stepping up attack on Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, BJP yesterday said if he could not contest the Lok Sabha elections and participate in a television debate with LK Advani due to health reasons, then how will he lead the nation.

"Manmohan Singhji is neither ready to fight the election nor ready for a TV debate with our prime ministerial candidate LK Advani. His illness is being cited as an excuse," senior BJP leader VK Malhotra said.

"If he is ill and can not even come for a TV debate then how

can he become Prime Minister of the country," he told reporters.

Malhotra said Singh contested the Lok Sabha elections just once and he was defeated then.

Manmohan Singh is being pitched as the UPA's next prime ministerial candidate if the Congress comes to power in General Elections 2009.

However, according to Congress sources, Manmohan will not be contesting the Lok Sabha elections.

Instead, just like 2004, he will be using the Rajya Sabha route if he returns to office.

The party's clarification comes in response to opposi-

tion leader L K Advani's challenge to the PM to become a Lok Sabha member.

Advani on Thursday challenged Singh to a live TV debate similar to the practice in the US where rival political leaders take on each other.

Reacting to the challenge, Congress spokesperson Jayanti Natrajan had said the BJP seems to be "obsessed" with everything in US. However, she said it was upto the prime minister to respond to the challenge.

The senior BJP leader said the Congress is in shambles after many key allies deserted the party in the last couple of days.

BRAC	
75, Mohakhali, Dhaka-1212	
Phone : 8824180 - 7, Ext : 2032.	
Tender for TV Spot Airing.	
Project Name	BRAC Health Program (TB)
Source of Fund	Donor Fund
Tender Package no.	BHP (TB) - Ad./02/09
Reference and date	IFT/BRAC/BPD-BHP/09-10 March 23, 2009
Name of Item	Airing of TV Spot on Television for TB
Duration	From April, 2009 to March, 2010
Price of Tender Documents	Tk. : 1,000/- (Non-Refundable)
Name and address of the Office Selling Tender Document	Accounts Department (4 <sup>th</sup> Floor), Annex Building, BRAC Centre, 75 Mohakhali, Dhaka-1212.
Date and Time for Selling Tender Document	From 29 March to 08 April 2009 Time: From 9.00 am to 3:00pm.
Name and address of the Office Receiving & Opening Tenders	BRAC Procurement Department (BPD), 75 Mohakhali, Dhaka-1212.
Date and Time for Submission of Tenders	On April 09, 2009 Time: From 9.00am to 2.00 pm
Date and Time for Opening of Tenders	April 09, 2009 Time: 3.00 pm.



PHOTO: AFP

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov shakes hands with United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon (R) during a meeting of the Shanghai Group in Moscow yesterday. The group which unites China, Russia and Central Asian states, met amid mounting international concerns over the resurgence of the Taliban militants in Afghanistan.

## Britain ready for talks with Taliban

AFP, Copenhagen

Britain is ready to hold talks with the Taliban if the insurgents put down their weapons and support democracy in Afghanistan, British Defence Secretary John Hutton said here Thursday.

"A dialogue is possible only if they lay down the weapons and support the democratic process. If people are willing to do that, I have no problem with that," he said.

"Of course it's possible to reach such kind of accommodations," he said at a news conference alongside Danish counterpart Soeren Gade.

But Hutton added that it was "impossible to imagine a reconciliation with the fundamentalist extremists, those who hated western values."

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার			
বাংলাদেশ এগ্রিবিজনেস ডেভেলপমেন্ট প্রজেক্ট			
কৃষি বিপণন অধিদপ্তর			
সেচ ভবন, ৫ম তলা, ২২, মানিক মিয়া এভিনিউ			
শেরেবাংলা নগর, ঢাকা-১২০৭			
তারিখ: ২৩/০৩/২০০৯ইং			
নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি			
কৃষি বিপণন অধিদপ্তর কর্তৃক বাস্তবায়নধীন বাংলাদেশ এগ্রিবিজনেস ডেভেলপমেন্ট প্রকল্পে "কাজ নাই মজুরী নাই" ভিত্তিতে (দৈনিক অদক্ষ কর্মী হিসেবে) নিম্নোক্ত শর্তাবলী সাপেক্ষে ০২ (দুই) জন "ড্রাইভার" নিয়োগ করা হবে। আগ্রহী প্রার্থীদের নিকট হতে আবেদনপত্র আদান করা যাবে।			
ক্রমিক নং	পদের নাম	সংখ্যা	প্রয়োজনীয় শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা
০১	ড্রাইভার (গাড়িচালক)	০২	৮ম শ্রেণী/এসএসসি পাস
শর্তাবলী:			
১। আবেদনকারীকে নিজ নাম, পিতা/স্বামীর নাম, মাতার নাম, বর্তমান ঠিকানা, স্থায়ী ঠিকানা, জন্ম তারিখ ০১/০১/২০০৯ইং তারিখে বয়স, নাগরিকত্ব, নিজ জেলা, ধর্ম, শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা, অভিজ্ঞতা কমপক্ষে ৩ বছরের ইত্যাদি উল্লেখপূর্বক আবেদন করতে হবে।			
২। আবেদনপত্রের সাথে অবশ্যই (ক) ১ম শ্রেণীর গেজেটেড অফিসার কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা সনদপত্রের ফটোকপি, (খ) সম্প্রতি তোলা ২ কপি পাসপোর্ট সাইজের সত্যায়িত ছবি, (গ) স্থানীয় ইউনিয়ন পরিষদ/পৌরসভা চেয়ারম্যান/সিটি কর্পোরেশন ওয়ার্ড কমিশনারের নিকট হতে নাগরিকত্ব/জাতীয়তা সনদপত্র, (ঘ) ১ম শ্রেণীর গেজেটেড অফিসার কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত চারিত্রিক সনদপত্রের মূলকপি, (ঙ) বৈধ ড্রাইভিং লাইসেন্স এর ফটোকপি, (চ) অভিজ্ঞতার সনদপত্র দাখিল করতে হবে।			
৩। আবেদনপত্র আগামী ০৯/০৪/০৯ইং তারিখ অফিস সময়ের মধ্যে "প্রকল্প পরিচালক, বাংলাদেশ এগ্রিবিজনেস ডেভেলপমেন্ট প্রজেক্ট, কৃষি বিপণন অধিদপ্তর, সেচ ভবন (৫ম তলা), ২২, মানিক মিয়া এভিনিউ, শেরেবাংলা নগর, ঢাকা-১২০৭" এই ঠিকানায় শুধুমাত্র ভাকবো/কুরিয়ার সার্ভিসযোগে পৌঁছাতে হবে। অসম্পূর্ণ ত্রুটিমুক্ত ও বিলম্বে প্রাপ্ত আবেদনপত্র সরাসরি বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে।			
৪। ০১-০১-০৯ইং তারিখে প্রার্থীর বয়স ১৮ থেকে ৩০ বছরের মধ্যে হতে হবে। মুক্তিযোদ্ধা সন্তানদের ক্ষেত্রে এই বয়সসীমা ৩২ বছর পর্যন্ত শিথিলযোগ্য।			
৫। এই নিয়োগের ক্ষেত্রে কর্তৃপক্ষের সিদ্ধান্ত চূড়ান্ত বলে গণ্য হবে। কোন কারণ দর্শাতে বাতিলের নিয়োগকারী কর্তৃপক্ষ সম্পূর্ণ বা আংশিক নিয়োগ কার্যক্রম/বিজ্ঞপ্তি বাতিল করার অধিকার সংরক্ষণ করেন।			
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পরিচালন ও সংরক্ষণ সার্কেল	
বিউরো, রাজশাহী	
তারিখ: ২৩/০৩/২০০৯ইং	
দরপত্র বাতিল বিজ্ঞপ্তি	
পরিচালন ও সংরক্ষণ সার্কেল, বিউরো, রাজশাহীর স্মারক নং-২৩৪/৮.০৬/২০০৮/১২৮ তারিখ: ১৮/০২/২০০৯ইং এর মাধ্যমে জারিকৃত রাজশাহীস্থ বিউরো কম্পিউটার সেটআপের জন্য কম্পিউটার বিলিং ফরম, রিডিং সীট, নোটিশ সীট ও রিবন সরবরাহের দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি অনিবার্য কারণবশত বাতিল বলিয়া ঘোষণা করা হইল।	
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