

# Pak militants attack Nato supply terminal

Troops kill 26 militants in northwest

AP, AFP, Peshawar/ Islamabad

Dozens of suspected militants fired rockets early yesterday in a transport terminal in northwest Pakistan that is used to ship supplies to Nato troops based in Afghanistan, police said.

Pakistan's army says troops backed by artillery and helicopter gunships have killed 26 militants near the Afghan border.

The army said in a statement Saturday that the militants were killed in an operation in Mohmand, a frontier region where security forces have been battling Taliban militants for months.

At least 12 shipping containers were damaged in the attack at the Farhad terminal in Peshawar, capital of troubled North West Frontier Province, local police official Zahur Khan told The Associated Press. He said police opened fire at the insurgents but they managed to flee.

The attack came less than a day after a suicide bomber blew up in a packed mosque in North West Frontier Province's Khyber tribal region, killing 48 people and wounding scores more in the worst attack to hit Pakistan this year.

Afghan-based US and Nato forces get up to 75 percent of their supplies via routes that pass through Khyber and a southwestern Chaman border crossing area where Taliban militants are believed to be operating.

The strikes took place in Mohmand, one of seven lawless tribal districts in northwestern Pakistan, where Taliban militants are active.

"At least 26 militants were killed and eight others wounded in helicopter gunship firing," a security official told AFP.

"A militant hideout was also destroyed during the strike," he said and added that there were no casualties for the security forces.

The militant death toll could not be confirmed independently as the area is sealed off under military operations.

Local administration official

## Sangsad to seal

from the executive in line with the Supreme Court (SC) directives.

The provision proposed to be incorporated in the new legislation has already drawn the ire of the Judicial Service Association.

If included, it will override the CrPC provisions opposed to it.

Noted jurist Shahid Malik yesterday told The Daily Star that government cannot delegate judicial power to anyone without consulting the apex court.

He said the provision recommended by the parliamentary body does not require the government to consult the Supreme Court before authorising the administrative magistrates to take cognisance of offences.

As it goes against the spirit of judiciary separation, the law ministry should not include the provision in the law, he observed.

According to the provision, the government will have to specify why and for how long it is delegating the cognisance power to an executive magistrate, said sources in the law ministry.

The executive magistrates will take cognisance of offences like the judicial magistrates do. But they will have to send the offences to the competent courts for trial.

The admin cadres lost the power to take note and hold part of offences with separation of the judiciary around 16 months back.

The standing committee's recommendation came in line with their argument that they need the authority to run the administration effectively.

The new law will also give a legal cover to the judicial magistrates' activities in over last one month.

As the twin ordinances separating the judiciary were not ratified in parliament and ceased to have effect on February 25, the High Court asked the government to explain under which legal authority the judicial magistrates were functioning.

Law Minister Shafiq Ahmed yesterday said he will not propose curtailing the government authority to appoint executive magistrates in metropolitan areas.

The government was given the power in judiciary separation ordinances that came into force on November 1, 2007. It retains the power in

Syed Ahmed Jan said a night curfew was imposed in Mohmand before the launch of the ground operation.

The tribal areas have been wracked by violence since Afghanistan's Taliban regime was toppled by the 2001 US-led invasion, prompting hundreds of fighters to flood the region.

Islamic militants were suspected in Friday's deadly mosque attack, apparently to avenge recent military operations in the area aimed at protecting the Nato supply route, authorities said.

The route passes in front of the mosque, where about 200 worshippers were present at the time of the blast.

Shortly after the attack, tribal police detained two suspects who were making a video near the mosque and investigators believed the men were linked to those who orchestrated the bombing, two local security officials said Saturday.

The officials who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorised to speak to the media provided no further details and only said the men were still in police custody and being questioned.

Several security officers were also killed in Friday's attack, which came hours before President Barack Obama unveiled a revised strategy to "disrupt, defeat and dismantle" the al-Qaeda terrorist organisation and the Taliban militants operating in Afghanistan and northwest Pakistan.

Afghan and Pakistani officials praised Obama's emphasis on civilian aid to their countries, saying it would be an effective way to deal with the growing militant violence.

Militants in Pakistan and Afghanistan have often killed scores of Pakistani civilians in attacks. Mosques and funerals have been targeted before, but Friday's blast was seen by many as plumbing new depths of evil.

"What kind of holy war is this? Only poor people have been killed," said Asfandyar Wali, head of the ruling secular party in the northwest. "This is not about implementing

Islamic law, this is not about holy war. This is outright insurgency."

Tariq Hayat, the top administrator of the Khyber tribal region, said 48 bodies were found in the rubble, and he predicted the death toll would likely rise. More than 100 people were wounded, medical officials said.

Pakistan has been hit by scores of attacks by al-Qaeda and Taliban militants since the Muslim country withdrew its support for the Taliban in Afghanistan after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks and supported the US-led invasion of that country.

## Trial process

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assisted the criminals directly will also face the trial.

The law minister said the committee formed by the home ministry has also decided to appoint prosecutors to file cases against the war criminals and to form a tribunal for holding the trial of the cases.

He informed that the government has sufficient information about the criminals to bring them under trial.

The government can seek expert assistance from the United Nations (UN) during the trial of the war criminals, he said.

## 2 more BDR

FROM PAGE 16  
assistance to meet the medical expenses. Based on advice of the physicians concerned, the DG granted him Tk 5.5 lakh that has already been adjusted to his hospital bills.

About sepoys Roich Uddin, another release said he got admitted to the BDR hospital on June 3, 2005 with kidney condition. On January 29 this year, he was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

On March 4, he was transferred to the Kidney Hospital. "While under treatment he passed away at 5:10pm on March 9," the release said.

Roich too applied to the BDR DG for financial help to meet the treatment expenditure. He was given Tk 8 lakh as medical grants, the press release said.

## Ctg clash

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been trying to "grab" the land. It is a Khas land and marked as the site of Bandar Graveyard, he claimed.

But Shafique dismissed their apprehension as unreasonable. He said the judiciary separation ordinances.

"Why are they [polices] expressing their concern now," he questioned.

He said there is no scope for the executive magistrates to influence the metropolitan police as the law enforcement agencies have legal buffer against that in their own laws.

## Equal edn

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observed on March 17 on the occasion of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's birthday.

Some 80,000 children took part in the competition. Of them, 120 participants received prizes from the PM as winners in various categories.

Congratulating all the participants, Hasina lamented that till today many children in the country do not get two square meals a day.

"Bangabandhu did not make the country independent to see such a reality. The Father of the Nation's dream was to present you [children] a bright, prosperous future," she said.

She also deplored that children are still being used in some hazardous works despite the ban on child labor in the country.

The children need to be groomed in the light of modern science and technology as they are the future of the nation, Hasina said.

The premier asked the parents to bring up their children imbued with the spirit of real history of the 1971 Liberation War.

She also said the children will have to be groomed with the lessons of morality to avert the rich-poor discrimination.

"The inequity between the rich and the poor is increasing day by day. But we dream of such a country where there will be no discrimination among the people," Hasina said.

Police arrested four people in this connection. A huge number of police were deployed.

## Subsidies, not cash

FROM PAGE 1

will have to generate more revenues while it will need to give subsidies to the affected sectors. He sought more cooperation from the banking sector to lessen the negative impacts of global recession on domestic economy.

The government will need a lot of foreign aid and proactive private-public participation to address the harsher days ahead, Muhith added.

Prime minister's Economic Affairs Adviser Dr Mashirul Islam said the country's bailout packages may not work because competing countries have bigger export volumes and have given bigger bailout packages.

Stressing both market and product diversification for bagging more export earnings, he said the country would suffer further as demands from importing countries have decreased.

Mirza Azizul Islam spoke for immediate release of arrear cash incentives to exporters, increasing government employees' salary, revisiting banks' interest rates, developing the power and energy sectors, and reducing duties and taxes to address recession.

Former finance minister Md Syeduzzaman urged the government to take even unpopular decisions, if necessary, for the development of the country.

BNP lawmaker MK Anwar suggested that the government reduce the fuel oil price further since its price declined substantially on the international market. The prices of diesel and kerosene may be fixed at Tk 35 per litre from the existing Tk 44, he said.

Pointing out that global recession has also led to the decline in essentials' prices worldwide, he said, "Unfortu-

nately we are threatened by recession. Cost of doing business has greatly increased."

Economist Atiur Rahman emphasised creation and protection of employment, protection of the agriculture sector, especially the poultry, which opens up scope for self-employment, development of infrastructure, more investment in ICT and skills development and constant monitoring.

Quoting a recent World Bank report, Mustafizur Rahman in his keynote paper said almost 40 percent developing countries are highly exposed to the poverty effects of the crisis. He said 56 percent countries are moderately exposed and only less than 10 percent face little risk. The report tags Bangladesh as highly exposed to the poverty effects of recession.

Mustafiz divided the crisis in three parts--the first wave of crisis is a crisis in financial sector, the second wave in credit, and the third one in consumer economy. He said the third wave appears to have started to hit the increasingly globally integrated economy of Bangladesh. The next budget offers an opportunity to undertake medium term anti-recessionary and targeted initiatives in view of the challenges. The first two waves did not affect Bangladesh, he added.

Mustafizur Rahman said the government has three policy choices. First, the government can take advantage of fiscal space in the 2008-09 budget; secondly, targeted measures should be of clear time-bound nature; and thirdly, policy thrust should be on instruments that are relatively easy to monitor and can be more easily targeted.

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## ACC

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Earlier on October 3, 2007, ACC Assistant Director Syed Ahmed filed the case against Mullah with Ramna Police Station. The charges include concealing information about wealth worth over Tk 2 crore.

On April 21 last year, ACCAD and investigation officer (IO) Mahabubur Rahman submitted a charge sheet to the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka, showing 25 people as prosecution witnesses.

On November 20, the HC delivered judgment ruling that ACC's sanction (permitting its officials to file the graft case against Mullah) was legal.

The HC observed that the provisions for all three ACC commissioners to sanction filing a case, submitting a report in 30 days since opening of an enquiry, and investigation report in 60 days since filing of the case were directory, not mandatory.

It also said the anti-graft body's receiving investigation reports from its officials and approving charge sheets for submission in the case were done with lawful authority.

The petitioner's counsels argued before the court that the commission's filing the cases and not completing the investigation within the stipulated time were illegal.

Earlier the HC stayed the case proceedings in over 200 graft cases and issued rules on the government and ACC asking them to explain why the proceedings should not be quashed or declared illegal.

## Sudan

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that garments and other manufactured goods are available in Bangladesh.

She stated that Bangladesh would open its diplomatic mission in Sudan "soon," which would further strengthen the existing "excellent" bilateral relations.

## 3 killed

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of Hatishura of the same upazila.

The two injured--Bablu Sheikh, 35, and Farid Hossain, 45--are now undergoing treatment at Khulna General Hospital.

The accident happened around noon when they were removing soil near the riverbank.

Police recovered the bodies and sent them to Khulna Medical College morgue for autopsy. A general dairy was filed with Tero Kheda Police Station in this connection.

Finance ministry sources said the government plans to implement the pay scale in phases instead of doing it at a time. As a result, the pressure on the budget would be tolerable, sources said.

Among the 50 questions, the IMF wanted to know about the subsidy and the government's energy pricing policy in next year's budget.

The IMF also wanted to know how much money would be required to implement the new pay scale by the government and what pressure it would have on the budget.

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Starting from today the government will conduct awareness building programmes against fishing Jatka (fry hilsha) and fertile hilsha.

The Jatka Protection Week was launched in the fiscal year 2003-2004 when hilsha production in the country came down to 1.99 metric tons and it stood at 2.90 metric tons by 2007-2008, said the minister in his written speech.

Hilsha constitutes 12 percent of the total fish produced in the country, he added.

"A total of five lakh fishermen are directly involved in fishing hilsha," said Biswas adding that another 20 lakh are involved indirectly in its transport, marketing, processing and export.

He pointed out that a mother hilsha weighing 1.5 to 2 kilogram is capable of releasing 10 to 20 lakh eggs each year. Hilsha has been a great source of protein for our people for hundreds of years, he added.

October 15 to 24 is the breeding season for hilsha and fishing jatka during this time is punishable offence. During the breeding season hilsha lay eggs along the 7000-square-kilometre long coast of the Bay of Bengal.

Jatka catching is also a punishable act in 100-kilometre stretch from Chatmohar to Char Alexander in Laxmipur, from Char Ilisha to Char Pial in Bhola district, and in 100 kilometres from Bheduria in Bhola to Char Rustam in Patuakhali from March to April under the Fish Protection Act.

Jatka catching is also forbidden in the 40-kilometre stretch of the Andharmank River of Kalapara in Patuakhali during November to January.

The periods from August to October and from November to January are the seasons for fishing hilsha.

A number of top officials including the secretary of the ministry were present at the press conference.

The government wants criminal charges to be filed against him for his speeches.

In New Delhi, Congress spokesman Kapil Sibal described Gandhi's surrender and arrest as a "drama".

"A drama is being enacted by Varun Gandhi. I am sure that (BJP leader LK) Advani is in tune with it. Without his consent, it would not have happened," Sibal said.

Meanwhile, law enforcers continued drives to hunt down the seven accused mentioned in the FIR. They are Maulana