



An aerial view shows rescue team continuing to look for victims in Padang yesterday, a week after the 7.6-magnitude quake that struck off the western coast of the island, killing more than 1,000 people and leaving half a million homeless.

German police discover 'terror cell'

ANI, London

German intelligence services have reportedly discovered a new Islamic terrorist cell operating from the port of Hamburg - the same city from which the devastating 9/11 attacks on the United States were secretly conceived and planned eight years ago.

According to The Independent, the existence of the new militant group was revealed in a secret report prepared by Hamburg-based intelligence agents which was leaked to German television's investigative documentary programme Report Mainz and Die Welt newspaper.

Washington readies fresh Iran sanctions

AFP, Washington

The United States is ready to slap fresh sanctions on Iran in the event international negotiations over its suspected nuclear weapons programme fail, a senior US Treasury Department official said Tuesday.

"This administration has demonstrated that it is committed to a diplomatic resolution of the international community's issues with Iran," Treasury Undersecretary Stuart Levey told the Senate Banking Committee.

"The world is now united in looking to Iran for a response. If Iran does not live up to its obligations in this process, it alone will bear the responsibility for that outcome," he said.

"Under these circumstances, the United States would be obliged to turn to strengthened sanctions," said Levey, who as undersecretary for terrorism and financial intelligence over-

sees the department's efforts to stanch the flow of funds to international terrorists and weapons of mass destruction proliferators.

"We are intensifying work with our allies and other partners to ensure that, if we must go down this path, we will do so with as much international support as possible," said Levey.

"We will now wait to see whether Iran follows its constructive words with concrete action. If it does not, and if the president determines that additional measures are necessary, we will be ready to take action, ideally with our international partners."

Levey told lawmakers that he was not in a position to provide details of the planned sanctions, although the department has completed work on them.

He added that sanctions already in place have borne fruit, and that the United States hope to exploit certain "economic vulnerabilities" in Iran.

Yemen army kills 29 Shia militants

AFP, Sanaa

The Yemeni army said yesterday that it has killed 29 Zaidi Shia rebels as it presses an all-out offensive against their strongholds in the northern mountains.

Troops killed 12 rebels in clashes on Tuesday in the Harf Sufyan district of Amran province, 70 kilometres (40 miles) north of the capital, the official Saba news agency quoted a commander as saying.

The other rebels were killed in several different clashes in Saada province farther north, the commander said.

The army said it had also destroyed five lorries carrying explosives to the rebels in Saada.

Villages of graves

Indonesia gives up hope on quake survival

AFP, Padang

Villages buried in landslides triggered by last week's earthquake may be declared mass graves. Indonesian authorities said Wednesday as relief agencies battled to reach remote areas.

Up to 400 people are believed to have been buried alive when hillsides collapsed in the 7.6-magnitude quake and obliterated four adjacent villages in Padang Pariaman district of Sumatra island.

West Sumatra Governor Gamawan Fauzi said most of the dead would probably never be found or would be in such a state of decay that it would be better to leave them

where they were.

"If after umpteen days the bodies are broken, if we dig them up, probably their arms will break off, their legs will break off. It's no good," he told reporters in Padang, the provincial capital and worst-hit city.

Military officer Haris Sarjana said 71 corpses remained buried at the site. Relief agencies are racing against time to get aid to farming villages in the rugged hinterland that are still cut off a week after the massive earthquake devastated parts of Sumatra.

Around half a million people could be homeless, according to estimates by the United Nations and Red Cross based on the official figure of about 100,000 homes destroyed.

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from the flattened Ambacang Hotel in Padang on Wednesday, the 76th corpse pulled from the wreckage there since the quake.

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