



Pakistani human rights activists light earthen lamps during a peace rally in Karachi on Saturday. A massive car bomb, killing 118 people on October 28 in Peshawar, overshadowed Pakistan government's talks with US and underscored the gravity of the extremist threat.

Any more terror attack from Pakistan will be retaliated

Warns Chidambaram

PTI, INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE, Madurai

Taking a tough stance, Home Minister P Chidambaram has warned Pakistan against meddling in India's affairs and said any more terror attack from that country will be retaliated "very strongly".

He said he has been warning Pakistan not to play with India and that the Mumbai attacks should be the "last game".

"We have been gaining strength day by day to counter terrorism from across the border. I have been warning Pakistan not to play games with us."

(I have told them that) the last game should be Mumbai attacks. Stop it there," he told a public meeting here last night.

"If terrorists and militants from Pakistan try to carry out any attack in India, they will not only be defeated but will be retaliated very strongly," he said in

his speech in Tamil. Chidambaram said India would retaliate strongly against any attempt by Pakistan to send infiltrators into India and "we have strength to tackle any such infiltration".

He said he had been consistently warning Pakistan against meddling in India's affairs but if they continued to do so, "we will deal with them strongly".

Addressing a public meeting here Saturday, the minister said: "The Mumbai attacks (of November 2008) should be Pakistan's last game. I have warned the country not to play with India."

Chidambaram's comments came three days after Prime Minister Manmohan Singh extended a hand of friendship to Pakistan but asked Islamabad to stop backing terrorists acting against India.

Chidambaram also said that both Congress and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) governments had underestimated the Maoists but insisted that they would not

succeed in their actions.

He reiterated that the central government was willing to have a dialogue with them on the condition that the Maoists lay down their arms, he said.

According to him, Naxalites were 'not enemies like Pakistani terrorists as they are our own countrymen'.

Meanwhile, a Pakistani anti-terror court, conducting the trial of seven suspects in connection with the Mumbai attacks has declared 14 other accused, including Ajmal Kasab, as "absconders" and adjourned the matter till November 7.

During Saturday's proceedings, Judge Malik Muhammad Akram Awan declared 14 other suspects linked to the attacks - including Kasab, the lone terrorist captured alive by Indian authorities during the strikes -- as "absconders," sources said.

Details of the other 13 were not immediately available.

Pak FM claims offensive 'very successful'

AFP, Kuala Lumpur

Pakistan's offensive in South Waziristan has been "very successful" and the military is likely to achieve most of its objectives before winter sets in, the foreign minister said yesterday.

Since October 17 some 30,000 Pakistani troops have been waging a major assault against Taliban fighters hiding out in the formidable terrain of South Waziristan, which borders Afghanistan.

Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi said the military has made significant headway in the region, part of the tribal belt where United States officials say al-Qaeda is plotting attacks on the West.

"The operation so far has been very successful. The resis-

tance that we were expecting initially did not come with the same stiffness as we expected," he said on the sidelines of a conference of developing nations in Kuala Lumpur.

"We would want to achieve our objectives as much as possible before the winter sets in. It seems, as things are going on right now, that we might be able to do so," he said.

"That area becomes very cold so we want to operate and establish our foothold before that," he said. Qureshi would not give a date, but winter sets in around mid-December in that region.

Qureshi said that many important towns and locations were now in the control of Pakistan's army and that "quite a few" militants had been killed or arrested.

China sacks education minister amid scandal

AP, Beijing

China's legislature has removed the country's unpopular education minister amid a corruption scandal in a city he used to oversee and widespread public dissatisfaction with the education system.

The executive committee of the national legislature dismissed Zhou Ji on Saturday at the end of a routine meeting and promoted a deputy education minister to replace him. In announcing the change late Saturday, the official Xinhua News Agency gave no reason but said Zhou "will get a new appointment."

At 63, the American-educated Zhou was two years short of retirement and thus an unlikely candidate for a job change.

Iran hands over evidence regarding Sistan blast to Pakistan

ANI, Karachi

Iran's Ambassador to Pakistan Mashallah Shakiri has said that his country has handed over evidence regarding the devastating Sistan bomb blast, in which 42 persons were killed, to Pakistan, and is waiting for a reply.

Interacting with media persons at the Karachi Press Club, Shakiri said Tehran has provided evidences pertaining to the bomb blast and is waiting for Islamabad's answers for future course of action, The Nation reports.

Responding to a query regarding Iran sealing its border with Pakistan following the blast, he said such reports were baseless, as authorities had only decided to beef-up the security along the border and not seal the passage between both the nations.

Iran has been blaming Pakistan for the attack on the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRG) in which 42 people were killed, saying there is specific information that the perpetrators were hiding inside Pakistan and has asked Islamabad to 'clarify' its stance over reports regarding its links banned terror group, Jondollah.

Iran's Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki had also said that the Sunni rebel group, which carried out a deadly bombing, was based in Pakistan.

US to question Lankan general over war crimes

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's top military commander, General Sarath Fonseka, is to be questioned by US authorities over allegations of war crimes during the island's fight against Tamil Tiger rebels, a report said Sunday.

The privately-run Sunday Times newspaper said Fonseka, who is visiting his daughters in Oklahoma, had been asked to present himself for an interview with the Department of Homeland Security on Wednesday.

The move "prompted fears in Colombo that Washington is asserting its legal authority over the 'war crimes' report" released last month, the paper



General Sarath Fonseka

said referring to a State Department dossier on alleged war crimes.

The report outlined excesses by security forces and Tamil Tiger rebels during the final stages of fighting earlier this year. The report, submitted to the US Congress, refers to Fonseka having over-

stepped his brief.

There was no immediate comment from the Sri Lankan foreign ministry or the US embassy in Colombo, but the Sunday Times said the Sri Lankan embassy in Washington was providing legal assistance to Fonseka.

Fonseka is a US Green Card holder and travelled to the United States last week to visit his two daughters in Oklahoma.

The State Department report cited allegations in which Tamil rebels took boys and girls to join their guerrilla force and in which government forces broke a ceasefire as well as killed rebels who surrendered.

US envoys unlikely to meet Myanmar junta chief

AFP, Yangon

Two senior US envoys travelling to military-ruled Myanmar this week will meet detained democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi but are unlikely to see the reclusive junta chief, an official said Sunday.

Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Kurt Campbell and his deputy Scot Marciel are planning the visit in the latest move by President Barack Obama's administration to engage the regime.

They will go to the remote administrative capital of Naypyidaw on Tuesday and meet Prime Minister Thein Sein, a Myanmar official told AFP on condition of anonymity.

This is the highest level government member the pair will meet, the official said, suggesting that they will not be granted talks with regime leader Than Shwe.

They will travel to Yangon Wednesday to meet Suu Kyi and members of her National League for Democracy (NLD) before departing the country, the official added.

7 separatists killed in Manipur encounter

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE, Imphal

Seven separatists were killed in a pre-dawn encounter with security forces Sunday in the northeastern state of Manipur, police said.

A police spokesperson said the encounter took place between a group of heavily armed militants and a column of the paramilitary Assam Rifles near village Sanapat in Imphal East district, about 30 km southeast of Manipur's capital Imphal.

Nepal Maoists take to streets to stall govt

AFP, Kathmandu

Nepal's Maoists said yesterday they would launch protests aimed at destabilising the government in a dispute over the military that led to the Maoists' fall from power in May.

The former rebels, who fought a decade-long civil war with the state before winning elections last year, stepped down after the president overruled their attempt to sack the army chief.

"From Monday we will launch our nationwide protest by surrounding government offices all over the country with thousands of our supporters," Dev Gurung, a senior Maoist leader, told AFP.

The Maoists also vowed to

bring Kathmandu to a standstill on November 10 by shutting the country's only international airport and blocking all highways.

Maoist leader Prachanda formed a government after winning the highest number of seats in parliamentary elections held in 2008 -- two years after the end of the decade-long civil war between the former rebels and the army.

But the administration fell after just eight months when the president blocked their sacking of the head of the army.

The Maoists have since been paralysing parliament, demanding the president apologise.



The Iranian-registered vessel identified as the Zoorik with a crew of 37 onboard on the brink of capsizing, after running aground in rough weather at the mouth of China's Yangtze river, near Shanghai yesterday. A rescue operation airlifted 37 crew members after helicopters dispatched by China's transport ministry succeeded in pulling the multi-national crew of Iranians, Bangladeshis and Malaysians off the distressed ship.

Man on a green mission to plant 100,000 trees

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE, Lucknow

It started with one sapling 17 years ago. Now for Chandra Bhushan Tiwari, life's sole mission is to plant 100,000 saplings. And he has even left a government job to pursue it.

"I just want to achieve my mission at the earliest. I cannot put into words what I feel when I come across saplings planted by me now transformed into trees," Tiwari, 40, told IANS.

Tiwari claims that he has already achieved half of his goal and has planted 50,000 saplings.

"Frankly speaking, I also feel a sense of pride in planting saplings, as in a way I believe what I am doing today will definitely be useful for the coming generations," he said.

Even after getting honoured by several politicians and public representatives, Bhushan maintains a low profile.

"It was a privilege for me when recently Uttar Pradesh Governor B.L. Joshi invited me to Raj Bhavan for an interaction," Tiwari said.

"He told me to continue with my mission and involve more and more people in the work. The governor also promised me to extend every possible help to achieve the target of planting one lakh trees," he added.

Asked if there was any specific reason that prompted him to launch the mission, Tiwari replied, "You can say my love with nature made me start such an exercise."

NEWS ANALYSIS

Karzai faces legitimacy crisis after Abdullah pullout

AFP, Kabul

Abdullah Abdullah's withdrawal from Afghanistan's run-off election may ensure Hamid Karzai remains president but will rob the incumbent of legitimacy and further boost a Taliban insurgency, said analysts.

The decision by the former foreign minister, six days before the country was once again due to go to the polls, is set to prolong a political crisis and throws into doubt whether the election will go ahead as a one-man contest.

Analysts believe that Karzai, who came to power in late 2001 after a US-led coalition drove the Taliban from Kabul, still wants the run-off to give him legitimacy for a second term in office.

But with voters disillusioned by first-round fraud and nervous of Taliban attacks, turnout is likely to be more miserable than the 38.7 percent recorded on August 20.

"If voter turnout is very, very low, below 20 percent, then even though he will be declared the winner he will lack legitimacy in the eyes of Afghans and the opposition," Haroun Mir, head of Afghanistan's Centre for Research and Policy Studies, told AFP.

"Dr Abdullah could make a lot of problems for him, because, firstly, they could



Afghan opposition candidate Abdullah Abdullah addresses a press conference at his house in Kabul yesterday. Opposition candidate Abdullah Abdullah on Sunday pulled out of Afghanistan's run-off election, plunging the war-torn country into fresh political turmoil less than a week before the scheduled contest.

refuse to recognise his legitimacy and also they could refuse to recognise his authority."

Analysts and diplomats say the run-off is still likely to take place, with ballot papers featuring Karzai and Abdullah already printed.

"There is no provision in the Afghan constitution for a candidate withdrawing from a run-off and in such an event the Supreme Court will have to make a ruling," one diplomat said.

Judges in such a situation were likely to declare that Karzai had been re-elected, the diplomat added.

Nader Naderi, head of a pro-democracy lobby group, said Afghan law stipulated that a run-off has to take place. "The constitution does not present any other alternatives," said Naderi, who heads the Free and Fair Election Foundation.

"It becomes a political crisis and there's little way to handle it within the current legal framework," he told AFP.

However, Daoud Sultan, an independent lawmaker who was formerly in Karzai's cabinet, said other alternatives had to be found.

Now, a psychic computer 'that can read people's minds'

PTI, London

In a key breakthrough, scientists have developed a "psychic" computer which can read people's minds by scanning their brain activity and reproducing images of what they are seeing or even remembering.

An international team has been able to convert brain activity stimulated by what a person is watching or recalling into crude video footage. Research shows that it is possible to "decode" signals in the brain by moving scenes.

According to the scientists, the breakthrough raises the prospect of significant benefits, such as allowing people who are unable to speak to communicate via visualisation of their thoughts; recording people's dreams; or allowing police to identify criminals by recalling the memories of a witness.

For their research, the scientists used the functional magnetic resonance imaging technology to scan the brains of two patients as they watched videos.

Subsequently, the computer, which was specially programmed, was used to search for links between configuration of shapes, colours and movements in the videos, and patterns of activity in the patients' visual cortex.

INDEPENDENT UNIVERSITY, BANGLADESH

Tender Notice

INVITATION FOR TENDER ON INTERNAL DECORATIVE PARTITION WALL, FALSE CEILING & LIGHTING WORKS For the IUB Campus @ Bashundhara

Sealed tenders are hereby invited from bonafide contractors for Supply & Installation of internal decorative partition wall, false ceiling & lightings works at the Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB), Bashundhara campus, Aftabuddin Road, Plot # 16, Block-B, Bashundhara, Dhaka. The bidders will be required to submit a complete offer including the cost of accessories with detail design, drawing and specification.

- The bidder will apply in their official letterheads to the undersigned along with the following documents:
 - Attested copies of documents evidencing several years of experience in internal decorative partition wall, false ceiling & lighting works.
 - Attested copies of the experience certificate from the employer for similar nature of works worth minimum Tk.1.0 crore in a single work order.
 - Attested copies of the latest Trade License, Income Tax and VAT Registration Certificates.
- The bidder shall furnish as part of the bid, an earnest money of 2.5% of the bid amount in favour of Independent University, Bangladesh in the form of an unconditional irrevocable bank guarantee from a schedule bank located in the country.
- The tender schedule will be available from the office of the undersigned on payment of non-refundable cash of **Tk.2,000/- (Taka Two Thousand)** until 12 November 2009 during office hours.
- The tenders will be received at the office of the undersigned up to 2:00 pm of 17 November 2009 and shall be opened at 2:30 P.M. on the same day at the same place in presence of the bidders who may like to attend the tender opening.
- IUB reserves the right to accept only the technically responsive tender without any consideration of the lowest bid and shall have the right to reject any tender without assigning any reason whatsoever.

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