

Indo-Pak foreign secy-level talks today in Delhi

Pak border guards accused of firing into Kashmir positions

AFP, New Delhi

Pakistan's foreign secretary arrived in New Delhi yesterday for the first official talks with India since the 2008 Mumbai attacks froze a slow-moving peace process between the rivals.

Salman Bashir will meet India's Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao for closed door talks on Thursday in the Indian capital.

India says it decided to resume talks after judging that Pakistan had taken some steps to address concerns about militant groups operating on its side of the border.

New Delhi blamed the

November 2008 Mumbai attacks -- which left 166 people dead and more than 300 others injured -- on Pakistan-based militant groups and "official agencies" of the country.

Pakistan had pushed the United States to help get the peace process back on track, arguing that the perceived threat from India limited its ability to support the fight against al-Qaeda and the Taliban.

The Press Trust of India quoting an unnamed government official said India would approach the one-day talks with an "open mind" but with limited expectations.

The two sides will not issue

a joint statement, the source told PTI.

On the eve of the talks, India accused Pakistani border guards of firing on Indian positions across the Kashmir border and injuring a guard.

India Border Security Force (BSF) officials in the Kashmiri winter capital Jammu said the firing came from a Pakistani Rangers post in the Samba border sector.

"There was no infiltration bid by militants but the fire came directly from a Pakistani post injuring one of our guards," said a BSF spokesman, adding that the Indian side returned fire.

'Face reader' to be 'secret Pak weapon'

ANI, Islamabad

The Pakistani delegation coming to India to take part in the foreign secretary-level talks today also includes a "physiognomy" expert, who would read the faces of the Indian officials and predict what they "actually" intend to say.

Pakistan's 'treasured' Director-General for South Asia, Afrasiab Hashmi, is said to be an expert in judging a person's character by reading his/her facial structure.

Though Hashmi has not received any special training in this unique art, many believe he harboured the skill right from birth.



Indian and Pakistani national flags flutter as Indian Border Security Force (BSF) personnel (L) and Pakistani Rangers allow a Pakistani truck to cross over to India at the Wagah. Pakistan's foreign secretary arrived in New Delhi on Wednesday for the first official talks with India since the 2008 Mumbai terrorist attacks froze a slow-moving peace process between the two nuclear-armed rivals.

PHOTO: AFP

BIRTH ANNIVERSARY

India to set up 2 museums on Tagore

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE, New Delhi

On the occasion of the 150th birth anniversary of Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore this year, Indian Railways will set up two museums in West Bengal to commemorate him, Railway Minister Mamata Banerjee announced in parliament yesterday.

"2010 marks the 150th birth anniversary of Kibiguru Rabindranath Tagore. In commemoration, I propose to set up a Rabindra Museum at Howrah and Gitanjali Museum at Bolpur, the place where Visva-Bharati International University is located, of which our honourable prime minister is the chancellor. I also propose to re-model Bolpur station, inspired by the architecture of Santiniketan," Banerjee said while presenting the Railway Budget.

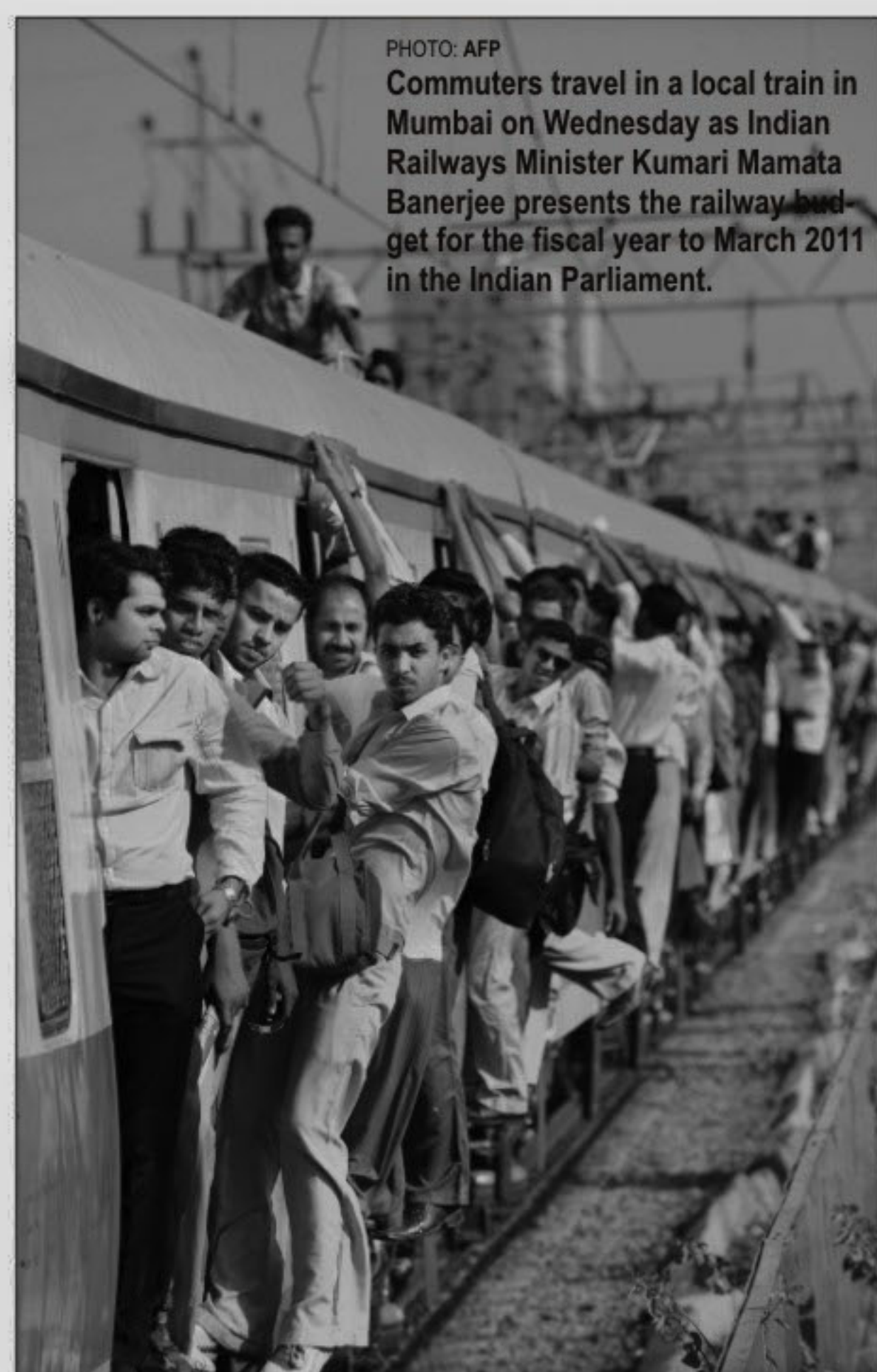


PHOTO: AFP
Commuters travel in a local train in Mumbai on Wednesday as Indian Railways Minister Mamata Banerjee presents the railway budget for the fiscal year to March 2011 in the Indian Parliament.

Greenhouse gas cuts 'not enough' to curb warming: UN

AFP, Nusa Dua

Countries will have to make far greater cuts in greenhouse gas emissions if the world is to limit the rise in global temperatures to two degrees Celsius or less, the UN has warned.

Commitments made since December's Copenhagen climate conference have been insufficient, the United Nations Environment Programme (Unep) said in a report at its annual meeting on the Indonesian island of Bali.

"No one should assume that the pledges will be enough," Unep director Adrian Steiner said.

"Countries will have to be far more ambitious in cutting greenhouse gas emissions if the world is to curb a rise in global temperature."

The Copenhagen summit struck a last-minute compromise that set a goal of limiting warming to two degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) and pledged a total of nearly 30 billion dollars in aid to poor countries by 2012.

US drone strike kills 6 in NW Pakistan

Taliban behead 3 'US spies', gas explosion kills 4 brothers

AFP, Miranshah/Peshawar

A US drone strike targeting a militant compound killed six insurgents yesterday in Pakistan's northwest tribal belt near the Afghan border, security officials said.

The attack happened in the Dandey Darpa Khel area of North Waziristan, a militant stronghold in the rugged tribal region, Pakistani officials said.

"The US drones fired three missiles, six militants were killed. A vehicle was also destroyed," said a security official in Peshawar city.

"It hit a compound, the death toll may rise." An intelligence official in the main district town of Miranshah confirmed the strike, but gave the death toll as "at least five".

Four young brothers, whom Pakistan police said were killed in a Taliban rocket attack, actually died in a gas explosion at their home in the northwest city of Peshawar.

"First we received a report of rocket attack but now it has been confirmed that it was an accidental blast caused by gas leakage," city police chief Liaquat Ali told AFP, reversing his initial statement.

"The victims were all brothers, the eldest

being 17 years old and the youngest was four," he added.

On the edge of Pakistan's tribal belt bordering Afghanistan, the city of 2.5 million has been hit hard by bomb attacks blamed on Taliban and al-Qaeda-linked militants.

"This was not a rocket attack. According to our final findings a gas leakage caused the explosion and killed the four brothers," Tanweer Ahmad, local chief of the bomb disposal squad in Peshawar told AFP by telephone.

Earlier Taliban militants have beheaded three men including two Afghans in Pakistan's lawless northwest tribal belt, accusing them of spying for the United States, officials said Wednesday.

The headless bodies were found dumped by the roadside in the Mir Ali area of the tribal North Waziristan district, which borders Afghanistan, local police officer Muneer Zaman said.

"Their throats were cut last night and the bodies were dumped early Wednesday," he told AFP from the region's main town Miranshah.

A note placed near the bodies said the men were beheaded because "they were US spies -- anybody found engaged in espionage will meet the same fate".

Turkish court charges 7 officers in coup plot

AP, Ankara

A Turkish court yesterday formally charged and ordered jailed seven senior Turkish military officers for allegedly plotting to overthrow the Islamic-leaning government.

Prosecutors were questioning several other high-ranking officers, including former chiefs of the Navy, Air Force and Special Forces.

About 50 commanders were detained Monday in the highest profile crackdown ever on the military after wiretap evidence and the discovery of alleged military plans drafted in 2003 to overthrow the government. The Turkish military has ousted four governments since 1960.

The crackdown dramatically escalated tensions between Turkey's military-backed secular establishment and Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, whose government has strong electoral backing.

Karzai takes control of election watchdog

AFP, Kabul

Moves by the Afghan president to take control of a key election watchdog have dismayed diplomats and analysts who said yesterday there is now even less chance that future polls will be free and fair.

President Hamid Karzai has changed a law to give himself control of the Electoral Complaints Commission (ECC), a body that threw out more than half a million votes cast for him in last year's fraud-tainted polls.

The amendment allows Karzai to appoint all five members of the ECC, whereas under the previous law, three members were appointed by the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan.

Former senior UN official in Afghanistan Peter Galbraith said the West should withhold the cash necessary to bankroll future elections until the ECC is reinstated to its original make-up.

The international community "should insist there should be a truly independent election commission, not one appointed by him", Galbraith, who resigned over last year's fraudulent poll, told the BBC.

Japan offers to enrich uranium for Iran

AFP, Tokyo

Japan has offered to enrich uranium for Iran to allow the Islamic republic access to nuclear power while allaying international fears it might be seeking an atomic weapon, according to a report yesterday.

Tehran has not yet given a concrete response to the US-backed proposal, which was made when Iran's top nuclear negotiator Saeed Jalili visited Tokyo in December, the Nikkei business daily said.

Japan's Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada on Wednesday held talks with Iran's visiting

parliamentary speaker Ali Larijani. But in a press briefing afterwards, Japanese officials neither confirmed nor denied the Nikkei report.

Okada told his guest that "Japan strongly hopes Iran's nuclear issue will be resolved peacefully and diplomatically ... and that Iran considers a related UN Security Council resolution seriously", a foreign ministry spokesman said.

The United States and European powers suspect Iran is enriching uranium to make nuclear weapons under cover of its civilian energy programme, a charge Tehran denies.



A villager looks at buried houses by a landslide at Dewata village in Pasir Jambu, West Java on Wednesday. Rescuers said that hopes were fading for more than 60 people missing after a landslide struck south of the capital Jakarta, killing at least 15 people.

70 feared dead in Indonesia landslide

AFP, Ciwidey

Hopes faded Wednesday for more than 60 people buried under a massive landslide that killed at least 15 in Indonesia, as rescuers used their bare hands to dig for survivors.

Stunned villagers stood by in silence as bodies were dug out of the sticky clay that crushed homes, offices and a processing plant at a tea plantation south of Jakarta on Tuesday.

Survivors said the earth crashed down with the sound of an explosion, giving plantation workers and their families almost no warning.

CAREER OPPORTUNITY

A renowned Multinational Company is seeking applications from deserving candidates for the following position:

SALES MANAGER – CONSUMER HEALTHCARE BUSINESS

The Role of the Sales Manager is focused on maximizing the achievement of the Sales and Distribution objectives of the Company's Consumer Healthcare brands in Bangladesh. The person will be responsible for:

- ◆ Streamlining the current Sales and Distribution standards
- ◆ Achieving Sales and Distribution objectives
- ◆ Driving accurate forecast of sales hence enabling an efficient supply chain delivering top line objectives for the organization
- ◆ Setting up and reorganizing the Sales and Distribution network
- ◆ Enhancing the capability of the Sales Force
- ◆ Drive Training needs of the Sales Force
- ◆ Drive Medical Marketing objectives for certain brands
- ◆ Develop a Sales and Distribution strategy for rural coverage
- ◆ Plan and effectively implement New Product Launches
- ◆ Manage competition intelligence in the market
- ◆ Plan and implement for Modern Trade Sales

The successful applicant must have at least 5 years of experience in Sales in FMCG industry. He/She should have working knowledge of forecasting, distribution realignment and rural marketing. Significant projects on ramping up distribution models will be an added advantage. As a Sales Manager, he/she must possess strong leadership skills and should be able to motivate his/her team to achieve objectives and maintain good team hygiene.

Pay package and benefits are as per industry standards.

If you are committed to make a difference and ready to work in an innovative challenging environment, the opportunity is there to join us through our rewarding career opportunity.

If you possess the required qualifications and experience, please forward your application and CV to the following address by 4th March 2010:

Human Resources Division, Post Box No. 6015, Dhaka – 1212
Only Short Listed applicants will be called for interview.

'Date-rape drugs' are on the rise, UN warns

BBC ONLINE

So-called date-rape drugs are on the rise, according to the United Nations drug control agency's annual report.

The International Narcotics Control Board says tough measures against the best-known drug, Rohypnol, have worked.

But sexual abusers are turning to alternative substances subject to less stringent international controls.

It wants these placed on governments' controlled substances lists and for manufacturers to develop safety features such as dyes and flavourings.

Son of Hamas co-founder spied for Israelis

AFP, Jerusalem

The son of one of the founders of Hamas spied from inside the movement for Israel's Shin Bet internal intelligence agency, the Israeli newspaper Haaretz reported in its Wednesday edition.

According to extracts of an article to be published on Friday, Israeli agents were able to prevent dozens of attacks thanks to the help of 32-year-old Mosab Hassan Yousef, the son of Sheikh Hassan Yousef.

REQUEST FOR QUOTATIONS (RFQ) Procurement of 500 units signboard for UNDP



Bangladesh

UNDP Bangladesh seeks quotations from interested and well qualified vendors to supply 500 pieces of Signboards including delivery and installation at different Union Parishads level. All interested firms may request the Bidding Documents from md.asfezzaman@undp.org by formal request to UNDP that will register bidders into participants list, so any correspondence, questions regarding the bidding documents and respective answers can be sent to all bidders.

Submission of Proposal: The envelope should state "Procurement of 500 units signboard for UNDP" and should be addressed to the UNDP Procurement Unit, IDB Bhaban (12th Floor), Begum Rokeya Sharani, Agargaon, Dhaka-1207. The bid should be submitted in the bid box placed in the 12th Floor of IDB Bhaban.

The deadline for submission of Proposal is **March 11, 2010, 14:30 PM**



Vacancy Announcement

Promotion of Development and Confidence
Building in the Chittagong Hill Tracts



Bangladesh

United Nations Development Programme in Bangladesh announces vacancy for the following positions for "Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility" under "Service Contract" modality. The duration of the contract is one year initially and subject to renewal on an annual basis upon satisfactory performance.

1. Upazila Coordinator - 2 positions
2. Programme Officer (Environment and Natural Resource Management) - 1 position

For details of the Terms of Reference and instructions to apply, please visit our website: <http://www.undp.org.bd/jobs>. Hard copies of the TOR's can be collected from UNDP-CHTDF Offices of Dhaka, Rangamati, Khagrachari and Bandarban. Applications should be submitted no later than 10 March, 2010.

"Only short-listed candidates will be contacted. Submitted documents will not be returned to the applicants"

"Qualified female candidates are strongly encouraged to apply"