

Afghan president grants wider powers to anti-graft body

AFP, Kabul

Afghan President Hamid Karzai yesterday boosted the power of an anti-corruption body that had faced fierce accusations of being toothless and half-hearted in its battle to wipe out graft.

The High Office of Oversight and Anti-Corruption will now be permitted to investigate allegations of corruption after Karzai publicly signed a decree extending its authority, the president said.

The decree marked "a very major and important step in our efforts at fighting corruption and bribery in our country", Karzai told reporters after signing the document in his palace.

"It gives Mr Osmani and his unit further power. I wish him success," he said, referring to the head of the body, Mohammad Yasin Osmani.

US operations already started in Kandahar

Say coalition commanders

AFP, Kandahar

Operations to push the Taliban out of their iconic Afghan stronghold of Kandahar are underway and will steadily build in the months ahead, military officials said yesterday.

The military and political efforts against the Taliban around Kandahar, Afghanistan's third biggest city and the militia's spiritual capital, are the next step in the US-led strategy to end a war now in its ninth year.

"We have been making preparation and plans concerning Operation Omaid," said General Sher Mohammad Zazi, Afghan army commander in the country's south.

"We're still working on the plan," he said, without giving further details.

Kandahar is the next target in major military operations to eradicate the Taliban from areas they have controlled, in many cases in tandem with drug cartels, over the years since their regime was overthrown in 2001.

The commander of US and Nato troops in Afghanistan, US General Stanley McChrystal, said the offensive had begun with initial military

and political efforts, including operations to secure key roads and districts.

Speaking by teleconference to reporters in Washington, he said: "That process has already begun (and) will ramp up in the weeks and months ahead," lasting "a significant time".

Operation Omaid follows Operation Mushtarak, currently under way in neighbouring Helmand province, which appears to have largely pushed back the Taliban and given the government a chance to take control.

Mushtarak -- "together" in Dari and Pashto -- is the first operation in a 12-18-month campaign for which President Barack Obama is sending another 30,000 troops, with 10,000 from Nato, aimed at taking the fight to the Taliban.

The strategy comprises military, political and civilian approaches in four stages dubbed "shape, take, hold and build" and aims to ensure that once eradicated, the insurgent threat does not re-emerge.

Initial stages of the strategy aimed at speeding up the war's end began in Kandahar province around November, a Western official told AFP on condition of anonymity.

Thai Red Shirts declare 'class war'

PM ready for talks

AFP, Bangkok

Thailand's rural underclass, vying to revive flagging momentum after a week of colourful protests, appealed yesterday for a popular uprising against the well-entrenched political and aristocratic elite.

Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva renewed an offer of talks with the so-called Red Shirt movement, but has stood firm against its demands for his resignation and snap elections.

Police said numbers had dwindled to 38,000 at the rally site, from more than 100,000 at the weekend, as the remaining Red Shirts sought to reach out to Bangkok's middle classes in their campaign against the all-powerful elite.



Red-shirted supporters of deposed Thai premier Thaksin Shinawatra chant slogans during an anti-government protest in Bangkok yesterday. Thailand's prime minister said he was open to negotiations with red-shirted protesters who have massed in the capital demanding his resignation and fresh elections.

'Ransom paid for British boy'

AFP, Islamabad

A five-year-old British boy was reunited with his father in Pakistan on Thursday, a British high commission official said following a kidnapping ordeal that saw a ransom paid in Paris.

Sahil Saeed was recovered by Pakistani police on Tuesday after being dropped near the town where he was kidnapped at gunpoint from his grandmother's house as he and his father prepared to fly home to Britain after a family holiday.



Five-year-old British boy Sahil Saeed (L) is kissed by his father Raja Naqqash Saeed during their reunion at the British High Commission in Islamabad yesterday.

Key al-Qaeda figure killed in Pakistan

AFP, Washington/Peshawar

An al-Qaeda figure who helped plan a deadly attack on the CIA in Afghanistan is believed to have been killed in a US drone strike in Pakistan, a US counterterrorism official said.

"We have indications that Hussein al-Yemeni -- an important al-Qaeda planner and facilitator based in the tribal areas of Pakistan -- was killed last week," the official told AFP Wednesday on condition of anonymity.

Yemeni's specialty was in "bombs and suicide operations" and he was suspected of playing "a key role" in the December attack at a CIA post in eastern Afghanistan that killed seven Americans, the official said in an email.

Earlier Pakistani security forces on Wednesday killed five militants including two Taliban commanders who were wanted over an uprising in the northwestern Swat valley, the military said.

Bakht Farzand and Mian Gul who who had a 10-million rupee (117,000 dollar) reward on their heads, were killed along with three other militants in a clash in Patten town, it said.

First time in Cox's Bazar | UK - Bangladesh Joint Venture

PRIAB Housing Fair
Stall No: 24, 25
Date: March 18-20, 2010
Venue: Dhaka Sheraton Hotel

মোলা উপলক্ষে মাত্র ৫০,০০০/- বুকিং দিয়ে কক্সবাজারে একমাত্র পূর্ণাঙ্গ 5 Star হোটেলের আজীবন গর্ভিত সদস্য হউন!!!



HOTEL
Blue Banshee
★★★★★

HOTLINE
01747946550, 01919169306
01919169331, 01919169334



Developed by: Ideal Real Estate Ltd
Corporate Office: Sultana Tower (8th Floor), 2 Mirpur Road, Kalabagan, Dhanmondi, Dhaka - 1209, Tel: 8113398, 8120944
Marketing Office: House # 328, Road # 22, New DOHS Mohakhali, Dhaka - 1206, Tel: 8817173, 8817174
Cox's Bazar Office: Hotel Motel Zone, 20, Kalatoli Road, Cox's Bazar
UK Office: 117 New Road (1st Floor), E1 1 HJ, London, UK, Phone: 00447536931162
Canada Office: 7600 Avenue Bloomfield, Apartment No: 1, Montreal, Quebec, H3N 2H3, Canada, Phone: 0015148068174
USA Office: 870, 42 Street, Apartment # 3, Brooklyn, New York 11232, Phone: 0017184354906

SONY make.believe

New Year Hot Promotion

Cyber-shot S series Affordable Performance

DSC-S930

User-friendly design with features such as 3x optical zoom lens, Face Detection and SteadyShot. Capturing your memory perfectly every time is easier than ever.

Intelligent Auto

Special Offer for Limited Stock [TX1, T2, T70, T90, T300]

FREE Special Offer for DSC-S930 2 Rechargeable Battery & Charger with special price @ Tk. 14,900 only

Tk. 2000 Instant Discount

NEW ARRIVAL WITH VERY LATEST TECHNOLOGY

anyone can be a photographer with Cyber-shot's wide range of cameras.

FREE 3 YEAR WARRANTY

BEWARE!! Fake Memory Stick, Disc, Tape Damage the image processor of camera. Warranty is void if you use fake memory Stick, Disc or Tape.

More 15 models of different mega pixel camera's are available

Handycam Hot Promotion Discount Upto Tk. 1500 + 3 Mini DV Cassette Gift Pack (with Mini DV Handycam) + Re-Writable DVD Disc (with DVD Handycam)

DCR-SR68E 80GB Hard Disk Drive Camcorder (Silver)

Light and compact with built-in 80GB hard disk drive for super long recording. It also delivers sharp, high-resolution images thanks to the Carl Zeiss® Vario-Tessar® lens, while the 60X optical zoom lets you capture tight shots from a distance.

80GB HDD
Carl Zeiss® 60x Optical Zoom Lens
DVD/Express and Direct Copy
Face Detection
Compatible with Memory Stick™ and SD/SDHC Memory cards
Picture Motion Browser for easy management of video and photos

Easy Handycam
HYBRID Memory Stick movie recording
QUICK ON
ZEISS
Touch Panel
Steady Shot
Face Detection for video & photo
1920x1080 recording

NEW ATTRACTION **DVD Creator VRD-P1** MRP Tk. 20,000 Promotion Price **Tk. 9,900**

Bringing Your Memories To Life

DCR-HC52E Mini DV Handycam
DCR-HC54E Mini DV Handycam
DCR-DVD710E DVD Handycam
DCR-DVD810E DVD Handycam
DCR-SR67E HDD Handycam
DCR-SR68E HDD Handycam

Special Offer for Limited Stock [DCR-SR47E]

Tk. 2000 Instant Discount

Buy Smart, Be Assured! Insist on Official Warranty, It makes a difference!

Available at all **SONY RANGS** Outlets

Promotion Partner **Saguna Hotel**