

Blast derails train in Russia

INDO ASIAN NEWS SERVICE, Moscow

A bomb blast derailed a freight train in Russia's North Caucasus republic of Dagestan yesterday, a police official said.

The incident took place at around 3.40 am near the Inchke station in Dagestan's Karabudakhkent district.

Eight cars were reportedly derailed as a result, four of them overturned.

No casualties were reported.

The derailment was caused by a bomb explosion, the official said, adding that law enforcement officers were working at the scene.

Twenty-seven people were killed and 90 injured when a bomb equivalent to 7 kg of TNT derailed a high-speed Moscow-St. Petersburg train Nov 27, 2009.



Iraqi security forces inspect the damage outside of the Iranian embassy in central Baghdad, following a massive explosion on Sunday. Three suicide car bombs targeting the Iranian and Egyptian embassies rocked Baghdad on Easter Sunday, killing 30 people.

Baghdad hit by triple blasts, 30 dead

AFP, Baghdad

Three suicide car bombs targeting the Iranian and Egyptian embassies rocked Baghdad yesterday, killing 30 people in a surge of violence as Iraqis struggle to form a government four weeks after elections.

Officials said the near-simultaneous blasts late morning injured around 168 people while witnesses reported mayhem in central Baghdad as ambulances and emergency workers raced to the sites of the explosions.

"They were suicide attacks against the Egyptian and Iranian embassies," said Major General Qasim Atta, spokesman for the Iraqi security forces' Baghdad operations.

He added that one of the bombings may also have been targeting the residence of the German embassy.

Atta later said that Iraqi security forces stopped a car primed with a bomb in Masbah, in central Baghdad, apparently which was to be used in an attack on the headquarters of security police tasked with protecting foreign embassies.

The driver was arrested and the bomb defused, he said.

The explosions occurred within minutes of each other, shattering windows in nearby buildings, sparking bursts of gunfire and sending large plumes of smoke billowing across the Iraqi capital.

Two suicide vehicle bombs battered the diplomatic west Baghdad neighbourhood of Mansur followed soon afterwards by a third huge explosion in front of the Iranian embassy in the centre of the city.

Said Mohammed, who was close to the blast which badly damaged the Egyptian embassy, said guards had tried to stop the attacker.

"Three security guards shouted at the truck to stop moving, and opened fire on the driver," said Mohammed, who then turned to nearby Iraqi army officers in anger and shouted: "How did the truck get here?"

Shards of glass covered the street in front of the embassy building, whose entrance was ravaged by a crater five metres (16 feet) in diameter.

An AFP correspondent, meanwhile, counted five bodies at the scene of the Iranian embassy blast -- three trapped inside burning car wrecks and two being carried into ambulances, one of whom did not have any legs.

Thai govt tries legal moves to stop Reds

AFP, Bangkok

Thailand's government yesterday said it would seek a court order to force anti-government protesters, loyal to ex-premier Thaksin Shinawatra, to end their crippling rally in Bangkok's tourist hub.

The "Red Shirts", who are demanding immediate elections to pave the way for the return of fugitive Thaksin, escalated their three-week rally a day earlier, massing in the capital's main shopping and luxury hotel district.

With businesses and tourism threatened, the government has banned the gathering under a strict security law invoked to cover the protests, and threatened protesters with a year in jail.

Deputy prime minister Suthep Thaugsuban, in charge of security, said the government would seek a court order to increase pressure on the Reds to leave after the weekend.

"Legal experts are drafting a request to submit to court tomorrow. When we have a court order the government will see what we can do," said Suthep.

"We will avoid force which risks clashes. But we may have to send authorities to the site."

Police said about 30,000 Reds, most of whom come from Thailand's poorer rural northern provinces, have ignored the government's warning to remain on Sunday.

"I am not afraid of being arrested and put in jail. I am sure I will have many people there with me," said one defiant protester, Kampa Ngaokor, a 55-year-old farmer from the north-eastern province of Chaiyaphum.

In a televised address, premier Abhisit Vejjajiva urged the Red Shirts to return to a protest site in the capital's government quarter.

Iran says will host nuke disarmament meeting

AFP, Tehran

Iran said yesterday it will host a nuclear disarmament conference this month to be attended by China, which has been resisting new sanctions against Tehran over its atomic ambitions.

"This is an international conference and Iran, which advocates nuclear disarmament, is calling on all nations to disarm," Tehran's chief nuclear negotiator Saeed Jalili told the official IRNA news agency.

Jalili said "the Chinese have welcomed the initiative... and will participate" in the April 17-18 conference.

The conference -- called "Nuclear Energy For All, Nuclear Weapons For No-one" -- would come soon after an international nuclear security summit to be held in Washington on April 12-13.

Iran has been under mounting global pressure to abandon its nuclear programme, with Western powers fearing it wants to build an atomic bomb. Tehran says the programme is peaceful and only meant to produce energy.

It has already been slapped with three sets of United Nations Security Council resolutions, and the spectre of more lingers spearheaded by

Washington and some western nations. China, one of the five veto-wielding Security Council members, has stiffly resisted any fresh sanctions against Iran.

Yesterday, Jalili said Iran was still ready to talk with world powers over its own package of proposals to resolve issues including disarmament discussed in Geneva last year.

"We said before we are ready to talk on issues which can help world peace, stability and security," Jalili said.

"It is better for the countries who left these negotiations to return to it and continue the dialogue. These negotiations clearly can furnish the ground for world cooperation to address common concerns."

Foreign ministry spokesman Ramin Mehmanparast said meanwhile the title of the conference indicated Iran's "seriousness in utilising nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, and we consider it to be the right of all nations."

"But using nuclear arms should not be allowed by any nation and that the world should be without such weapons," adding a list of other countries planning to attend would be announced later.



Pope Benedict XVI celebrates Easter mass on Sunday at St Peter's square at the Vatican. The mass will be followed by Pope Benedict XVI "urbi et orbi" (to the city and the world) blessing.

US to adopt new air security policy

ALJAZEERA ONLINE

The United States has announced new security measures to replace the mandatory screening of air travellers from 14 countries, imposed after the failed attack on a flight in December.

The measures are designed to significantly reduce the number of passengers pulled aside for additional screening and will not be based on nationality or passport, but on characteristics pulled together by intelligence agencies.

The new screening strategy, announced on Friday, results from a review ordered by Barack Obama, the US president.

Janet Napolitano, the department of homeland security secretary, said the new measures would "utilise real-time, threat-based intelligence along with multiple, random layers of security, both seen and unseen, to more effectively mitigate evolving terrorist threats".

Advertisement for Bangladesh Power Development Board (APSDCL) featuring a logo and text in Bengali. It lists various services and contact information for the company.

Advertisement for Kim Jong Il's visit to Kyrgyzstan. It includes a headline 'Ban Ki-moon visit prompts Kyrgyzstan rally', a sub-headline 'ALJAZEERA ONLINE', and a detailed report on the event, mentioning the UN secretary-general's visit and the rally in Bishkek.

Advertisement for Ashuganj Power Station Company Limited. It features the company logo, name, and address. Below this is a detailed table with columns for 'ক্রমিক নং' (Serial No.), 'কাজের নাম' (Job Name), 'দরপত্র' (Bidding), 'দরপত্র জামানতের পরিমাণ' (Bid Security), and 'কাজের সময়সীমা' (Job Duration). The table lists various engineering and construction jobs with their respective details and deadlines.