



Municipal workers spray salt on a road in Brussels on December 24, 2010. Thousands of travellers were stranded at Paris' main airport today after the cancellation of hundreds of Christmas flights, as freezing weather and widespread snowfalls caused travel chaos across Europe. At least 400 flights in and out of Paris' main hub Roissy-Charles de Gaulle were cancelled, with flights in Belgium and Germany also affected and motorists staying off the roads as western Europe battled the latest cold snap.

PHOTO: AFP

2G SCANDAL

Indian police grill former minister

AFP, New Delhi

Indian federal investigators yesterday questioned a former minister at the heart of one of the biggest corruption cases in the country's history.

Ex-telecom minister A. Raja quit last month over the 2008 cut-price sale of second-generation (2G) mobile phone licences that India's government audit watchdog said cost the treasury as much as 40 billion dollars.

A spokesman for the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) said Raja was being questioned at its headquarters in New Delhi.

Raja, who has denied any wrongdoing, is accused of changing rules to help certain companies, many of which, according to the auditor, were ineligible to apply for wireless permits.

His lawyer said his client feared he already stood "condemned, charge-sheeted, tried and convicted by the media."

The questioning came after police raided Raja's home and offices along with those of current and retired telecom ministry officials and a high-profile corporate lobbyist.

The CBI has said the searches recovered allegedly "incriminating documents". Indian media reports say the CBI is probing the possibility of kickbacks being paid by some of the firms bidding for 2G licences.

The scandal paralysed parliament for the entire winter session and has brought opposi-

tion calls for Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's resignation.

Raja was expected to face questioning about alleged irregularities in the timing of the sale and about the role of his relatives in some of the companies which allegedly acted as fronts for certain telecom firms which won spectrum.

The case is being seen by Indian commentators as the Congress-led coalition government's most serious crisis during its six weeks in power.

Singh, 78, declared earlier in the week he had "nothing to hide" as he volunteered to be quizzed by a parliamentary panel over the scandal. But the offer failed to satisfy the opposition which is seeking a cross-party investigation into the licence sale.

Singh, who enjoys a reputation for honesty in India's murky political world, has been battling to protect his image against accusations that he failed to intervene when Raja sold the 2G licences for a fraction of their value.

There is no suggestion the prime minister benefited personally but critics have accused him of turning a blind eye because Raja's regional DMK party is a key member of Singh's ruling coalition.

The government has been rocked by a series of scandals including October's over-budget Commonwealth Games, where investigators uncovered suspect contracts and substandard construction.

Cambodian PM accepts WFP apology

AFP, Phnom Penh

Cambodia's premier said yesterday he accepted an apology from the World Food Programme for an incorrect statement about the country's food security, days after the controversial jailing of a WFP worker.

Cambodian warehouse employee Seng Kunnaka was sentenced on Sunday to six months in prison for printing and distributing anti-government material in a rushed trial criticised by rights groups.

The arrest came not long after Prime Minister Hun Sen gave a speech in which he attacked the WFP for wrongly claiming Cambodia was vulnerable to food shortages. The UN organisation has since apologised for the error.

A government spokesman told AFP earlier this week that there was no connection between the arrest and Hun Sen's attack on WFP.

"This is an individual case... They did not prosecute WFP", Khieu Kanharith said Monday.

Nepal crisis not to end by 2010

IANS, Kathmandu

With just a week left for the year to end, the protracted political crisis paralysing Nepal for nearly six months is not likely to be resolved with the formation of a new government by next Friday.

The faint hope of a new government ended with the opposition Maoist party losing their parliament battle Thursday night to the ruling coalition and agreeing to call it off.

The former guerrillas had forced President Ram Baran Yadav to call a special session of parliament this month in a bid to end the futile prime ministerial election process, which failed to choose a new premier despite 16 rounds of vote, and begin a fresh race with new contestants.

The special session was also intended to be a rap on the knuckles for the government that had prorogued the house last month without their consent after a brawl in the house over the new budget.

However, the plan misfired after it became apparent that the communists in the ruling coalition, who are also demanding a new prime ministerial election, would not support the Maoists but remain with their allies and defeat the former rebels if it came to a vote.

The Maoists therefore had no option but to agree to end their much-vaunted special session after only two sittings.

While the mollified ruling parties said a regular session of parliament would be called within a week and it would focus on electing a new prime minister, it would still not end complications and have a new government in place by Friday.

The Nepali Congress, the largest party in the alliance government, has refused to withdraw its candidate, Ram Chandra Poudel, who has been holding up the formation of a new government for months.

Poudel is the only contestant left in the prime ministerial fray after both the Maoists and communists were forced to withdraw their nominees, the first due to a vote-buying scandal and the latter after a feud within the party.

Militants kill US spies to avenge drone attacks

IANS, Washington

Suspected American spies are being killed routinely in Pakistan's northwestern tribal region bordering Afghanistan, apparently to avenge US drone attacks.

Tribesmen in the region have said corpses appear in fields and on roadsides almost every day with written warnings pinned to their clothes: 'All American spies will meet the same fate.'

'Espionage has long been viewed as an egregious offence in the lawless borderland but residents say the current pace of assassinations is unprecedented,' The Washington Post reported yesterday.

The killings parallel a massive surge in CIA drone attacks on North Waziristan, home to a nest of insurgents that includes Al Qaeda and the militant Haqqani network.

CIA drones have fired 112 missiles on Pakistan's tribal areas this year - 88 percent of which hit North Waziristan, the dailysaid.

But tribesmen have now said the US campaign has had 'far-reaching consequences' for people in North Waziristan and has provoked 'cycles of violence' that are difficult to predict and impossible to control.

Pak Islamists warn of anarchy if blasphemy law changed

AFP, Lahore

Thousands of Islamists rallied in major Pakistani cities yesterday threatening further protests and anarchy if the government moves to amend a controversial blasphemy law.

A ruling Pakistan Peoples Party lawmaker sparked outcry last month by seeking to end the death penalty for blasphemy, after a Christian mother of five was sentenced to hang for defaming the Prophet Mohammed.

Demonstrators marched in the eastern city of Lahore, the port city of Karachi and the central city of Multan, after influential religious parties called for protests to defend the law.

A crowd of nearly 1,500 people gathered in Lahore, calling for "Jihad" and pledging to sacrifice their lives to protect the honour of Prophet Mohammed.

They also warned that attempts to soften the law would trigger nationwide protests.

"Pakistan was created in the name of Islam and we will not tolerate any attempt to amend the law," a leader of the pro-Taliban Jamiatul Ulema-e-Islam (JUI), Maulana Ahmad Tule said the participants.

Former information minister and lawmaker from the ruling Pakistan Peoples Party government, Sherry Rehman in November submitted a draft bill in the lower house seeking an end to death penalty under the existing law.

English-language newspaper Dawn had

quoted Rehman as saying that the law victimised minorities in the country.

Rights activists also say the law encourages Islamism in a nation already besieged by Taliban attacks.

Addressing a separate rally of over 500 people in Lahore, a leader of the banned charity Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD), Husnain Siddiqui said, "We will launch a national movement against all those lawmakers, who support efforts to amend the law."

Politicians and conservative clerics have been at loggerheads over whether President Asif Ali Zardari should pardon Asia Bibi, the Christian mother who was sentenced to death under the blasphemy law.

Pakistan has yet to execute anyone for blasphemy, but Bibi's case has exposed the deep faultlines in the conservative country.

In the port city of Karachi, more than 2,000 people rallied against Rehman's proposed draft bill and demanded the government had Bibi a severe punishment for insulting Prophet Mohammad.

Bibi was arrested in June 2009 after Muslim women labourers refused to drink from a bowl of water she was asked to fetch while out working in the fields.

Days later, the women complained that she made derogatory remarks about the Prophet Mohammed. Bibi was set upon by a mob, arrested by police and sentenced on November 8.

US pays Pakistan more than \$600m in aid

AFP, Islamabad

Washington transferred more than 600 million dollars to the Pakistani government this week to pay for its efforts in the fight against violent extremists, the US embassy in Islamabad said Thursday.

The 633 million dollar payment under the Coalition Support Fund (CSF) programme came on Wednesday, amid reports that top US military commanders in Afghanistan were pushing to expand special forces ground raids across the border into Pakistan's lawless tribal areas.

"The Coalition Support Fund is designed to reimburse the government of Pakistan for expenses incurred fighting violent extremist groups," the embassy said in a statement.

It added that the payment covered the first six months of this year and Pakistan had now received "approximately 8.76 billion dollars" since 2001 under the scheme.

The CSF process reimburses 27 nations, including Pakistan, for logistical, military and other support provided to Washington's overseas military operations.

Washington considers Pakistan's lawless tribal belt the global headquarters of Al-Qaeda and says eliminating the militant threat is vital to winning the nine-year war against the Taliban in neighbouring Afghanistan.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়
শরীয়তপুর
(এস, এ, শাখা)
স্মারক নং-১২-এসএ ২৮/২০১০-১১/১৫৮ তারিখ : ১৯/১২/২০১০খ্রিঃ
দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি
শরীয়তপুর জেলা প্রশাসকের নিয়ন্ত্রণাধীন উপজেলা ভূমি অফিসসমূহের জন্য নিম্নবর্ণিত কম্পিউটার ও ইলেকট্রনিক্স সামগ্রী ক্রয়ের নিমিত্তে (পিপিআর/২০০৮ অনুযায়ী প্রকৃত ঠিকাদার-সরবরাহকারীদের নিকট হতে সীলমোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

বাংলাদেশ কম্পিউটার কাউন্সিল
(বিজ্ঞান এবং তথ্য ও যোগাযোগ প্রযুক্তি মন্ত্রণালয়)
বিসিসি ভবন, আগারগাঁও, শের-ই-বাংলা নগর, ঢাকা-১২০৭
ফোন : ৮১৪৪৭৮৭ ফ্যাক্স : ৮৮-০২-৯১৪২৪৬২৬ ই-মেইল : training@bcc.net.bd, ওয়েব: www.bcc.net.bd
স্মারক নং- ৩৯.১০৭.০২৫.০১.১২.২৬৩.২০১০.৩৬৪০ তারিখ : ২২-১২-২০১০
Diploma ও Post-Graduate Diploma in ICT কোর্সে
ভর্তি বিজ্ঞপ্তি
বাংলাদেশ কম্পিউটার কাউন্সিল (বিসিসি)-এর প্রশিক্ষণ কর্মসূচীর আওতায় ১ (এক) বছর মেয়াদী Diploma in ICT (DICT) এবং Post-Graduate Diploma in ICT (PGDICT) প্রশিক্ষণ কোর্সের জন্য আগ্রহী প্রার্থীদের নিকট থেকে নির্ধারিত ফর্মে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

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Gazipur-1703
Website: www.spcbl.org.bd
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Sealed tenders are hereby invited from the competent suppliers/manufacturers/dealers for procurement of the abovementioned material as per under noted schedule. The tender(s) addressed to the Managing Director, The Security Printing Corporation (Bangladesh) Ltd, Gazipur shall have to be dropped in the tender box kept in Corporation's Office at Gazipur and its Liaison Office at Annex Building-1, 6th Floor, Bangladesh Bank, Dhaka on 25.01.2011 up to 4.00pm. Tender may also be sent to Corporation's Office at Gazipur through postal/courier services which must reach within the scheduled deadline mentioned above. Submission of tender after the abovementioned time shall be returned unopened. Tender(s) will be opened only at Corporation's Office, Gazipur in presence of tenderer(s) if any on the next office day at 11.00am. 1 (one) tender schedule is applicable only for one supplier/dealer/manufacturer of submitting one offer. Tender paper showing terms and conditions with specification will be available up to 26.12.2010 to 09.01.2011, from the abovementioned two places against payment of Tk 200.00 (two hundred) only during Sunday to Thursday between 9.00am to 4.00pm. An application for the schedule in the letterhead pad from the respective firm will be needed. Earnest money @ 3% (three percent) of the total quoted amount shall have to be submitted in the form of Bank Draft/Pay Order/irrevocable Bank Guarantee along with the tender in favour of The Security Printing Corporation (Bd) Ltd, Gazipur. Tender without earnest money shall not be acceptable. The authority reserves the right to reject or accept any tender(s) without assigning any reason whatsoever.
Md Kalimulla
General Manager
GD-5543