

Japan 'will overcome' nuclear crisis Says IAEA

BBC ONLINE The situation at Japan's quake-damaged nuclear plant remains very serious...

But IAEA director-general Yukiya Amano said he had "no doubt that this crisis will be effectively overcome".

Workers at the Fukushima Daiichi plant have been battling to cool reactors and spent fuel ponds to avoid a large-scale release of radiation.

The Fukushima plant was crippled by fire and explosions after the 11 March quake and tsunami.

Electricity has been restored to all reactors and engineers hope to test water pumps soon.

Earlier, some workers were temporarily evacuated from the complex after grey smoke was seen rising from the No 3 reactor.

Radiation levels did not appear to have risen significantly though after the smoke was spotted, the IAEA and Japan's nuclear safety agency said.

Divided allies seek Nato role in Libya Arab League gets back behind strikes

AFP, Brussels

Nato allies sought yesterday to mend an acrimonious debate over what role the alliance should play in Libya amid French reluctance to hand it the lead and Turkish concerns about the air strikes.

The ambassadors of the 28-nation military organisation entered a new round of talks to discuss whether Nato should take the lead in a no-fly zone run by a Western coalition since Saturday, or join the operation in a support role.

However, Nato allies agreed to use naval and air power to enforce an arms embargo on Libya, giving the alliance a part in the military campaign amid divisions over whether it should take the lead.

After days of heated debate, the 28-nation military organisation also agreed to endorse operational plans to help enforce the no-fly zone over Libya.

The strikes launched by aircraft and warships have been conducted by US, French and British forces as individual nations, but London, Rome and several other allies want the operations to be taken over by Nato.

With the United States eager to hand over command of the mission as soon

as possible, US President Barack Obama said Monday he expected Nato would play a role in coordinating the next phase of action within days, rather than weeks.

But France is resisting handing the baton to Nato in Libya, fearing a backlash from Arab nations that it wants to bring into the campaign.

Turkey has so far blocked the approval of Nato operational plans for a no-fly zone over Libya, as it criticised the scope of the Western-led operation, which has included strikes on Muammar Gaddafi forces.

"We have seen in the past that such operations are of no use and that on the contrary, they increase loss of life, transform into occupation and seriously harm the countries' unity," said Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Vowing in a speech to parliament that Turkey "will never point a gun at the Libyan people," Erdogan ruled out any combat mission by Turkey, NATO's sole predominantly Muslim member and a key regional player.

Germany has also refused to join the intervention in Libya, abstaining from voting for the UN Security Council resolution that approved "all necessary

measures" to protect Libyan civilians from Kadhafi forces last week.

The temperature went up a notch on Monday when Nato Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen criticised the French and German positions during a closed-door meeting of Nato envoys, prompting the German and French ambassadors to walk out, Nato sources said, confirming a Financial Times report.

Frustrated by the lack of decision, Norway said its fighter jets would not fly as long as it was unclear who was running the operation, while Italy warned it could take back control of bases used by the coalition on its territory.

Meanwhile, The Arab League got back behind international military strikes against Libya on Monday after comments by its leader had indicated divisions over the campaign against Muammar Gaddafi.

The Arab League had announced its support for the no-fly zone and "we are committed to that decision," he added.

Mussa said that earlier comments had been "misinterpreted" and were motivated by concerns about civilians being caught up in the coalition strikes, as Arab governments did not want more deaths in Libya.

CONFLICTING GOALS IN LIBYA Removing Gaddafi not allowed: UK Aim is to oust Gaddafi: US

AGENCIES

The UN has not given coalition forces the "legal authority" to remove Muammar Gaddafi by military action, David Cameron has said while US state department spokesman Mark Toner said ousting Gaddafi is the ultimate goal as conflict of interests over Libya intervention became apparent.

The UK prime minister told Parliament a UN resolution allowing strikes on the country was "limited in its scope".

The head of the armed forces said it "absolutely" did not allow the targeting of Colonel Gaddafi.

But there is some confusion, as Defence Secretary Liam Fox has said such action is "potentially a possibility".

Meanwhile, US President Barack Obama's administration insisted, after coming under pressure for not spelling out its war aims in Libya, the goal is to see Muammar Gaddafi removed from power.

British Foreign Secretary William Hague did not rule out the possibility of targeting Gaddafi as a legitimate one in an interview on Monday, adding he would not "speculate on the targets".

British prime minister said: "The UN resolution is limited in its scope. It explicitly does not provide legal authority for action to bring about Gaddafi's removal from power by military means. "We're trying to convince Colonel Gaddafi and his regime, and his associates, that they need to step down from power," said US state department spokesman Mark Toner. "That remains our ultimate goal here."



David Cameron

Muhith FROM PAGE 1 the dignity of the Nobel laureate, Rizvi said at a luncheon meeting of American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham) in Bangladesh at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel.

"I will not speak much on the issue of Grameen Bank. It might be a contempt of court. Our finance minister has been assigned to find a suitable solution," Rizvi said.

A report was published in a section of newspapers that a committee had been formed to broker a compromise on Yunus' removal from Grameen Bank as its managing director.

"Nothing has happened like this," a news website quoted the finance minister as saying yesterday when his attention was drawn to the report.

At the AmCham meeting, Rizvi said the relationship between Bangladesh and the US is good. "Still, there are certain shadows hanging over the two countries' relationship."

Rizvi also said: "The relationship between Bangladesh and the US is as strong as it was in the last 40 years. It's truly multifaceted, very deep and diverse. We should not let consume this relationship by any issue."

NEWS IN brief

Strong quakes jolt Japan's tsunami-hit northeast

AFP, Osaka

A series of strong earthquakes rattled northeast Japan yesterday, keeping residents on edge more than a week after a devastating tremor and tsunami battered the region.

Two 6.6-magnitude tremors and one 6.4 quake struck within two and a half hours off Japan's tsunami-stricken northeast coast, starting from 0718 GMT, the US Geological Survey reported.

There were no reports of casualties or damage and no tsunami warnings.

UN Security Council to hold fresh Libya session

AFP, United Nations

The UN Security Council agreed Monday to meet on Thursday for further discussions on Libya amid criticism of the strikes on Muammar Gaddafi's regime that followed the UN resolution allowing military action.

The new session to be held Thursday had been planned under the Security Council's decision to review the situation seven days after the UN body approved the use of force in Libya.

It comes after Russian comments that last week's resolution was "flawed."

Yemeni president warns of civil war in case of coup

AFP, Sanaa

President Ali Abdullah Saleh warned yesterday of civil war in case of any attempted coup in Yemen, as pressure mounted for the embattled leader to step down.

"Any attempt to reach power via a coup will lead to a civil war in the country," Saleh said in an address to military commanders that was broadcast on state television.

Meanwhile, two soldiers died in clashes between Yemen's regular army and the Republican Guard, elite forces loyal to President Ali Abdullah Saleh, in the southeastern city of Mukalla, medics said yesterday.

China rejects Google claims of email interference

BBC ONLINE

China's foreign ministry has rejected claims by Google that Beijing is disrupting access to its e-mail service in the country.

"This is an unacceptable accusation," ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu told a regular news conference yesterday.

Google said on Monday that difficulties faced by users of its Gmail service was the result of government blocks.

Users say the interference coincided with an internet campaign calling for protests like those in the Middle East.

Afghanistan announces crucial security handover

AFP, Kabul

Afghan forces will take over security from Nato this summer in the capital of violence-wracked Helmand province and several other areas, President Hamid Karzai said yesterday.

The move, 10 years after the US-led invasion that ousted the Taliban regime in the wake of the September 11 attacks in 2001, is the first step towards the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan by the end of 2014.

Karzai's announcement that Afghan forces will take on three provinces and four cities comes after Nato-led force agreed last year to begin putting the field of combat under his control.

US for govt talks with Yunus

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He did not elaborate.

During his four-day visit, Blake met with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Leader of the Opposition Khaleda Zia, Finance Minister AMA Muhith, senior government officials, Prof Muhammad Yunus and civil society members. Former World Bank president James Wolfensohn was present during Blake's meeting with the prime minister.

The US had earlier said it was "troubled" by government's dismissal of Yunus as managing director of Grameen Bank on the ground that the 70-year-old pioneer of microfinance violated the bank's 60-year retirement law. Yunus denied any wrongdoing and appealed to the High Court.

After losing the appeal in the HC, Yunus has gone to the Supreme Court, where his petition awaits further hearing.

In a written statement yesterday, Blake said Prof Yunus has brought great honour to Bangladesh, and "we in the United States have been deeply troubled by the difficulties he is currently facing."

"As a friend and partner of Bangladesh, we are concerned about the dampening effect this will have on

civil society in general and on the integrity and effectiveness of Grameen Bank in particular," he said.

The United States, he said, sees it as "a distraction and an unnecessary departure from all the great work being done in Bangladesh."

Asked what could be the compromise, Blake said the United States does not prescribe any formula. "It could be found through dialogue between Prof Yunus, Grameen Bank and Bangladesh government," he added.

In reply to another question if the US stand on Prof Yunus is interference in Bangladesh's internal matters, Blake said, "Prof Yunus and Grameen Bank have positive reputation in USA and among many Congressmen, members of the Bangladesh congressional caucus, President Obama and Secretary Clinton. This is a matter of great interest in USA," Blake said.

Blake said Yunus is a Nobel Prize winner and recipient of the American Presidential Medal of Freedom and a Congressional Gold Medal. "His work over the past decades to lift millions of women out of poverty is internationally recognized,"

he added.

Asked if Secretary of State Hillary Clinton could visit Bangladesh this year, he said he will try to make a schedule "if Yunus' matter is solved".

The US official praised Bangladesh's progress in economic development, counter terrorism and regional partnership.

"Bangladesh plays an important role in furthering peace and stability, both within its borders and across the region," he said.

Bangladesh, he said, "is the number one contributor to UN peacekeeping efforts, BRAC and other civil society groups are playing role in Afghanistan. Bangladesh recently sent a crack team of cholera experts to Haiti to lend expertise and assistance to that troubled country."

Blake further said Bangladesh is one of a select few countries in the world that is partnering with the United States on the four signature initiatives of President Barack Obama: global health, food security, global climate and engagement with Muslim communities.

Bangladesh has made tremendous progress in MDGs especially in maternal and child health, he said.

And further progress could be made in reducing human rights violation by the security forces and corruption.

Blake said he visited a shelter in Jessore for women victims of trafficking. He appreciated enactment of laws against sex trafficking and protection of migrant workers.

WOLFENSOHN FOR AMICABLE SOLUTION Talking to journalists after a meeting with Bangladesh Bank Governor Atiur Rahman, James Wolfensohn said, "I am here to take a note of the microfinance industry, not just the current issue with Prof Yunus. I am going from here to other countries such as Vietnam, Hong Kong and China. This is part of an overall view."

On the Nobel laureate, the former WB chief said: "I just hope that the issue ends in peaceful resolutions because your country has been a great leader in microfinance."

"I think your reputation is very strong. It would be my hope and belief that it will remain so. Whatever you are doing in your country is your business, not mine," said the former WB president who visited Bangladesh as part of his global tour.

Vandalism over death

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people injured.

Angry workers caught the truck and beat up its driver Abu Taleb, 55. Then they resorted to vandalism and locked into clashes with Ansar members who tried to bring the situation under control.

Sirajul Islam, officer-in-charge of Ashulia Police Station said the authorities of Softex declared it closed for the day after the death of Ibrahim.

Meanwhile, reckless driving claimed the life of a 7-year-old girl at the city's Demra yesterday.

Brishti, 7, daughter of a

rickshaw-puller Habu Miah of West Hajinagar in Demra was walking along Wasa Road at around 11:30am when a speeding truck ran over her, killing her on the spot.

The locals caught the truck-driver Akhter Hossain, and beat him up. In a different incident, a mother and her 12-year-old son suffered wounds when a bus sped away hitting them at the city's Shabbagh early yesterday.

Both Reeta Begum, 30 and her son Ramim were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Charges sent to sessions

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ordered the authorities concerned to transfer the charge sheets.

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) on Monday indicted 26 more BGB members, raising the total number of accused to 850.

Special Superintendent of the CID Abdul Kahar Akand submitted two supplementary charge sheets in two cases against the 26, including a deputy assistant director, to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka,

showing 58 prosecution witnesses.

Earlier on January 5, the trial court took into cognisance the charges against 801 personnel of BGB (previously known as BDR). On February 3, the court ordered further investigation into the carnage as more names surfaced alongside the 824 accused.

Last year, in July the CID pressed charges against 824 people and 23 civilians on various accusations including murder, arson, looting, hiding of bodies and sedition.

Govt mulls private security

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Somali pirates on December 5 last year. Pirates took hostage the ship's 25 crew and one passenger. They were released after 100 days.

Statistics from the International Maritime Bureau show that Somali pirates in just 2010 had taken over 53 ships and took hostage 1,181 crew in the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean. They killed at least eight sailors for not getting ransom during this period.

Local owners of 79 ships are concerned not only about crew security but also their businesses which involves hundreds of crores of taka. A ship costs \$12 million to \$25 million depending on the capacity, they said.

They asked the government to respond immediately before incidents like Jahan

Moni recur.

"We are ready to pay local security forces. If countries like India, China and Malaysia can allow local forces to protect their ships from pirates, why not us," said shipowner Shahjahan, who suffered a lot including financial loss to get his ship and crew back.

He had to pay \$4.2 million as ransom to get the ship and crew released.

Azam J Chowdhury, who recently bought two ships, including a one-lakh tonne oil tanker for over \$22 million, fears increasing attacks by Somali pirates.

"Many of our crew do not want to go to the Middle East countries because of the piracy. We have to hire foreign crew at higher cost," he said.

Azam J Chowdhury suggested that the government could sign a protocol agree-

ment with countries such as the UAE, Bahrain and India, to protect Bangladesh's ships and crew in case of attacks by pirates.

Meghna Group of Industries, the biggest importer of essential commodities, including sugar, oil, also owns two ships.

"We are entrepreneurs, not experts. The government has to protect our ships and crew," said Mostofa Kamal, chairman and managing director of the group.

SM Mahfuzul Huq, secretary general of the Bangladesh Ocean Going Ship Owners' Association, said according to the law, the government should ensure security to the ships. He said they conveyed the message to the government in a series of meetings held after the hijacking of MV Jahan Moni.

Family for posthumous

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Hossain, brother of Taher.

Taher's wife Lutfa Taher and Anwar were talking to journalists following the High Court verdict that said Ziaur Rahman was responsible for the killing of Taher.

They said they are happy to get justice after so many years of Taher's killing. Anwar said although there is no law in Bangladesh under which posthumous trial Zia can be held, his offences should be put on record.

The HC verdict is a historical one, he said.

Lutfa Taher expressed her satisfaction that those (including her husband) convicted by the fake tribunal on false charges are now relieved of the charges.

Hasanul Huq Inu, who was among those convicted and sentenced by the tribunal, also demanded posthumous trial of Zia.

Taher was killed through a farcical trial in a fabricated case as he had tried to resist revival of communalism and rehabilitation of war criminals in Bangladesh, he said.

"We want trial of Ziaur Rahman although there is no

trial at present providing for trial of anybody after death," he said.

US journalist and writer Lawrence Lifschultz, who had covered the trial of Taher in 1976, was present in the courtroom when the HC verdict was delivered.

Terming the verdict a special one for the nation, he said it is a wake up call to recognise the rule of law.

"Justice was achieved through the High Court verdict and it is a great day for Bangladesh," the renowned journalist said.

Advertisement for North South University featuring the Executive Master of Public Health (EMPH) Admission Summer 2011. It includes details about the program (Fridays Program, 9:00 AM - 8:00 PM), application deadline (April 21, Thursday), admission test (April 22, Friday), and majors in Health Services & Hospital Management, Epidemiology, Disaster Management, and Reproductive, Maternal & Child Health. It also lists Why EMPH at NSU and provides contact information for further details.