

Pakistan to probe into Laden raid

AFP, Islamabad

Pakistan's prime minister yesterday ordered an independent commission to investigate the Abbottabad operation in which elite US forces killed Osama bin Laden on May 2, the premier's media office said.

"Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani has constituted a commission to investigate the Abbottabad incident," a statement said.

A five member commission will be headed by Justice Javed Iqbal, a senior judge of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, it added.

Pakistani Lawmakers earlier threatened to withdraw logistical cooperation for US troops based in Afghanistan and condemned CIA-operated drone strikes.



A handout photo released by the South African government yesterday shows South African President Jacob Zuma (L) meeting with Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi on May 30 during his one-day visit to Tripoli.

PHOTO: AFP

Indo-Pak glacier talks yield no progress

AFP, New Delhi

India and Pakistan yesterday concluded a 12th round of talks over a disputed Himalayan glacier where troops have clashed intermittently since 1984 without reporting any progress.

The estranged South Asian neighbours in a joint statement said talks which began Monday "enhanced understanding of each other's position" on the Siachen glacier, the world's highest battlefield.

"Both sides presented their positions and suggestions towards the resolution of Siachen," it said following the two-day talks between Indian Defence Secretary Pradeep Kumar with his Pakistani counterpart Syed Athar Ali.

It added that they had agreed "to meet again at a mutually-convenient date in Islamabad," without giving any further details.

India in 1984 occupied key areas on Siachen, raising fears of another all-out conflict between the neighbours, and in 1987 the two militaries fought a fierce skirmish on the 6,300-metre high frigid mass.

28 killed in Indian bus plunge

AFP, Gauhati

At least 28 members of a wedding party were killed in India's northeastern state of Assam when their bus plunged into a gorge after hitting a wooden bridge, police said yesterday.

The accident took place on Monday night in Kamrup district, 30 kilometres from Assam's main city of Guwahati.

About 40 people were thought to be on the crowded bus, with several taken to hospital with serious injuries.

Pakistani jet attacks kill 17 Talibans

REUTERS, Kalaya

Pakistani warplanes attacked Taliban positions in the north-western Orakzai region yesterday, killing 17 militants, a senior regional government official said.

Orakzai is one of seven ethnic Pashtun tribal areas where the Pakistani army has tried to root out militants with offensives against their strongholds.

The strike came a day after a local newspaper reported that Pakistan will launch an offensive in North Waziristan, a known sanctuary for al-Qaeda and Taliban militants.

Pakistan's performance in fighting militancy has come under close scrutiny again after it was discovered that al-Qaeda chief Laden had been living in the country.

Army operations in areas like Orakzai have failed to break the back of militant groups such as the Pakistani Taliban, who have stepped up suicide bombings since US special forces killed bin Laden near Islamabad on May 2.

Residents in the town of Mamoozai, where the air strike took place, said several helicopter gunships were hovering overhead hours after the attack.

Nato strikes Tripoli after Zuma ends peace mission

Gaddafi refuses to leave country

REUTERS, Tripoli

Muammar Gaddafi is emphatic he will not leave Libya, South African President Jacob Zuma said yesterday after talks with the Libyan leader that left prospects for a negotiated end to the conflict looking dim.

But new questions emerged over how long Gaddafi could hold on after a senior United Nations aid official said shortages of food and medicine in areas of Libya controlled by Gaddafi amounted to a "time bomb."

Within hours of Zuma's departure from Tripoli late on Monday, Libyan television reported that Nato aircraft had resumed attacks, striking what it called civilian and military sites in Tripoli and Tajoura, just east of the capital.

Zuma was in Tripoli to try to revive an African "roadmap" for ending the

conflict, which started in February with an uprising against Gaddafi and has since turned into a war with thousands of people killed.

The talks produced no breakthrough, with Gaddafi's refusal to quit - a condition the rebels and Nato have set as a pre-condition for any ceasefire - still the sticking point.

"Col Gaddafi called for an end to the bombings to enable a Libyan dialogue," Zuma's office said in a statement. "He emphasized that he was not prepared to leave his country, despite the difficulties."

Zuma also said Gaddafi's personal safety "is a concern" -- a reference to Nato strikes which have repeatedly hit the Libyan leader's Bab al-Aziziya compound and other locations used by the Libyan leader and his family.

Now in its fourth month, Libya's

conflict is deadlocked on the ground, with anti-Gaddafi rebels unable to break out of their strongholds and advance toward Tripoli, where Gaddafi appears to be firmly entrenched.

Rebels control the east of Libya around the city of Benghazi, Libya's third-biggest city Misrata, and a mountain range stretching from the town of Zintan, 150 km south of Tripoli, toward the border with Tunisia.

Western powers have said they expect Gaddafi will be forced out by a process of attrition as air strikes, defections from his entourage and shortages take their toll.

Panos Mountzis, the UN humanitarian coordinator for Libya, told Reuters in Tripoli that some food stocks in areas under Gaddafi's control were likely to last only weeks.

Food prices to double

FROM PAGE 1

which has already seen food prices double in the last 20 years.

Half of the rise to come will be caused by climate change, Oxfam predicts.

It calls on world leaders to improve regulation of food markets and invest in a global climate fund.

"The food system must be overhauled if we are to overcome the increasingly pressing challenges of climate change, spiralling food prices and the scarcity of land, water and energy," BBC quotes Barbara Stocking, Oxfam's chief executive, as saying.

Among the many factors continuing to drive rising food prices in the coming decades, Oxfam predicts that climate change will have the most serious impact.

Ahead of the UN climate summit in South Africa in December, it calls on world leaders to launch a global climate fund, "so that people can protect themselves from the impacts of climate change and are better equipped to grow the food they need".

FOOD JUSTICE

Food prices are forecast to increase by something in the range of 70 to 90 percent

vated price volatility.

The report said: "The vast imbalance in public investment in agriculture must be righted, redirecting the billions now being plowed into unsustainable industrial farming in rich countries toward meeting the needs of small-scale food producers in developing countries."

"GOVERNMENTS TO BLAME

The report said the failure of the food system flowed from failures of government to regulate and to invest, which meant that companies, interest groups and elites had been able to plunder resources.

"Now the major powers, the old and the new, must cooperate, not compete, to share resources, build resilience, and tackle climate change," it said.

"The economic crisis means that we have moved decisively beyond the era of the G8, when a few rich country governments tried to craft global solutions by and for themselves.

"The governments of poorer nations must also have a seat at the table, for they are on the front lines of climate change, where many of the battles -- over land, water, and food -- are being fought."

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