

NEWSIN brief

Migrant boat sinks in Caribbean; 17 killed

AFP, Miami

Seventeen Haitian suspected illegal migrants died Wednesday when their boat capsized off the Turks and Caicos islands near the Caribbean, authorities said.

The incident occurred in the early hours of Christmas Day as the boat, which had been intercepted by police, was "being towed into dock" at Providenciales, the government of the British territory said in a statement.

Cambodian garment workers join protests

AFP, Phnom Penh

Thousands of Cambodian garment workers yesterday joined anti-government protests demanding that Prime Minister Hun Sen step down and call a new election.

The opposition had urged the textile industry's vast workforce to join its daily rallies in the capital against Hun Sen, and the workers' participation is a boost to efforts to challenge the long-ruling strongman.

Over 90 migrants rescued off Greece

AFP, Athens

The Greek coastguard has rescued more than 90 migrants sailing off the south of the country after their boat ran into trouble in bad weather, a spokeswoman said yesterday.

The boat first encountered difficulties late on Monday and the rescue operation was completed on Wednesday. All the migrants are doing well according to the coast-guard. Their nationalities have not been released.

40 civilians killed in DR Congo attack

AFP, Kinshasa

At least 40 civilians have been killed in an attack on a village in the restive east of the Democratic Republic of Congo, a non-governmental organisation said yesterday.

The attack took place in the town of Kamango before dawn, with the civil society blaming it on the Islamist Ugandan rebel group ADF-Nalu.

2 tourists found dead in Nepal hotel

AFP, Kathmandu

Two Italians tourists visiting Nepal were found dead in their hotel room, which was locked from inside, in the capital Kathmandu on Christmas Eve in unexplained circumstances, police said yesterday.

The couple arrived in Nepal on December 11 and had told the hotel owner they visited the Himalayan nation every year, the officer said.

DRONE STRIKES

Pakistan to raise issue at UNHRC

AFP, Islamabad

Pakistan yesterday said it would raise the issue of US drone strikes inside its territory at the United Nations Human Rights Council.

"We will go to the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) in Geneva if the drone strikes continue" Tasneem Aslam, the spokeswoman for the ministry of foreign affairs said in a weekly news conference.

The UN General Assembly passed a resolution on December 18 2013 calling on states using drone strikes as a counter-terrorism measure to comply with their obligations under international law and the UN Charter.

But in the latest US missile strike after the UN resolution, at least three people were killed late on Wednesday night in Miranshah in Pakistan's northwestern tribal district of North Waziristan, which borders Afghanistan.

Pakistan's foreign ministry condemned the fresh attack, terming it a violation of Pakistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Ties between the US and Pakistan have been seriously strained over US drone strikes in Pakistan's tribal belt as well as over sanctuaries for Afghan Taliban insurgents inside its borders.

But human rights groups and Pakistani politicians say the missile attacks have killed innocent civilians and are a breach of sovereignty.

President Barack Obama has defended the drone strikes as an effective, lawful tool used with restraint to target



A Shinto priest, right, leads Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, centre, as he visits the controversial Yasukuni war shrine in Tokyo, yesterday, in a move Beijing condemned as "absolutely unacceptable". Abe described his visit as a pledge against war but triggered a strong response from China and South Korea, both victims of Japan's 20th century aggression. The shrine is believed to be the repository of around 2.5 million souls of Japan's war dead, including several high-level officials executed for war crimes after World War II.

PHOTO: AFP

SRI LANKA CIVIL WAR

Tamil council to tally deaths

AFP, Colombo

The provincial government in Sri Lanka's main Tamil region said yesterday it would compile its own death toll from the country's ethnic war, saying an ongoing census would play down the number of casualties.

Tamil officials said the census ordered by President Mahinda Rajapakse last month would give a distorted picture because of its "flawed" terms of reference, arguing that a more credible alternative was needed.

Sri Lanka has repeatedly rejected allegations that its troops killed civilians while battling the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in 2009, who were also accused of using civilians as a human shield.

The provincial council says it needs comprehensive casualty figures to provide social services to all victims.

Pleas for peace amid fear of civil war

AFP, Juba

Heavy fighting was raging in South Sudan's key oil-producing north yesterday, officials said, although neighbours Kenya and Ethiopia said they had made "good progress" in efforts to broker an end to the civil war.

Fears that a new civil war could erupt in South Sudan drove leaders of two neighboring African countries into its capital yesterday. Army spokesman Philip Aguer said troops loyal to President Salva Kiir were battling forces allied to former vice president Riek Machar inside the town of Malakal, capital of Upper Nile state.

He also said troops were preparing an offensive against Bentiu, the main town in oil-rich Unity State, to follow on from their recapture of Bor, another state capital that had fallen into rebel hands during the nearly two weeks of clashes in the world's youngest nation.

The violence in South Sudan, a fledgling oil producer which won independence from Sudan just two years ago, has left thousands dead, according to the United Nations.

Ten of thousands of civilians have also sought protection at UN bases amid a wave of ethnic violence pitting members of Kiir's Dinka tribe against Machar's Nuer.

The UN Security Council voted Tuesday

to send nearly 6,000 extra soldiers and police to South Sudan, nearly doubling the UNMISS force to 12,500 troops and 1,323 civilian police.

Amid reports of bodies piled in mass graves and witness testimonies of massacres and summary executions and rapes, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has promised those responsible would be "held accountable".

The UN said aid agencies need \$166 million (121 million euros) over the next three months to distribute food, manage camps for the displaced and provide health and sanitation.

Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta and Ethiopia's Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn flew into Juba on Thursday for talks with President Kiir, the latest in a line of peace brokers who have flown in since the fighting began on December 15.

The fighting started after Kiir accused Machar of attempting a coup. Machar denied this, and said the president was exploiting a clash between members of the army as a pretext to carry out a purge.

Although Kiir and Machar -- a former vice president who was sacked in July -- have said they are open to peace talks, fighting has spread to half of the country's 10 states.

SOUTH SUDAN



A Greenpeace International activist jumps holding his passport with a Russian transit visa in St Petersburg, yesterday. Russia yesterday started issuing visas to the foreign crew of a Greenpeace protest ship and dropped the criminal case against the last member of the 30-strong team.

PHOTO: AFP

Cell-phone ban for unwed girls in India!

IANs, Patna

A village council in Bihar has banned the use of mobile phones by unmarried girls, said a council member on Wednesday.

The decision was taken on Tuesday evening at a meeting of Somgarh panchayat (council) in West Champaran district.

The panchayat also threatened to impose heavy fine on the girls' families if they violated the diktat, said Zakir Ansari, husband of the village council head.

"Decision was taken with approval of hundreds of villagers," said Ansari who works as the de facto head.

He said all families have been told to ensure that the decision is not violated.

However, Bihar Panchayati Raj Minister Bhim Singh said that a panchayat has no right to impose ban on the use of mobile phones by girls or prevent them from keeping mobile phones.

Arafat died of natural causes

AFP, Moscow

Yasser Arafat died of natural causes, not radiation poisoning, Russian scientists who examined his remains said yesterday, but their findings were dismissed by Swiss experts as politically motivated.

The conclusions into the Palestinian leader's 2004 death dovetail with the findings of French investigators but differ from those of Swiss radiation experts who maintain he could have been poisoned.

"We have completed all the studies," Vladimir Uiba, head of Russia's Federal Medical-Biological Agency, told reporters.

"The person died a natural death and not from radiation."

The Palestinians have long suspected that Arafat was poisoned, with some pointing the finger directly at Israel.

Uiba said that his agency had not received any requests from the Palestinians to conduct a repeat examination.

"We've completed an expert evaluation, and everyone agreed with us. Moreover, even the Swiss withdrew their statements and agreed, and the French confirmed our conclusions," Uiba told reporters in comments confirmed by his spokesman.

The director of the Lausanne Radiophysics Institute who examined the samples of Arafat's remains, immediately

took issue with Uiba's statement, saying the position of the Swiss experts had remained the same.

"Our point of view has not changed, that's for sure," said Francois Bochud, criticising the Russian experts for not releasing their report.

"The Russians, they make claims without providing any data, without providing any scientific arguments, for me that is empty, a political declaration."

Bochud said the Swiss had not received a copy of the Russian study, and that Palestinian officials who had seen it said the results were similar to the Swiss data.

"But to claim the opposite with same data seems to be really fallacious," he said.

Bochud co-authored a report released in November

that found high levels of polonium, up to 20 times the normal level, were found in samples taken from Arafat's body. The report said the findings were consistent with radioactive poisoning without saying conclusively Arafat's death was due to the polonium.

Alexander Vlasov, the spokesman for the Federal Medical-Biological Agency, told AFP the Russian experts had been tasked by the foreign ministry to carry out the investigation for the Palestinian authorities.

He said it was up to the Palestinians to publish the report.



Bakhkrabad Gas Distribution Company Limited

(A Company of Petrobangla)
Comilla, Bangladesh

জালানি নিরাপত্তা সর্বোচ্চ অগ্রাধিকার

শিল্পে প্রাকৃতিক গ্যাস ও গৃহস্থালীতে বিকল্প জ্বালানি

Ref. No. 28.02.1900.011.53.432.13

Dated: 10.12.2013

Invitation for International Tender

01.	Ministry/Division	:	Ministry of Power, Energy & Mineral Resources/ Energy & Mineral Resources Division.
02.	Agency	:	Petrobangla.
03.	Procuring entity name	:	Bakhkrabad Gas Distribution Company Limited.
04.	Procuring entity district	:	Comilla, Bangladesh.
05.	Invitation for	:	Procurement of Calibration equipment (Lot 1): Chart Recorder, Planimeter, Chart Papers & Pens (Lot 2).
06.	Invitation Ref. No.	:	28.02.1900.011.53.432.13
07.	Date	:	10.12.2013

KEY INFORMATION			
08.	Procurement method	:	Open tendering method.
09.	Budget and source of funds	:	BGDCL's Own Fund, Cash Foreign Exchange.
10.	Time limit to selling tender document	:	From 22-12-2013 to 09-02-2014 during office hours.
11.	Tender last selling date	:	09.02.2014
	Date	:	Time
12.	Tender receiving date & time	:	10.02.2014 12-00 noon.
13.	Tender opening date & time	:	10.02.2014 12-15pm.
14.	Name & address of the office(s) - Selling tender documents	:	Tender documents will be available in the following offices of BGDCL during office hours: a) Accounts Department, Head Office, Chapapur, Comilla, Bangladesh. b) Dhaka Liaison Office, House No. 222, Lane No. 15, Lake Road, New DOHS, Mohakhali, Dhaka-1206, Bangladesh.
15.	Receiving tender documents	:	Purchase Department, Bakhkrabad Gas Distribution Company Limited, Head Office, Chapapur, Comilla, Bangladesh.
16.	Opening tender documents	:	Purchase Department, Bakhkrabad Gas Distribution Company Limited, Head Office, Chapapur, Comilla, Bangladesh.

INFORMATION FOR TENDERER			
17.	Eligibility of tenderer	:	All bonafide manufacturer(s)/suppliers are eligible. But they must have overseas Track Records/Experience in supply of Calibration equipment (Lot-1); Chart Recorder, Planimeter, Chart Papers & Pens (Lot: 2) for at least 05 (five) years and related evidences must be submitted along with the bid(s).
18.	Brief description of goods or works	:	Calibration equipment (Lot 1); Chart Recorder, Planimeter, Chart Papers & Pens (Lot 2).
19.	Price of tender document	:	US\$ 50.00 or Tk. 4,000.00 (non-refundable).
20.	Lot No.	:	Identification of lot
	1	:	Calibration equipment US\$ 2,500.00 or Tk. 1,95,000.00
	2	:	Chart Recorder, Planimeter, Chart Papers & Pens US\$ 1,000.00 or Tk. 78,000.00
Lot 1 + Lot 2 = US\$ 3,500.00 or Tk. 2,73,000.00			

PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS:			
21.	Name & designation of official inviting tender	:	Nurul Huda Deputy General Manager (Purchase).
22.	Contact details of official inviting tender	:	Deputy General Manager (Purchase) Bakhkrabad Gas Distribution Company Limited, Chapapur, Comilla, Bangladesh. Tel: +880-81-68681, E-mail: dgm_purchase@bgdcl.org.bd
23.	Special instructions	:	(a) Tenderers have the option to quote either single lot or both lots. b) Local tenderers are not eligible to participate in this tender. But this will not bar anybody to work as local agent of foreign manufacturer/supplier. c) Should the submission date of tender happen to fall on holiday, tenders shall be received and opened at the same time & place on the first subsequent working day. d) BGDCL reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

BG/1176, December 2013

GD-4961

Time Extension for Tender Notices:

- Interior, Exterior Decoration & Furniture Works of proposed Modhukhali Branch, Sherpur Branch, Nawabpur SME Branch and Retail Value Center & Prime Elegance.
- Construction of Lift Core and Supply & Installation of Lift.

Tender Notice of Sl#1 was published in the "Prothom Alo" and "The Daily Star" on 15.12.2013.
Tender Notice of Sl#2 was published in the "Daily Kaler Kantho" and "The Daily Star" on 07.12.2013.
In both cases, the following time extension will be applicable.

Sl.	Name of Tender	Sale of tender Schedule		Pre-bid Meeting Schedule	Last date of Submission
		From	To		
1.	Interior & Exterior Decoration and Furniture works for proposed branches/divisions.	15.12.2013	09.01.2014	07.01.2014 at 11:00 AM	09.01.2014
2.	Construction of Lift Core and Supply & Installation Lift at our Gulshan Br., Dhaka.	15.12.2013	09.01.2014	07.01.2014 at 12:30 PM	09.01.2014

Sd/-
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