

NEWS IN brief

Pak Taliban suspend ceasefire

REUTERS, Peshawar
The Pakistani Taliban have not extended a month-long ceasefire but are still open to pursuing peace talks with the Islamabad government, a spokesman for the insurgent movement said Wednesday. Shahidullah Shahid said some Taliban leaders had objected to extending the ceasefire, which lasted during the month of March. The Pakistani Taliban and the Islamabad government are now involved in their second round of peace talks.

Turkey lifts controversial Twitter ban

AFP, Ankara
Turkey's government lifted a controversial ban on Twitter yesterday, a day after the country's top court said the ban breached the right to free speech. Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan had ordered the block on March 20 in the lead-up to key local elections last Sunday, in which his party chalked up sweeping wins despite damaging leaks on Twitter and other social media claiming widespread graft.

Japan cancels Antarctic whaling hunt

AFP, Tokyo
Japan is cancelling its next Antarctic whaling hunt for the first time in more than 25 years, an official said yesterday, just days after the UN's International Court of Justice ordered an end to the controversial practice. On Monday, the Hague-based ICJ issued a landmark ruling that found the Antarctic programme illegal.

US court removes campaign donations cap

AFP, Washington
The US Supreme Court on Wednesday removed the overall limit on contributions a donor can make to political candidates, a move which critics say could give rich individuals unfair influence over elections. The move was immediately hailed by Republicans, who are gearing up to challenge President Barack Obama's Democratic supporters for control of the Senate in November mid-term elections.



PHOTO: AFP
People walk along a cracked road in Iquique, northern Chile on Wednesday, a day after a powerful 8.2-magnitude earthquake hit off Chile's Pacific coast. A powerful aftershock measuring 7.6 rocked northern Chile late Wednesday, sparking a new tsunami warning and sending thousands of people fleeing for higher ground a day after the deadly tremor killed six people.

Choose between war and peace

Says Kerry as Israel scraps prisoner release plan

AFP, Algiers

US Secretary of State John Kerry yesterday demanded action from recalcitrant Israeli and Palestinian leaders, saying negotiations were at a "critical moment" and they had to choose whether to make peace.

Negotiating teams in Jerusalem made progress in overnight talks that stretched until 4:00am, but "there is still a gap and that gap needs to close fairly soon," Kerry said in Algiers at the start of a trip to North Africa.

"You can facilitate, you can push, you can nudge, but the parties themselves have to make fundamental decisions to compromise," Kerry said.

"There's an old saying, 'You can lead a horse to water but you can't make it drink,'" Kerry said at the Algerian foreign ministry.

"Now's the time to drink; the leaders need to know that." Meanwhile, Israel has called off a planned release of Palestinian prisoners meant to advance peacemaking and called for the US-sponsored negotiations to be reviewed, an official briefed on the talks said yesterday.

The official, who declined to be identified, said Israeli negotiators had informed their Palestinian counterparts of the decision in an overnight meeting held in an effort to avert a collapse of the troubled talks.

Earlier, The Palestinians, infuriated by Israel's refusal to release some 26 Palestinian prisoners by a weekend deadline, announced out of the blue that they were planning to take their claim for statehood to 15 agencies.

And Israel, having already broken the terms of a July deal to return to the negotiating table, unveiled tenders for 700 more homes in east Jerusalem.



Four killed at US base shooting

AFP, Los Angeles

A soldier with "mental health issues" killed three people and wounded 16 before turning the gun on himself Wednesday at Fort Hood, the US military base devastated by a deadly 2009 shooting rampage.

Base commander Lieutenant General Mark Milley said the gunman, who served in Iraq in 2011, was being treated for depression and anxiety, and being checked for possible Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

All of the dead and wounded were military personnel. At least four of those injured were hospitalized in critical condition.

"At this time, there is no indication that this incident is related to terrorism, although we are not ruling anything out," Milley told reporters at the sprawling US army installation in Texas.

The US army base remained on lockdown for a couple of hours after staff were ordered to shelter in place, but personnel and family members were later given the all-clear.

Musharraf survives assassination bid

AFP, Islamabad

Pakistan's former military ruler Pervez Musharraf, who is on trial for treason, narrowly escaped what police called an assassination attempt as a roadside bomb went off shortly before his convoy was due to pass early yesterday.

The bomb was planted on Musharraf's route from an army hospital in Rawalpindi, where he has been staying since January, to his home on the outskirts of Islamabad. It went off at around 2:00 am (2100 GMT Wednesday).

Nobody was injured and there have so far been no claims of responsibility.

"Four kilograms (nine pounds) of explosive device planted in a pipeline under a bridge exploded around 20 minutes before the former president was supposed to cross the spot," police said.

Niazi said Musharraf was then taken home via an alternative route. Musharraf, who led Pakistan from 1999 to 2008, returned from self-imposed exile in March last year to fight in general elections, but was barred from taking part and has faced a barrage of legal cases including treason. It was the fourth apparent attempt on the ex-general's life, with the first three occurring while he was in office.

Some commentators in the domestic media said those explosives may have been planted by insiders in order to exaggerate the threat to Musharraf's life and expedite his safe passage out of the country through a behind-the-scenes deal.



Morning light secret to healthy weight!

AFP, Washington

Being slimmer could be as simple as waking up early for some morning sunshine, US researchers suggested on Wednesday.

A small study of 54 volunteers showed that the leanest ones did not necessarily eat better or exercise more than the rest. They simply were exposed to more bright daylight earlier in the day.

The findings by Northwestern University researchers are published in the journal PLOS ONE.

"The earlier this light exposure occurred during the day, the lower individuals' body mass index," said co-lead author Kathryn Reid, research associate professor of neurology at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine.

The study found morning light accounted for about 20 percent of a person's body mass index (BMI).

"The message is that you should get more bright light between 8 am and noon," she added.

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT



United Nations Development Programme in Bangladesh announces a vacancy for the position of **National Consultant (Education) - First Phase of Policy Review of Functional Assignment to Local Governments (Union Parishad and Upazila level) in the delivery of health and education services** (Short term National Consultant) through Individual Contract modality under UPGP & UZGP.

For the details job description and instructions to apply for the position, please visit our website: http://jobs-admin.undp.org/cj_view_job.cfm?job_id=45433

Application should be submitted by no later than **16 April, 2014**.

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted. Female candidates are encouraged to apply.

VACANCY NOTICE



United Nations Development Programme in Bangladesh announces a vacancy for the post of **Communications Associate** (1 position, SB-3 level) under Service Contract modality.

The duration of the service contract is one year initially, subject to renewal on an annual basis upon satisfactory performance and availability of funds.

For details of the Job Description and instructions to apply, please visit our website: <http://www.undp.org.bd/jobs>. Applications should be received no later than **Thursday, 17 April, 2014**.

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted. Female candidates are particularly encouraged to apply.

Request for Proposal (RFP)

HR Outsourcing for NESS Module Development
Reference: RFP-BD-2014-015



United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Bangladesh seeks Proposals from interested Companies for Hiring Consultancy Firm to HR Outsourcing for NESS Module Development.

All interested companies may download the Bidding documents (RFP) from <http://www.bd.undp.org/content/bangladesh/en/home/operations/procurement/>

Submission of Proposal: The envelope should state the tender subject mentioned above and the Proposals must be submitted as per the instructions specified in the RFP document by the deadline mentioned below to the **Registry, UNDP Bangladesh**, IDB Bhaban (12th Floor), Begum Rokeya Sharani, Agargaon, Dhaka-1207.

The deadline for submission of Proposals is **Tuesday, 22 April, 2014, 4:30 p.m.** Local time.

TRAINING ON RESEARCH METHODS AND IMPACT ANALYSIS



A training program for practitioners and researchers

The Institute of Microfinance (InM), a leading research and training Institute of Bangladesh in the field of microfinance, poverty alleviation and development regularly organizes customized training programs for development practitioners and sector stakeholders.

Objective of the Training

Upon completion, the successful participants will be able to use the tools and techniques of research methodology and apply various instruments for gathering data for quantitative and qualitative research methods. They will be in a position to conduct impact analysis with sound methodology and/or to evaluate impact reports.

Course Content

- Concept and Logic of Social Research
- Defining Data
- Quantitative Data Collection Techniques
- Data Management
- Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis
- Quantitative Data Analysis
- Impact Analysis



Payment of course fee can be made in cheque or bank draft drawn on "INSTITUTE OF MICROFINANCE". *Partial waiver may be given to deserving individual applicants.*

Training Schedule

- May 11 – May 29, 2014.
- 45-hour training program
- Five classes (3 hours) per week
- From 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Training Venue

InM Training Centre
House: 30, Road: 03, Block: C
Monsurabad R/A, Adabor
Shamoli, Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh

Admission Procedure

Total number of participants will be 25 for the course and they will be selected on "First Come First Serve" basis.

Course Fee

- Tk. 25,000/= (Twenty Five thousand only)

Certification

On successful completion of the course, participants will be awarded a **Certificate** by the Institute of Microfinance (InM).

Institute of Microfinance (InM)

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