

THE NEWS

Monday

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Two hurt as gunmen attack tourist bus in Delhi

NEW DELHI: Gunmen on a motorbike opened fire with an automatic pistol on a tourist bus outside New Delhi's Jama Masjid on Sunday, injuring two Taiwanese tourists, police said.

The attack came just a fortnight before the start of the Commonwealth Games, when 7,000 foreign athletes and officials are expected in the Indian capital amid ongoing concerns about security from participating nations.

Witnesses said two men wearing raincoats and helmets arrived on a motorcycle outside the mosque, with the passenger opening fire first at the mosque and then at the tourist minibus as passengers disembarked.

"According to our preliminary investigation, they (the gunmen) finished off an entire magazine of their sten gun," assistant police commissioner Jagbir Singh told AFP, referring to an automatic pistol.

One of the victims suffered a serious stomach wound, said Amit Banerjee, head of Lok Narayan Jay Prakash Hospital where the tourists have been transferred. The other has a superficial head wound that is not life-threatening, he said.

The incident in the ancient walled city, a top tourist attraction for visitors, happened as a series of security drills were under way in New Delhi on Sunday, with a beefed-up security presence on many of the capital's main roads.

Indian officials have been forced to defend security arrangements in the city ahead of the October 3-14 Commonwealth Games, a multi-sport event that brings together athletes from

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Iran, Pentagon deny seizing of US troops

TEHRAN/WASHINGTON: Pentagon denied reports on Sunday that US troops entered Iranian territory, moments after officials in Tehran dismissed reports that its security forces seized seven US troops near the border with Pakistan.

"We have no missing soldiers. All accounted for," Pentagon press secretary Geoff Morrell said in an email, rejecting an Iranian website report as "false", which claimed that seven US forces "who intended to enter Iranian territory at the Kuhak border area near Saravan were identified and arrested by border patrols".

Javanonline.ir, which is close to the elite Revolutionary Guards, later retracted the news and "apologised" to its readers, while Tehran-based Al-Alam television and Press TV reported Iranian officials in the region as well border patrol services had denied the arrest.

"No American troops have been arrested. We deny it," Ali Mohammad Azad, the governor general of Iran's Sistan-Baluchistan province, told the Arabic language Al-Alam network.

Iran's English-language Press TV said the Revolutionary Guards also rejected the reports. —Agencies



NEW DELHI: Indian police guard the area around gate number three of the Jama Masjid after foreign tourists were attacked by unknown gunmen here on Sunday.—AFP wirephoto

Lib Dem leaders criticised for backing Tory policies

LONDON: Liberal Democrats turned on the party's leadership on Sunday, with one senior peer accusing Nick Clegg and government ministers of causing "dismay" among supporters about the way Tory policies were being enthusiastically promoted.

During a session of public soul searching about the coalition deal and future strategy at the Lib Dem conference in Liverpool one of the city's councillors criticised ministers for talking about spending cuts with "relish".

One former MP said the party leadership were so "terrified" of stories highlighting splits in the coalition they were endorsing policies which came from the Tories and failing to promote Lib Dem achievements in government.

Senior peer Lord Greaves said: "I see Liberal Democrat spokespeople going on television and in

the Press defending in detail policies that I know to be Tory policies that this party does not agree with, which are against party policy and which will not be party policy at the next general election.

"I look at this and I see the glee that this is causing amongst our enemies, amongst the cynics in the media. I see the confusion it's causing our members in many places and the dismay it's causing amongst people who vote for us. The way in which coalition policy, when it is not Liberal Democrat policy, is being presented has got to change."

He called for new rules to replace the convention of collective responsibility in government decision-making to help Lib Dem ministers set out their own policies.

Paula Keaveney, who represents Cressington on Liverpool City Council, called on the party's

leadership to recognise it was hard to remain distinctive if they sound like "mini-me Conservatives". "I've got to say, as someone who felt very awkward about the coalition, very difficult about working with the Conservatives, I would find it a lot easier to take if some of the announcements about necessary cuts weren't made by our politicians with quite so much relish."

David Rendel, former MP for Newbury, said the leadership "seem terrified of the tabloid stories that they might get about splits in the coalition...so terrified that they pretend that every coalition policy is agreed on both sides."

"The result is that people who are normally not our supporters get a very misleading idea about what our policies and ideas are."

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'Police hunting two killers of Imran Farooq'

News Desk

LONDON: Detectives probing the murder of Muttahida Qami Movement leader Dr Imran Farooq are looking for at least two killers, Daily Mirror reported on Sunday, as police issued an appeal, seeking assistance in the investigation.

Dr Farooq, 50, was stabbed repeatedly before being bludgeoned over the head with bricks in North London. Officers from Scotland Yard's Counter Terrorism Command have taken on the murder case due to a possible political motive.

A poster issued by the police said Dr Imran Farooq was found suffering stab wounds and head injuries outside his home, shortly before 5:30pm, Thursday. Dr Farooq was on his way home from work when he was attacked, it

added. "Police are urgently seeking witnesses following a murder in Green Lane, Edgware, on Thursday, 16th September 2010," said the poster. "Did you see or hear anything? Did you see any vehicles arriving or leaving? Were you in the area of Green Lane at the time?" asked the police in the poster.

Anyone with information has been asked to contact on 020 8721 3784 or those who wish to remain anonymous may phone Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Dr Farooq was a leading member of the MQM and fled to the UK in 1999, claiming asylum. He claimed that there was a bounty on his head and he was wanted "dead or alive" by Pakistani authorities for criminal and terrorist activities.

3 protesters, woman killed in held Kashmir

HELD SRINAGAR: Three more protesters and a female bystander died on Sunday in occupied Kashmir, sparking further rallies against rule from New Delhi and the tactics of security forces.

The deaths come ahead of a visit by a high-level political delegation, headed by Home Minister P Chidambaram, that is set to arrive in the region on Monday.

The 22-year-old woman died in Sopore when paramilitary forces opened fire, said a police officer. Her elder brother told AFP that she was not part of a protest and was in her garden when she was shot.

Three protesters also died after being injured last week in clashes with Indian forces.

Hundreds poured onto the streets on Sunday, holding anti-India

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Babar describes Punjab as 'police state'

News Desk

RAWALPINDI: Federal Minister for Law and Justice Babar Awan on Sunday called Punjab administrators as "illegal" and said whatever they do would also be considered unlawful.

Addressing a programme of former nazims and naib nazims and later talking to the media, the federal law minister said Punjab was giving an impression of a 'police state'.

"Those who entered the power politics from backdoor have already fled; whereas, those looking for a secret exit have become politically bankrupt," he noted. He challenged Pakistan Muslim League chief Nawaz Sharif to muster some 'moral courage' and enter parliament. "A horse and arena is awaiting him," he added.

Awan suggested that anything worth discussing be put forth through parliament. He said the year for a change is 2013 when people would re-elect the Pakistan Peoples Party for another term.

People have been pinning high hopes on parliament whose both houses would be meeting on Monday during which three bills,

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UN gathers new pledges for \$2bn Pak appeal

Norway triples assistance for flood victims; Clegg unveils major aid boost

UNITED NATIONS: The United Nations gathered new aid pledges for the Pakistan flood disaster on Sunday after making a record \$2 billion appeal to feed millions of victims.

Twenty-five top ministers, including US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, gathered in New York ahead of the UN summit this week, to discuss the new crisis in Pakistan. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has called the floods "the worst natural disaster the United Nations has responded to in its 65-year history."

The UN secretary general and Pakistan Foreign Minister Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi will co-chair Sunday's meeting at the UN headquarters. French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner and Britain's International Development Minister Andrew Mitchell will also be present.

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Drone kills five militants in North Waziristan

News Desk

PESHAWAR: A US missile strike killed five suspected militants while scores of others were killed in clashes in northwestern tribal areas near the Afghan border on Sunday.

Intelligence officials said a US drone fired four missiles targeting a vehicle and a hideout for militants linked to al-Qaeda and the Taliban in the 14th such attack this month - the most intense barrage since the strikes began in 2004—killing at least five militants.

The officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the house belonged to a local militant and was located in Dehgan, a village in the Datta Khel, a town in the North Waziristan Agency.

A security official in Peshawar confirmed the attack and toll, and

added: "The nationalities of the militants killed were not immediately known."

In the ongoing deadly feud between Bangash and Turi tribes in the Kurram Agency, at least 40 tribesmen were killed and several others injured when Taliban militants, belonging to the Haqqani group, stormed a remote village 10 kilometres from Parachinar on Sunday.

The death toll is expected to rise further as many of the injured are said to be in critical condition. A senior government official said that the Taliban militants also set parts of the Kurram tribal region's main town, Khaiwat, on fire.

The 40 tribesmen were killed "while the whole village was set on fire by the militants", the official

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Flawed outlets hinder flood outflow

News Desk

DADU: Manchhar lake water on Sunday was putting pressure on the lake embankment from Zero Point to Boobak in the Indus link canal, as the three artificial outlets failed to increase lake water outflow into the Indus River.

According to the Sindh Irrigation Department, Larkana-Sehwan (LS) bund was breached at three points near Karampur to reduce water level in the lake. However, a nominal quantity of water was flowing out as the breaches

were made at flawed locations and lacked proper engineering work.

As a result, Bhan Saeedabad's defence line was facing sustained water pressure and efforts were afoot to prevent further inundation. Sehwan Taluka's (sub-district) Boobak, Arazi and Bukhtiarpur towns were still water-locked and their ground links remained cut-off for the third consecutive day.

At least 1,500 flood victims have been relocated from various areas of Boobak to army camps

set up in Sehwan. The floodwater receded a little in Khairpur Nathan Shah and people have started returning to their homes in Mehar and Khairpur.

Earlier, the water level in Manchhar Lake, situated near Dadu on the Right Bank Canal, reached an alarmingly high level and exceeded the lake capacity of 121 RL (reduced level). The gauge of water level measurement had also submerged due to overflow. The floodwater in the lake had spread to a range of 150 nautical miles.

Floods leave a long trail to walk

By KB Arbab

KARACHI: Floods after battering the country for over a month are finally receding and survivors have started returning to their homes, but many have no place to restart a life deeply wounded by the losses of life-time toils.

As millions of souls embark on a new journey to rebuild their homes from the ruins, relief workers believe the rehabilitation phase is much more difficult compared to saving them from inundation when the massive flood torrents headed south in the month of August.

Heavy monsoon rains started to hit Pakistan from July 22. After several days of torrential rains, rivers in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa breached their banks, flooding riverine areas. A week later, the water ravaged Punjab, but the

worst yet came when the catastrophe enveloped in one package—the mighty Indus River—and hit Sindh in the first week of August.

An estimated 21 million people were affected and more than 1.9 million homes were destroyed or damaged when 62,000 square miles of Pakistan came under water. Initial estimates suggest more than 3.4 million hectares of crops and at least 200,000 pieces of livestock were also lost in the way.

"The catastrophe is much worse than these figures," said Abdul Sattar Ishaqani, the president of the Nishat Welfare Organisation (NWO), one of the many NGOs participating in flood relief activities in upper and central Sindh.

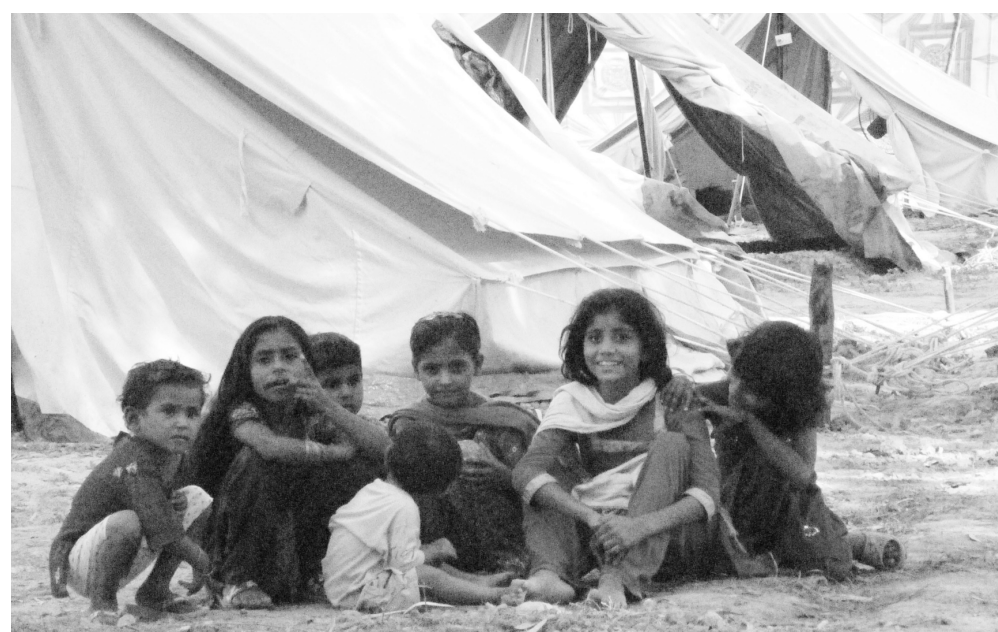
He said water still holds sway in vast areas and the flood is yet to be over. "In fact, it will take

some six months for the earth to dry and all the flooded areas to get fully accessible. Only then, we would know exactly what has happened."

The NWO was among the first NGOs to engage in relief activities when the floods entered Sindh. It established five relief camps for those rescued from inundated or vulnerable areas and provided them food and shelter, besides medical facilities.

"We also took care of those who chose to stay behind in the flooded areas to secure their properties or for other reasons. We regularly went—and in some parts are still going—into the flooded areas to provide them ration supplies, said Nisar Soomro, the general secretary of the organisation.

Speaking at the NWO offices in Hyderabad, both Ishaqani and Soomro agreed that starting a new



QAZI AHMAD: Flood-affected children sit outside their tents at a relief camp set up here.

life for the flood victims after returning to their ruined homes would be very, very difficult as in many cases people had lost everything—literally.

Their views were fully endorsed by Syed Muhammad Shah, a former provincial lawmaker from the Dadu district. He fears the law and order situation might deteriorate in Sindh, when the returning people would find no place to live, no land to cultivate and all their savings washed away.

Ishaqani suggests a holistic approach and new ideas to alleviate the sufferings of these people. He says that relief camps at major conurbations had swelled beyond expectations and at places were quite unmanageable. "I would say, shift the tentages to the victims' home villages," he said, adding

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