



HEAVY RAINS WREAK HAVOC IN MANILA

PHOTO BY AARON FAVILA / ASSOCIATED PRESS

A man carries a girl on his shoulders as he crosses a flooded area in Quezon City, north of Manila, Philippines, on Tuesday. Relentless rains submerged half of the sprawling Philippine capital, triggered a landslide that killed nine people and sent emergency crews scrambling on Tuesday to rescue and evacuate tens of thousands of residents.

briefly

NIGERIA

Gunmen kill 19 in attack on church

Gunmen have opened fire on an evangelical church during a service in central Nigeria, killing the pastor and at least 18 worshippers while injuring several others, officials said on Tuesday.

The radical Islamist group Boko Haram, responsible for hundreds of deaths across north and central Nigeria this year, have repeatedly targeted Christians during worship in a series of gun and suicide bomb attacks.

Kogi state, southwest of the capital Abuja and the scene of the latest violence, has not been hit particularly hard by the Islamists, although members of the group are believed to have come from the ethnically diverse area.

AUSTRALIA

Art critic Robert Hughes dies at 74

Influential Australian art critic, historian and writer Robert Hughes has died at the age of 74 in New York after a long illness, his family said on Tuesday.

Hughes, whom the New York Times once proclaimed the world's most famous art critic, passed away at the Calvary Hospital in the Bronx on Monday.

"He had been very ill for some time," said a statement from his wife Doris Downes, who was with him when he died, without giving further details.

JAPAN

Military drill to start with US, ROK

The United States, Japan and the Republic of Korea will conduct a two-day joint drill from Aug 8 in the waters near Hawaii. Japan's Maritime Self-Defense Force announced on Tuesday according to Kyodo News.

Two destroyers will be mobilized in the drill, and Japan will also work with naval forces with the US and ROK to carry out on-site inspection and search and rescue training.

Japanese naval force said it would keep active in participating in joint drills with its allies.

In June, the three nations also had a two-day joint drill in the waters south of the Korean Peninsula, raising concerns over regional stability.

DPRK

Red Cross to hold talks with Japan

The Red Cross of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will hold talks with its Japanese counterpart later this week, Yonhap News said the nation's state news media reported on Tuesday.

The meeting is likely to touch upon the issue of repatriating remains of Japanese people who died in the DPRK.

"Talks between the DPRK Red Cross Society and Japan Red Cross Society will be held in Beijing, China on Aug 9 and 10," the DPRK Central News Agency said in a brief dispatch.

NEW ZEALAND

Long-dormant volcano erupts

A volcano quiet for more than a century erupted in a New Zealand national park, spreading thick ash for several kilometers and causing some residents to evacuate their homes. Some domestic flights were canceled on Tuesday.

Mount Tongariro spewed ash and rocks for about 30 minutes late on Monday night after a few weeks of increased seismic activity. It didn't cause any injuries or damage in the sparsely populated central North Island region.

Tongariro National Park has three active volcanoes, is a popular tourist destination and was the backdrop for many scenes in the *Lord of the Rings* movies.

MALAYSIA

Girl, 3, killed in exorcism ritual

A 3-year-old Malaysian girl was killed in a suspected exorcism ritual by family members who believed she was possessed by evil spirits, police said on Tuesday.

Police raided a house in northern Penang state late on Sunday after receiving a distress call from a family member and found a group of eight people lying on top of the girl in a bedroom, said district police chief Azman Abdul Lah.

The girl was face down under the human pile, which comprised her parents, grandmother, uncle, aunt, two cousins and their Indonesian maid, he said.

AFP-AP-CHINA DAILY

Syria's Assad receives top Iranian envoy

By AGENCIES
in Damascus and Aleppo, Syria

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad held unannounced talks with a top envoy from closest ally Iran on Tuesday, as his troops engaged rebels in fierce fighting in key battleground city Aleppo, and Syrian rebels said they were running low on ammunition because Assad's troops encircled their stronghold at the southern entrance to the country's biggest city.

Iran, which has voiced growing criticism of support by the United States, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Qatar for the rebels fighting Assad's forces, also sent its foreign minister to Ankara and a stern letter to Washington holding them responsible for the fate of 48 of its citizens kidnapped by the rebels.

But the rebels say they suspect the captives were troops sent to help Assad. A rebel spokesman in the Damascus area said on Monday that three of the Iranians had been killed by government shelling, and the rest would be executed if the shelling did not stop.

Saeed Jalili, a top aide to Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, went straight into a meeting with Assad on his arrival from neighboring Lebanon.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran believes in national dialogue between all domestic groups to be the solution, and believes foreign solutions are not helpful," Iran's state media quoted him as saying on arrival in Damascus.

"We hope to take an effective step in regards to this new direction."

Assad has reinforced his troops in preparation for an assault to recapture rebel-held districts of Aleppo after repelling fighters from most of Damascus.

"The Syrian army is trying to encircle us from two sides of Salaheddine," said Sheikh Tawfiq, one of the rebel commanders, referring to the southwestern neighborhood that has seen heavy fighting over the last week. Mortar fire and tank shells

exploded across the district early on Tuesday, forcing rebel fighters to take cover in crumbling buildings and rubble-strewn alleyways.

Tanks have entered parts of Salaheddine and army snipers, using the cover of heavy bombardment, deployed on rooftops, hindering rebel movements.

Another rebel commander, Abu Ali, said snipers at the main Salaheddine roundabout were preventing the rebels from bringing in reinforcements and supplies.

But rebels said they were still holding the main streets of Salaheddine that have been the front line of their clashes with Assad's forces.

PM defects

As Assad's forces battle to retake Aleppo, the president has suffered a series of setbacks including on Monday when Prime Minister Riyadh Hijab denounced the "terrorist regime" in Damascus after fleeing the country.

Opposition figures, despite setbacks in recent weeks of fighting in the two main cities Damascus and Aleppo, spoke of an extensive and long-planned operation to spirit Hijab and his large extended family across the border to Jordan.

"I announce today my defection from the killing and terrorist regime and I announce that I have joined the ranks of the freedom and dignity revolution," Hijab said in a statement read by a spokesman. He declared himself "a soldier in this blessed revolution."

But Syrian state television said on Monday that Hijab had been fired.

A spokesman for US President Barack Obama hailed Hijab's defection as a sign that the 40-year rule of Assad's family was "crumbling from within" and said he should step down.

Western leaders' repeated predictions of Assad's imminent collapse have so far proven premature, however.

REUTERS—AFP

SIX COUNTRIES THAT ALREADY HAVE NUCLEAR-POWERED SUBMARINES

UK FRANCE RUSSIA INDIA CHINA US



G.MUNRO / CHINA DAILY

India's nuclear submarine set for sea trials

By AGENCIES
in New Delhi and Beijing

India on Wednesday said its first self-built nuclear-powered submarine was set for sea trials, as it detailed billion-dollar projects to arm its navy with warships, aircraft and modern weaponry.

The indigenous 6,000-ton *INS Arihant* (Destroyer of Enemies) was unveiled in 2009 as part of a project to construct five such vessels that would be armed with nuclear-tipped missiles and torpedoes.

"*Arihant* is steadily progressing toward operationalization, and we hope to commence sea trials in the coming months," Indian navy chief Admiral Nirmal Verma told reporters.

"Our maritime and nuclear doctrine will then be aligned to ensure that our nuclear insurance comes from the sea," Verma said.

Arihant is powered by an 85-megawatt nuclear reactor and can reach 44 kilometers an hour, according to defense officials.

It will carry a 95-member crew.

The Indian navy inducted a Russian-leased nuclear submarine into service in April this year, joining China, France, the United States, Britain and Russia in the elite club of countries with nuclear-powered vessels.

Verma said 43 warships are currently under construction at local shipyards.

The first of six Franco-Spanish *Scorpene* submarines under contract will join the Indian navy in 2015 and the sixth by 2018.

The admiral said the navy was also poised to induct eight Boeing long-range maritime reconnaissance P-8I aircraft next year.

Fu Xiaoliang, an expert on South Asian studies at the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations, said the debut of *Arihant* seems like a symbolic gesture, and the submarine's power as a strategic deterrent requires further evaluation.

Media reports said the advent of *Arihant* may pose

a direct nuclear threat to Pakistan and China, yet Fu indicated that the submarine's influence currently remains in the Indian Ocean.

The submarine is equipped with non-nuclear missiles.

Russia previously decided to lease the Nerpa nuclear-powered submarine to the Indian navy in September 2011.

India paid Russia \$650 million for the 10-year lease of the submarine, which was renamed *Chakra*.

In April *Chakra* was formally included in India's navy and made India the sixth country in the world to own a nuclear-powered submarine.

The submarine was later moved to an Indian navy base to be used as a training vessel for the first Indian-built *Arihant* missile-carrier submarine.

In 2008 leasing of the then-Nerpa was postponed after a malfunction in the fire safety system killed 20 Russian sailors.

AFP—CHINA DAILY

Capital Development Authority New Era of Development

Expression of Interest Bus Rapid Transit Project Islamabad, Pakistan

Expression of Interest must be submitted before 30th August 2012

Islamabad Capital Territory, Pakistan like other developed cities of the world requires an affordable, reliable and efficient transport system for its residents. Provision of state of the art Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is the vision of Prime Minister of Pakistan. In fulfillment of the Prime Minister's vision, Capital Development Authority (CDA) is in the process of launching the much awaited Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Project for Islamabad.

A feasibility study on Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Project of Islamabad is underway with the assistance of Infrastructure Project Development Facility (IPDF) and Cities Development Initiative for Asia (CDIA), a subsidiary of Asian Development Bank (ADB).

CDA is seeking potential parties of National / International repute, whether single or jointly as consortium in extending their interest for construction, operation, development and maintenance of the Project.

The interested parties shall submit their Expression of Interest along with their corporate details, financial and technical profiles (name, contact details and profile of firm / consortium, legal status of the firm, organizational structure and nature of business operations, 5 years audited financial statements, similar nature projects undertaken, experiences and appropriate skills indicating that they qualify to provide the services) International parties / firms are encouraged to apply.

Capital Development Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all of the EOIs without assigning any reason.

For Further Details Please Contact

EOI Document is available on CDA website

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