

### Zimbabwe Opposition Targeted for Revenge



Louise Arbour

Supporters of the Movement for Democratic Change in Zimbabwe say they have been targeted for beatings and some of their homes have been burnt, UPI reported.

Louise Arbour, the UN high commissioner for human rights, said Sunday the violence might make a political settlement between the MDC and President Robert Mugabe impossible. The New York Times reported. She said reports suggested most of the violence is aimed at MDC supporters in rural areas.

Jendayi Frazer, the US assistant secretary of state for African affairs, told BBC that US sanctions might be used if the violence continues.

Meanwhile, Zimbabwe's opposition Movement for Democratic Change will take its claim of victory in last month's election over President Robert Mugabe to the United Nations Security Council this week, the party said Sunday.

### Germany, US Sign Anti-Terror Pact

The United States and Germany have signed a deal allowing the two nations to share data on suspected terrorists, officials said.

The pact, which must still be approved by German lawmakers, would allow the two allies to trade information on such things as suspects' ethnic origin, religious beliefs, union membership and even their sex lives, Der Spiegel reported Sunday.

The proposed bilateral agreement has drawn criticism from union leaders in Germany.

The head of Germany's Confederation of German Trade Unions, Michael Sommer, called the agreement the height of impertinence that the government can pass on information about the union membership of German citizens to the (United States).

Under the agreement signed March 11, Germany and the United States will share personal data, fingerprints and DNA samples of people suspected of terrorism or other serious criminal activity.

### Japan PM In Trouble



Yasuo Fukuda

Calls to replace Japanese Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda are emerging in his Liberal Democratic Party, an influential ruling party lawmaker said on Monday, after the ruling bloc suffered a bruising defeat in a by-election.

But former chief cabinet minister Kaoru Yosano, whose name has been floated as a potential successor to Fukuda, told Reuters he thought the Japanese leader should soldier on and try to revive his support rates, which have dropped below 30 percent.

In a vote widely seen as a referendum on Fukuda's struggling administration, former opposition Democratic Party lawmaker Hideo Hiraoka defeated the LDP's Shigetaro Yamamoto in Yamaguchi, central Japan in Sunday's race for a vacant lower house seat, reported Reuters. Fukuda's support rate fell to 25 percent in a recent survey due mainly to doubts about his leadership in the face of a divided parliament, where the opposition controls the upper house and can delay laws.

### Nepal Parties Urged To Form Gov't

Nepal's prime minister urged political parties to explore ways to form a coalition government Monday after election results announced last week for a new governing assembly showed no party had a majority.

According to AP, Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala said it was now necessary to begin talks among the parties on forming a new government.

"The election results call for continued cooperation and unity," Koirala said in a statement issued Monday thanking voters and political parties for making the April 10 election for a Constituent Assembly successful.

The assembly is to rewrite the constitution, decide the country's future political system and govern the nation in the interim. Nepal's Maoists, who emerged the single largest party in this month's historic election, now face the hard task of convincing the opposition of their commitment to democracy if they want to forge a coalition government, Reuters reported.

The election saw voters dumping traditional parties, giving the Maoists a strong mandate for change, such as sweeping land reform to help farmers in one of the world's poorest nations.

# US Interrogators Violate Int'l Laws



The file photo shows one of the 80 Al-Qaeda and Taliban detainees (2nd l) wearing an orange jump suit surrounded by heavy security at the Guantanamo Naval Base.

The administration of President George W. Bush has told Congress that US intelligence agents trying to prevent terrorist attacks can use interrogation methods that in other circumstances might be prohibited under international law, 'The New York Times' reported on its website Saturday.

Citing unnamed officials, the newspaper said this legal interpretation of the Geneva Convention was outlined recently in letters sent to lawmakers by the Justice Department.

Last year, President Bush issued an executive order which the White House said would make the Central Intelligence Agency comply with international conventions banning harsh treatment of detainees.

The order spelled out new standards for interrogation techniques, requiring that they comply with international standards for humane treatment, but it did not identify any approved techniques, the Pioneer Press said.

It has been clear that the order preserved at least some of the latitude Bush has permitted the CIA in using harsher interrogation techniques than those permitted by the military or other agencies. But the new documents provide more details about how the administration intends to determine whether a specific technique would be legal, depending on the circumstances involved.

"The fact that an act is undertaken to prevent a threatened terrorist attack, rather than for the purpose of humiliation or abuse, would be relevant to a reasonable observer in measuring the outrageousness of the act," 'The Times' quoted Brian Benczkowski, a deputy assistant attorney general, saying in that letter.

The letters from the Justice Department to Congress were provided by the staff of Democratic Senator Ron Wyden, a member of the Senate Intelligence Committee, who sought more information from the department, the report said.

#### Justifying the Methods

Legal experts critical of the administration, noted the paper, indicated that the Justice Department seemed to be arguing that the task of preventing a terror attack could justify interrogation methods that would otherwise be illegal.

"What they are saying is that if my intent is to defend the United States rather than to humiliate you, than I have not committed an offense," Scott Silliman, a professor of national security from Duke University, was quoted by 'The Times' as saying.

The Justice Department's interpretation shows the Bush administration is contending that the boundaries should have a degree

of latitude, 'The Times' said, despite the president's order last summer which he said meant the CIA would hew to international norms on the treatment of detainees.

According to Reuters, the United States has faced heavy criticism from rights groups and some allies for its use of a simulated form of drowning known as "water boarding" during interrogations and for holding hundreds of suspected militants in a prison camp at a US naval base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

#### Classified Information

The committee had received classified briefings on the matter and Wyden had requested further information, which yielded the letters, the paper said.

A senior Justice Department official, speaking to 'The Times' on condition of anonymity, said of the classified information: "I certainly don't want to suggest that if there's a good purpose you can head off and humiliate someone."

But he said "the fact that you are doing something for a legitimate security purpose would be relevant."

"There are certainly things that can be insulating that would not raise to the level of an outrage on personal dignity," the official said.

## News in Brief

### China Train Crash Leaves 70 Dead

Seventy people were killed and 420 injured early Monday when a passenger train from Beijing careered off the rails and slammed into another train in eastern China, state media reported.

Ruling out terrorism, the official Xinhua news agency said preliminary investigations found human error was to blame, without elaborating.

The first train was traveling to Qingdao--the coastal city that will host the Olympic sailing competition in August -- when it derailed, causing a train coming in the opposite direction to leave the tracks.

Nine carriages derailed, China news service said, and the second train crashed into those still on the track.

The rail accident, the worst in China in more than a decade, happened near the city of Zibo in Shandong province, the news service said.

Xinhua reported 70 people killed in the accident, quoting officials at the rescue headquarters. It said there were no foreigners among the dead.

Pascal Boisson, 54, suffered multiple fractures to his ribs and may have another fracture in the chest, Xinhua reported, quoting Zhang Jun, head of the orthopedics department at one of Zibo's hospitals.

Other survivors recounted their experiences.



### Somali Fighters Capture Strategic Town

Islamic Courts Union (ICU) fighters have captured Jowhar town 90km north of Somali capital Mogadishu on Saturday night after the provincial administration of the region entirely pulled out, spokesman confirmed, Mareeg.com said.

The spokesman of the ICE fighter Abdi Rahin Isse said that their fighters have arrived in the town for demands from the city's residents fearing insecurity might renew in the region.

He added that they were arranging talks with the elders of the town to set up civilian soldiers for the town to maintain the security of the city. The fighters are so far reportedly present in the town.

Jowhar is the most significant of several towns the rebels have captured in recent months, highlighting the inability of the Western-backed interim government to impose its authority despite support from Ethiopian and African Union (AU) troops.

### Olympic Torch in N. Korea

After a troubled worldwide trip the Beijing Olympic torch Monday began its journey through the capital of communist North Korea, where thousands were mobilized to show support for close ally China, AFP said.

TV footage showed crowds dressed in their best clothes packing the streets of Pyongyang as the torch began its 20-kilometer (12 mile) relay route. It was the first time the Olympic flame had been carried in North Korea.

In some other cities, the relay has sparked rowdy protests against China's policies on Tibet and other issues, but North Korea clamps down sharply on any dissent and the Pyongyang leg was guaranteed to run smoothly.

Reclusive leader Kim Jong-Il was absent from the launch ceremony at the Tower of the Juche Idea--named after the impoverished state's guiding ideology of juche or self-reliance.