

## Asia



## Malaysia's Ibrahim appeals over 'affair'

Malaysian opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim requested a court to drop sodomy charges against him because of allegations that a female prosecutor had an affair with the main witness. The junior prosecutor has already been removed, but Mr Anwar says her alleged affair with the male witness is

evidence of a conspiracy against him.

Mr Anwar is accused of sodomising a former male aide, Saiful Bukhari Azlan, in 2008. He strongly denies the charge.

The trial was adjourned until 9 August.

Homosexual acts are illegal in Malaysia and Mr Anwar faces up to 20 years in prison if convicted.

Mr Anwar was imprisoned on separate sex and corruption charges in 1998, and freed on appeal in 2004.

The lawyer for the former deputy premier Mr Anwar asked the High Court to drop the sodomy charge against his client after last week's surprise twist.

A junior prosecutor was removed from the case after a leading political blog claimed she was romantically involved with Mr Saiful, 25, who has accused Mr Anwar of sodomising him.

Malaysia's attorney general made the decision saying there was no proof to support the claim of an affair, but the move would protect the credibility of the prosecution.

Neither Mr Saiful nor the woman, Farah Azlina Latif, has responded to the accusations.

"The integrity of the prosecution is compromised," said lawyer Karpal Singh.

Mr Anwar says there is insufficient evidence to prosecute him, and that the latest revelation is further proof of a conspiracy to end his career.

"It just supports our contention right from the beginning that this is all a farce, a politically motivated trial, trumped-up charges," he told reporters.

"This is an additional fact or evidence to support our case, to show the prosecution is not and cannot be impartial."

A government lawyer said the affair was only "bare allegations with no substance", and that Ms Farah was a junior member of the team, without access to important documents.

Court was adjourned until 9 August, when a judge will hear detailed arguments and rule on whether to resume the trial.

## Six children killed in Afghan bomb blast

A suicide bomber who targeted a vehicle in Afghanistan carrying a government official killed six children nearby, officials said.

District government chief Ahmadullah Nazak, who was being escorted to work in a police vehicle in Kandahar province, survived the attack.

A second blast followed, wounding two police officers.

Meanwhile, an advisor to President Hamid Karzai was injured in a separate attack in Jalalabad.

The explosion in a market in Dand district, west of Kandahar city, wounded Mr Nazak's bodyguard, who was in the car - but Mr Nazak escaped unharmed.

"I dropped down. Then I heard a second explosion," Mr Nazak said. "It hit our car, but it didn't injure me."

Officials said six children had died in the blast.

The second bomb exploded after police arrived at the scene and injured two officers, according to district criminal investigations chief Mohammad Hussain.

No group has so far said it

carried out the attack, but correspondents say it fits the pattern of Taliban attacks targeting southern Afghan officials. Kandahar is at the centre of Nato's plans to end nearly nine years of insurgency.

Later, in Jalalabad city's second district, a bomber targeted the vehicle of Wahidullah Sabaoun, President Karzai's adviser on tribal affairs.

Mr Sabaoun, another tribal elder, and seven other people were injured. Hospital officials said Mr Sabaoun's life was not in danger, but that three others were in a critical condition.

Security officials in the eastern province of Nangarhar told the BBC that explosives packed in a rickshaw had gone off close to a busy school.

On Sunday, six Afghan civilians died when the minibus they were travelling in struck a roadside bomb in Kandahar.

The Taliban have stepped up their attacks since last year. In December US President Barack Obama ordered 30,000 reinforcements to Afghanistan.

## Over 1500 dead in Pakistan's 'worst ever' floods

### FROM FRONT PAGE

"The rains are very heavy indeed. Whenever it rains the levels rise so fast."

The UK government's Department for International Development announced it was providing £10m for the Pakistan relief effort.

International Development Secretary, Andrew Mitchell, said: "I know many British people are deeply concerned by the terrible suffering caused by the ongoing monsoon floods in Pakistan. The government of Pakistan is leading the relief efforts and the UK is ready to help in any way we can."

Charity organisation, Muslim Aid, said it was conducting a rapid assessment to identify the most urgent needs of the affected people.

"Livestock, houses, bridges, link roads and communication infrastructure have been washed away by flood water. The level of water in the country's major

rivers has risen to a dangerous level threatening dams and embankments throughout the country," it had said.

Its acting head of emergency, Mohamed Bali said: "The disaster has a huge impact on the people of Pakistan. Through this Emergency Appeal, Muslim Aid aims to take food, medicines, clean water, tents and emergency non-food items to the flood victims without delay."

The fear now is that diarrhoea and cholera will spread among the homeless.

Dr Ahmed Farah Shadoul, from the World Health Organization, said urgent action was needed to prevent disease spreading.

"Specifically diarrhoeal diseases, skin problems, eye problems, malaria and fevers, and measles, especially in children."

"That's why it's very essential to take all the appropriate measures to address those issues," he said.

Food is scarce and water supplies have been contaminated by the floods.

Mian Iftikhar Hussain, the Information Minister of Khyber-Pakhtoonkhwa (formerly North West Frontier Province), one of the worst-hit regions, said rescue teams were trying to reach 27,000 stranded people, including 1,500 tourists in the Swat Valley, the scene of a major military offensive against the Taliban last year.

"We are also getting confirmation of reports about an outbreak of cholera in some areas of Swat," he added.

The Pakistani military said it has committed 30,000 troops and dozens of helicopters to the relief effort, but winching individuals to safety is a slow process.

The army - which says it has rescued 28,000 people in recent days - predicts the initial search and rescue operation will take up to 10 days.

But the army says rebuilding the damaged areas could take six months or more.

A spokesman for the UK-based charity Save the Children said the infrastructure damage in Swat may be worse than in the earthquake which devastated the region in 2005.

"We fear that in places that have not been accessed as yet there are people that were trapped, and there is a possibility of more deaths taking place," the spokesman said.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said he was "deeply saddened by the significant loss of lives, livelihoods and infrastructure in Pakistan", and offered an extra \$10m (£6.5m) in aid for the relief effort.

Even though the rain has stopped, huge swathes of north west Pakistan are still under water. Pakistan also issued new flood warnings as rising water levels threatened to overwhelm

one of the country's biggest dams.

Rising water levels at Warsak Dam, the country's third biggest, prompted disaster officials to ask residents in the northern outskirts of Peshawar city to leave their homes.

"If needed, forced evacuation will be started," said Adnan Khan, a spokesman for the Disaster Management Authority of Khyber-Pakhtoonkhwa province.

Fear also existed that extremist groups may use the disaster as a means of recruiting and promoting their agenda.

A welfare organisation allegedly linked to the Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorist network - was also reportedly helping survivors.

The group, Falah-e-Insaniat, helped civilians fleeing the Swat offensive.

The United States, keen for an opportunity to win friends in the region, said it was providing 10 million dollars in emergency assistance.