

DISASTER UPDATE

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TODAY'S HIGHLIGHTS

National

‘45000 child malnutrition deaths every yr in Maharashtra’ – The Times of India

TNN, 4 February 2010, 05:28am IST

PUNE: Of the estimated 45,000 children dying each year due to malnutrition in Maharashtra, only around 12,000 are severe malnutrition cases. The remaining 33,000 children succumb due to mild or moderate malnutrition. Also, malnutrition is the underlying cause in about 480 of the 2,850 maternal deaths each year in the state.

International

Bomb blast in northwest Pakistan; 8 killed including 4 foreigners

AFP, 3 February 2010, 12:23pm IST

PESHAWAR, PAKISTAN: A bomb blast in northwest Pakistan killed eight people on Wednesday, including four foreign aid workers and children at a school which had just been rebuilt after a previous Islamist attack.

Journalists were also wounded when the bomb exploded as Pakistani paramilitary forces escorted a group of foreign and local visitors to the inauguration ceremony for the newly built school in the volatile region.

Pakistan Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani strongly condemned the blast and ordered an investigation into the attack in Koto village, about 10 kilometres (six miles) from the Lower Dir's main town of Taimargara.

Doctor Sardar Ali told AFP from Taimargara Hospital that medics had received the bodies of three schoolgirls and a man.

Police said they were investigating the nationalities of the foreigners and that four local journalists were also injured.

Police said the attack happened ahead of the inauguration of the school, which had been

blown up in January 2009 and was reconstructed with the help of a foreign aid organisation.

20 killed in Karbala blast – The Hindu

BAGHDAD: A bomb planted on a parked motorcycle ripped through a crowd of Shia pilgrims on Wednesday, killing 20 people and wounding more than 100, just days after authorities promised tighter security for the huge religious procession, said officials.

The blast on the outskirts of Karbala was the second major scene of bloodshed this week as hundreds of thousands of pilgrims make their way to an important annual religious observance. It raised fears of a spike in attacks by suspected Sunni militants when the pilgrimage culminates Friday. The bomb exploded at about 11 a.m. in an area known as Ibrahimia near the east entrance — one of three — into Karbala, about 80 km south of Baghdad, said a police official.

At least 108 people were wounded, said the official, and cautioned that the number of casualties could increase. For years, the main Shia pilgrimages have been a prime target for attacks blamed on Sunni extremists. — AP