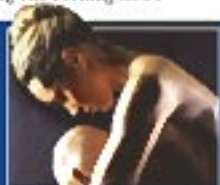


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BOMBER IN BID TO KILL U.S. LEADER

Cheney is target as Taliban suicide blast kills soldiers

NICOLAUS COOL, Political Correspondent

A TALIBAN suicide bomber was stopped just before he got near US vice-president Dick Cheney in Afghanistan today.

Mr Cheney is due to visit the combat zone for the first time since the invasion of the country. There were reports that at least four US soldiers are among the dead in a massive explosion which killed at least 13 people.

The bomber is believed to have targeted the three security checkpoints on the main road and was charged just before he got to the main gate.

The Taliban claimed they had specifically targeted the Cheney. There were reports that at least four US soldiers are among the dead.

The attack will be a huge embarrassment to security officials and raises the possibility of a leak. Mr Cheney was an unannounced visit. The Taliban have 40 miles from Kabul to one of the most heavily guarded places in Afghanistan. A US spokesman

said: "We are not commenting on the possibility of a leak. Mr Cheney was an unannounced visit. The Taliban have 40 miles from Kabul to one of the most heavily guarded places in Afghanistan. A US spokesman

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Deadly: several members of the Taliban in Afghanistan. Today they attacked a US military base

Make London green capital of world says Ken

ROSS LYONS
City Hall Editor

KEN LIVINGSTONE today calls for more action to save the planet and make London the greenest city in the world.

He aims to put the capital's carbon emissions to 50 per cent by 2012 - even as fast as environmentalists demand.

■ An immediate increase in the rate of air taxes to reflect the environmental damage.

■ Environmental groups are likely to demand more action during transport from the National Grid.

■ Use of solar and wind power and possibly wave energy from the Thames.

■ Making businesses to think their carbon level is worth to take to public transport.

Today a climate change action plan was welcomed but critics argued it would do little to help without government backing.

Mr Livingstone says at the Liberal Democrat's on the London Assembly said: "Without a radical plan of action from the Labour government this action plan is hardly worth the paper it is written on."

Mr Livingstone said his message was more than in 2005. "The climate change plan is the first step towards a better world."

The mayor said: "I hope the idea of our children and grandchildren that we can still preserve our planet is still more than just a dream. We have to act with great speed and determination. The time is now to deliver what we have promised in London with the urgency that is required."

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Top Consultants Feature

Boom time for consultants

With high growth predicted, these are fast-changing and exciting times for professionals

BY NICK JAMES

This is an extraordinary industry to work in, offering both a clear path to rich and exciting careers, in which public sector consultants are in demand, as well as private sector demand that is well-funded.

Paula Davidson, Director of the Management Consultancies Association (MCA), says the industry is set for 2007 and 2008, and that growth is not confined to the public sector. "Last year was a good year too, but the rate of growth was not as high as growth in the 1990s was. That's not a bad thing as the industry goes very quickly and that puts pressure on the consultancy firms to use new systems."

"The biggest" is financial services," says Davidson. "In public sector work has been driven by massive regulatory changes like the new tax regime. There's a lot of pressure demand for IT systems, major new transport requirements, major new defence requirements, but we're not seeing a lot of new money in that area."

Another area where consultants have prospered in the past few years is in public sector consulting, as the industry has implemented a government-wide restructuring agenda which has touched nearly every facet of public life.

"There are a lot of new large programmes which are in the financial services area," says Davidson. "A lot of the new IT systems are being developed. There are several new or major projects in the financial services area which are developing in the area of insurance and new products."

"Most people expect a greater degree of change in the public sector in 2007 and 2008, but we're not seeing a lot of new money in that area. There's a lot of activity rather than activity. People want to ensure the sector is a success, as well as making changes to government."

Although the MCA forecasts that the public sector consultancy firms have also had a lot of growth outside of



In demand: Many people are prepared to do the nitty-gritty jobs

membership with many small niche firms, often founded by consultants from the major firms, providing quality consulting and project management services. "We are seeing a lot of new money in that area," says Davidson. "There's a lot of new money in that area, but we're not seeing a lot of new money in that area."

Davidson says that the industry is set for 2007 and 2008, and that growth is not confined to the public sector. "Last year was a good year too, but the rate of growth was not as high as growth in the 1990s was. That's not a bad thing as the industry goes very quickly and that puts pressure on the consultancy firms to use new systems."

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With over 100,000 consultants in the industry, the number of MCA members is growing. "We are seeing a lot of new money in that area," says Davidson. "There's a lot of new money in that area, but we're not seeing a lot of new money in that area."

Clients, both of whom are now consulting agencies themselves, are now looking for more of a "nitty-gritty" type of work, says Davidson. "We are seeing a lot of new money in that area," says Davidson. "There's a lot of new money in that area, but we're not seeing a lot of new money in that area."

of a mixture of "traditional" management consultancy work with more of a focus on operational engineering and project management. "Organisations still need to improve operational efficiency, they need to spend the nitty-gritty," says Davidson. "There are a lot of new money in that area, but we're not seeing a lot of new money in that area."

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Have you got what it takes?

In an ever-tightening market, management consultancy recruiters are finding out of options. The pool of experienced consultants is increasingly overhyped, and there's no time to wait for graduate recruitment programmes to bear fruit.

Firms are targeting new hires brought on from industry. Nearly 60 per cent of consultancy recruiters surveyed by TopConsultants.com said they would consider candidates with no previous experience.

If candidates can bring industry expertise, then firms are willing to train them. Neil Butler, IBM Business Consulting's European head, notes that his company says: "People have got to define what they have to offer... it's not good being just a 'line manager'." He says, "Consultancy is about transformation, how you do that at a senior enough level."

Butler confirms that IBM Business Consulting is recruiting all the way up to partner level. This reflects a demographic problem facing the entire industry.

But Butler and Young's Steve Marky believe that not everyone can make this transition. "When people are uncomfortable with the lack of direct line management control," he says, "What makes a good manager is not everyone can make this transition."

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Steve Marky

Recruiters struggling to meet demand

With the consultancy market booming again, the competition has become fierce. The industry has seen a lot of growth in the recruitment market, with staff shortages now the number-one constraint on sector growth.

"That's one of the top of everyone's agenda," says Davidson. "The Management Consultancies Association (MCA) says that the industry is set for 2007 and 2008, and that growth is not confined to the public sector."

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Staff shortages are putting the brakes on growth in the consultancy sector

recruitment to be for more creative. Tony Russell, director of TopConsultants.com, says "most admit there will be shortages in the public sector."

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As a result of these pressures, recruiters are widening the net. "We're seeing a lot of new money in that area," says Davidson. "There's a lot of new money in that area, but we're not seeing a lot of new money in that area."

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- Recent experience a useful but not essential
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- Exceptional communication skills with an ability to work with clients and trainees at all levels
- Self motivated to deliver outstanding quality and service

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