

Sri Lankan Buddhists offer flowers before a statue of Lord Buddha at a temple in Colombo early yesterday at the start of a campaign to pray for peace.

Lanka offers compromise to end peace deadlock

Norway moves to salvage truce

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka will offer a compromise to end a deadlock in peace moves with Tamil rebels when a Norwegian envoy visits today, following violence that has claimed 146 lives in two months.

An official said the government is ready to make concessions on a venue for talks when Norway's International Development Minister Erik Solheim launches his mission today to salvage a 2002 ceasefire, in the face of almost daily killings of rebels and supporters.

Proposed talks on shoring up the ceasefire between the government of President Mahinda Rajapakse and the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) had been held up over a bitter dispute

on a venue, with the rebels calling for Oslo and the government backing an Asian capital.

"The president is now agreeable to go someplace else," a senior official close to Rajapakse, who declined to be named, told AFP.

"Solheim will be told that we are ready to compromise on the venue issue in the interest of getting talks started."

Government spokesman Nimal Siripala de Silva said he was hopeful that Solheim would be able to break the deadlock in the talks and get the two parties together for an ice-breaking meeting.

"What is important now is for the two sides to sit at a table. What they discuss and other matters like an agenda can be discussed. We must first get to the table," de Silva

told AFP.

"We now have positive signals that both sides may be moving towards a round of talks by the middle of February," said a diplomatic source close to the peace process.

Colombo also hopes that US Under Secretary for Political Affairs Nicholas Burns will exert pressure on the LTTE to halt attacks and sit down to talk when he arrives this week.

Burns and Solheim were to meet here Monday, with Burns "to reiterate the strong US desire to see all Sri Lankans work for peace," the US State Department said last week.

Burns is not due to have direct meetings with the LTTE unlike Solheim, who is set to talk with LTTE supremo Velupillai

Prabhakaran and London-based chief negotiator Anton Balasingham.

A sharp rise in violence since early December -- with 146 people, including 84 security personnel, killed in the north and east -- threatens to reignite an ethnic conflict which has left more than 60,000 dead since 1972.

The government has accused the LTTE of unleashing the violence while the rebels maintain the attacks were carried out by "ordinary people" who were harassed by security forces.

The LTTE in a statement Sunday said two civilians had been killed in the northern peninsula of Jaffna on Friday while the military said two rebels and two policemen were killed on Saturday.

Bomb blasts rock Assam ahead of Republic Day

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE, Guwahati

Militants in Assam have steeped up attacks ahead of Republic Day, triggering a string of explosions overnight wounding five policemen, blowing up two gas pipelines and two power installations, officials said yesterday.

A police spokesman said suspected militants of the outlawed United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) blew up two gas pipelines in eastern Assam late on Saturday.

"There was a big fire in one of the blast sites with the blaze leaping up to 25 meters high. The fire was controlled Sunday morning after nearly four hours," police official B Deka said. "The blast at the other pipeline created a big crater in the area."

The two facilities belonged to the state-owned Assam Gas Company Limited (AGCL) for supplying natural gas through pipelines to both domestic and industrial consumers in the region.

Invitation for Tenders	
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh	
1	Ministry/Division: Youth & Sports.
2	Agency: Department of Youth Development.
3	Procuring entity name: Project Director: Establishment of Eighteen New Youth Training Centre (First Phase-8 Centre).
4	Procuring entity code: Not used at present.
5	Procuring entity district: Dhaka.
6	Invitation for: Installation of Deep Tube-Well & Water Supply Arrangement for Youth Training Centre at Cox's Bazar & Patuakhali.
7	Invitation Ref. No.: JUA/JUPROKE/18/GAVIR NALKUP/96/2005-620.
8	Date: 05/01/2006
KEY INFORMATION	
9	Procurement method: Open tendering method (OTM).
FUNDING INFORMATION	
10	Budget and source of funds: GOB.
11	Development partners: None.
PARTICULAR INFORMATION	
12	Project/programme code: 5650
13	Project/programme name: Establishment of Eighteen New Youth Training Centre (First Phase-8 Centre).
14	Tender Package No.: 18 YTC/7(5)
15	Tender package name: 18 YTC/Cox's Bazar & Patuakhali/Installation of Deep Tube-Well & Water Supply Arrangement.
16	Tender publication date: 05-01-2006
17	Tender last selling date: 05-02-2006
18	Tender closing date and time: 07-02-2006, 12.01pm.
19	Tender opening date and time: 07-02-2006, 03pm.
20	Name & address of the office(s): a. Selling tender document (principal): Office of the Project Director: Establishment of Eighteen New Youth Training Centre (First Phase-8 Centre), Department of Youth Development, Jubo Bhabon (5th Floor), 108, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000. b. Selling tender document (others): i. Senior Asst. Secretary (Jubo-2), Ministry of Youth & Sports, Bangladesh Secretariat (Bhabon No-7, Room-724), Dhaka. ii. Office of the Divisional Commissioner, 1st 12-storied Building, Room No-218 (1st Floor), Development Wing, Segunbagicha, Dhaka. iii. Engineers Consortium Ltd, 870, Shewrapara, Mirpur, Dhaka. c. Receiving tender document: Same places as stated in 20(a, b). d. Opening tender document: Office of the Project Director of Establishment of Eighteen New Youth Training Centre (First Phase-8 Centre), Department of Youth Development, Jubo Bhabon (2nd Floor), 108, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000.
21	Place/date/time of Pre-tender meeting: Place: Date: Time: Pre-tender meeting shall not be held.
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER	
22	Eligibility of tenderer: All pre-qualified contractors of the Department of Youth Development having experience of completion similar type of works for at least Tk 10 (ten) lacs. In addition, tenderers of the categories specified in the tender data sheet are eligible to participate in the tender.
23	Brief description of works: Installation of Deep Tube-Well & Water Supply Arrangement for Youth Training Centre at Cox's Bazar & Patuakhali.
24	Price of tender document: Tender document can be purchased from the Office of the Project Director through a Treasury Challan of Tk. 750/- (seven hundred & fifty) only for each lot deposited to Code Number 1/3640/0000/2366.
25	Lot No. Identification of lot Location Tender security amount (Tk) Completion time in weeks/months 1 18YTC Cox's Bazar/ installation of deep tube-well & water supply arrangement Cox's Bazar Youth Training Centre Tk. 45,000/- 4 (four) months 2 18YTC/Patuakhali/ installation of deep tube-well & water supply arrangement Patuakhali Youth Training Centre Tk. 45,000 4 (four) months
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS	
26	Name of official inviting tender: Md. Mosharraf Hossain.
27	Designation of official inviting tender: Project Director.
28	Address of official inviting tender: Department of Youth Development, 108, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000.
29	Contact details of official inviting tender: Tel. No. Fax No. E-mail 9550863 7168364 dyd-1966@bttb.net.bd
30	The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all tenders.

Md. Mosharraf Hossain
Project Director
Department of Youth Development

MOVE AGAINST MILITANT CROSSING

Congress seeks to pressure Pakistan

REUTERS, Hyderabad

The Congress party said yesterday it was committed to making peace with the country's arch rival Pakistan and urged the government to pressure Islamabad to curb anti-Indian militants.

A two-year peace process between the nuclear-armed neighbours has been buffeted by Pakistan's impatience over the pace of conflict resolution and India's charge that Islamabad continues to support guerrillas fighting its rule in Kashmir.

"Congress continues to have serious concerns about terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan," the party said in a draft resolution at a party convention in Hyderabad.

"Pakistan must now dismantle the infrastructure of terrorism completely to fulfil its solemn commitment," it said.

"Although militant violence may have reduced in numbers since the

neighbours launched moves to make peace it had not reduced in intensity, the party said.

"It (Congress) urges the government to press (Pakistani) President Pervez Musharraf to deliver on his promise that Pakistan would not allow territory controlled by it to be used for heinous acts of violence against India," the resolution said.

The Congress's call came days after top diplomats of the two countries held talks in New Delhi and pledged to push the peace process forward.

The officials, however, differed on ways to resolve the longstanding territorial dispute over the Himalayan region of Kashmir, at the heart of nearly 60 years of enmity.

Both countries claim Kashmir in full but rule it in parts. India accuses Pakistan of supporting a 16-year revolt against its rule in Indian Kashmir which has so far killed tens of thousands.

US to prod Pakistan to flush out al-Qaeda

AFP, Washington

US leaders are expected to call for more intensive efforts by Pakistan to flush out Osama bin Laden and his number two from their sanctuary in meetings with Prime Minister Shaukit Aziz here this week.

Believed hiding in northwestern Pakistan, al-Qaeda chief bin Laden and his deputy Ayman al-Zawahiri taunted President George W. Bush last week in their latest taped messages, glorifying the terror network's bloody actions and warning of more to come.

Pakistani President General Pervez Musharraf, who is facing an increasing litany of tribulations at home, has sent Aziz, among his most trusted lieutenants, to meet with President George W. Bush and other leaders.

Counterterrorism is widely expected to hog the agenda, as the back to back release of bin Laden and Zawahiri's recordings has sent a chilling reminder to Americans that the masterminds of the September 11, 2001 attacks remain

at large, experts said.

Another additional US concern is the jump in suicide bombings and roadside blasts in Afghanistan, attributed to an influx of foreign militants from the border with Pakistan, said Strategic Forecasting Inc. (Stratfor), a private US intelligence firm.

"While Washington continues to get cooperation from Pakistan, it is always concerned about the quality of the cooperation and its longevity, if you will," said Kamran Bokhari, Stratfor's senior analyst for Middle East and South Asia.

Stratfor believes bin Laden and Zawahiri are in northwestern Pakistan.

"To the best of our understanding, our company places them somewhere in northwestern Pakistan, we don't even think they are in the tribal areas."

"How they have survived this long? Definitely, there is evidence to suggest that in certain quarters of the military and security apparatus, there are sympathisers," Bokhari said.

Showdown in Nepal as king refuses to budge

REUTERS, Kathmandu

As thousands of pro-democracy protesters fought running battles with police on the streets of the capital this weekend, Nepal's king sat regally unmoved hundreds of miles away in the east of the country.

When he returns to Kathmandu on Sunday, after a three-week "informal visit" to the countryside, his reaction to the latest twists in a long-running political crisis will be closely watched. So far there is no indication that he is prepared to compromise, analysts and diplomats say.

"Things are headed for confrontation if he doesn't respond to what people are demanding," said Yubaraj Ghimire, editor of the Samay news weekly. "Then we would get into a phase of bloodshed and more repression."

King Gyanendra seized absolute power last February, finally losing patience with politicians he accused of ruining the country. But royal rule has brought no relief to his dirt-poor Himalayan kingdom, with civil liberties squeezed, human rights trampled and a

Maoin rebellion undeterred.

"He has all the characteristics of an autocrat," said one Western diplomat.

"What we have seen in the last year is a systematic attempt to destroy major democratic parties and to undermine their leadership, and to place monarchists in key positions in local government, the civil service, security forces and constitutional bodies."

Gyanendra has promised to restore democracy by 2008, and as a first step plans to hold municipal elections on Feb. 8.


Political parties, who were not consulted about the polls, dismiss them as a farce, a crude attempt to legitimise the king's rule, and have refused to take part.

It is a position, which wins some sympathy abroad. The diplomat dismissed the polls as an attempt to show a "facade of democracy", as does the Brussels-based International Crisis Group.

"For the palace these elections are a showdown -- they're not looking for reconciliation or compromise," said the think-tank's Nepal specialist, Rhoderick Chalmers.



Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh (L) and Congress Party chief Sonia Gandhi (R) raise their hands as they take part in the 82nd Indian National Congress Party Plenary session at the Gachibowli Stadium in Hyderabad yesterday.



BANGLADESH BANK
Central Bank Strengthening Project
IDA Credit Number: Cr 3792-BD

Invitation for Bids (IFB)

IFB Title: Procurement of Standard Hardware & Software Including Training and Technical Support

IFB Number: BB(G)-IT-2

- This Invitation for Bids (IFB) follows the General Procurement Notice (GPN) for this project that appeared in Development Business, issue no. 613 of February 16, 2003.
- The Peoples Republic of Bangladesh has received a credit from the International Development Association toward the cost of Central Bank Strengthening Project, and it intends to apply part of the proceeds of this credit to payments under the agreement(s) resulting from this IFB: Procurement of Standard Hardware & Software including Training and Technical Support.
- The Bangladesh Bank serves as the implementing agency for the project and now invites sealed bids from eligible Bidders for Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Standard Hardware & Software including Training and Technical Support.
- Bidding will be conducted using the International Competitive Bidding (ICB) procedures specified in the World Bank's Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits and is open to all Bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the Guidelines that meet the following minimum qualification criteria:
 - The Bidder must have been in business for the last five (5) years.
 - During the past five (5) years, the Bidder must have completed at least one (1) successful contract involving the supply, installation, and provision of technical support for at least one thousand and two hundred (1200) PC/Workstations.
 - The Bidder must demonstrate minimum annual turnover of US\$ fifteen (15) Million equivalent in any year of the last five (5) years.
 - The Bidder must demonstrate minimum average annual turnover of US\$ ten (10) Million equivalent calculated as total certified payments received for contracts in progress or completed, within the last five (5) years.
 - The bidder must demonstrate present liquid asset or line of credit of minimum US\$ three (3) Million equivalent.
 - The local agent of the Bidder must have at least 5 (five) years proven experience in providing after sales services. The local agent's relationship with the Principal/Manufacturer shall be at least two (2) years.
- Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from Bangladesh Bank and inspect the bidding documents at the address given below from 10AM to 3PM on all working days.
- A complete set of bidding documents in English may be purchased by interested Bidders on the submission of a written application to the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Tk 20,000.00 (twenty thousand) or US\$300.00 (three hundred). The method of payment will be pay order or bank draft. The document will be sent by Courier Service or may be collected in person. No Bidding Documents would be sold on the day of Bid opening.
- Bids must be delivered to the address below at or before 11AM Bangladesh Standard Time on March 21, 2006. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of not less than Tk.8,000,000/- (eight million) or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late bids will be rejected. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below at 11:30AM on March 21, 2006.
- The attention of prospective Bidders is drawn to (i) the fact that they will be required to certify in their bids that all software is either covered by a valid license or was produced by the Bidder and (ii) that violations are considered fraud, which is, among other remedies, punishable by potential blacklisting from participation in future World Bank-financed procurement.
- The attention of the bidders is also drawn to the fact that at the time of receipt of the bidding documents, they carefully check that they have received all sections and attachments of the bidding documents.
- The bidders may kindly note that the package under this IFB is a part of the total Information System to be procured by the Purchaser, and the IFBs against the following packages shall also be issued in due course of time:

Package Number	Package Description
BB(G)-IT-3	LAN, WAN, OA, Intranet & Generator Package
BB(G)-IT-4	Enterprise Resource Planning
BB(G)-IT-5	Banking Application
BB(G)-IT-6	CIB Online
BB(G)-IT-7	Enterprise Data Warehouse

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