

# Palestinian polls campaign begins today

## Little doubt over outcome

AFP, RAMALLAH, West Bank

The contest to succeed the late Yasser Arafat as Palestinian Authority president is set to formally begin on Saturday with the election of Mahmud Abbas a seemingly foregone conclusion.

Abbas, who has already succeeded Arafat as chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, is the overwhelming favourite to sweep to victory on January 9 after his chief rival Marwan Barghout dropped out and the radical Islamist movement Hamas decided to boycott the ballot.

The 69-year-old former prime minister is expected to try and associate himself strongly with

Arafat's legacy during the campaign but also send a message to the international community by calling for an end to the armed uprising which has left more than 4,600 people dead -- more than three-quarters of them Palestinians.

While his image as a dour bureaucrat is never likely to inspire the kind of devotion among the Palestinians that Arafat enjoyed, Abbas is hoping to tap into a growing level of disillusionment after four years of violence.

In a speech on Tuesday to mark the end of the 40-day mourning period, Abbas eulogised his former boss for leading the Palestinians "to the doorstep of liberty and independence".

But he has also been pumping out a message in the lead-up to the official start of the campaign that the attacks by militants against Israel have been counter-productive and that weapons should only be borne by the security forces.

His comments in a newspaper interview earlier this month that "the use of weapons is harmful and it should stop" drew predictable condemnation from the likes of Hamas who argued that it was unreasonable to expect the Palestinians to lay down their arms while Israel continues to occupy the West Bank and Gaza.

But as the candidate of Fatah, the movement founded by Arafat and which has dominated Palestinian

political life for the last four decades, Abbas can withstand such criticism without worrying about a reverse at the ballot box.

With Hamas deciding to boycott what it sees as an illegitimate contest, the only real danger lurking for Abbas was from Barghout, Fatah's leader in the West Bank who is currently serving five life sentences.

Barghout did formally register himself just before the close of nominations but a concerted campaign by the Fatah leadership persuaded him to withdraw his candidacy within days.

None of the other six candidates, four of whom are independents, has registered double figures in the opinion polls.

# World's biggest earthquake in four years hits off Australian coast

AFP, Sydney

The world's biggest earthquake in almost four years, measuring 8.1 on the Richter scale, struck off the coast of Australia's southern island state of Tasmania early Friday, but caused no damage or injury.

Seismological officials said it was felt throughout Tasmania and the South Island of New Zealand, but because it occurred at a depth of 10 kilometres (6.25 miles) and far from inhabited land, it was barely noticed even by the scientists or penguins on nearby Macquarie Islands.

Geoscience Australia said the epicentre of the quake, which struck at 1:59 am (1459 GMT), was 400 kilometres (250 miles) off Macquarie Island and 800 kilometres (500 miles) off the coast of Tasmania, about halfway between Australia and Antarctica.

Seismologist Cvetan Sinadinovski said it caused build-

ings to shake in the island state for up to 15 seconds, but did not cause a tsunami or unusual tidal activity because it was of horizontal rather than vertical displacement and struck far off the coast.

"If it happened underneath a population centre in Australia, this would probably have destroyed a whole city," Sinadinovski said.

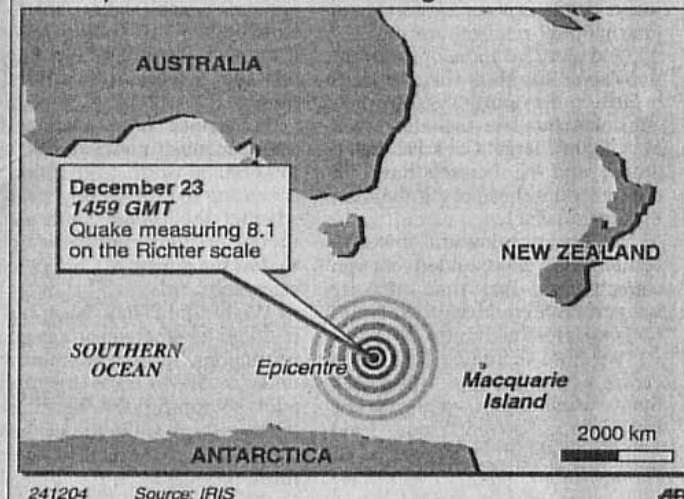
He described the quake as more than 30 times stronger than the earthquake that devastated the south-eastern Australian city of Newcastle in 1989, claiming 13 lives and injuring 160.

Friday's earthquake, which was initially registered as 7.8 on the Richter scale but later upgraded to 8.1, was the largest since one off the coast of Peru in early 2001, Sinadinovski said.

He said large earthquakes were common in the Macquarie Rise region, occurring every year or two.

## Biggest quake in four years

But world record setting tremor causes no reported casualties, damage



## 2 convicted for attempts on Musharraf

REUTERS, Islamabad

A Pakistani military court convicted two low-ranking army officers on charges of involvement in assassination attempts on President Pervez Musharraf last year, a military spokesman said on Friday.

Spokesman Major-General Shaukat Sultan said one of the convicts, a sepoy, was given the death penalty, the other was sentenced to 10 years in jail.

The military court handed down the sentences a few days ago and the trial of up to four other junior army officers and six air force officers was under way, Sultan said.

Musharraf, a key ally in the U.S.-led war on terror, survived two assassination attempts in December last year in the garrison city of Rawalpindi, near Islamabad.

Sultan did not say in which of the attempts the two had been involved.

The announcement of the verdicts came on the first anniversary of the second attempt on Musharraf's life in which 15 people were killed.

# Russia sends food, water to astronauts in orbit

REUTERS, Moscow

A Russian spaceship blasted off on Friday carrying vital food and water to two astronauts whose supplies have been rationed because they were running so low.

Russian cosmonaut Salizhan Sharipov and American Leroy Chiao are eagerly awaiting the Christmas-time arrival of the Progress M-51, which launched from the Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan that Russia rents from its ex-Soviet neighbor.

"Everything went really well," a mission control spokesman said. "The spacecraft has now reached its orbit."

The craft is scheduled to dock on Dec. 26 with the International Space Station, where the two-man crew has been stationed since October.

A fortnight ago the astronauts were asked to cut their daily calo-

rie intake by around 10 percent because they only had enough food for a balanced diet for another month.

Russian officials accused the previous crew of overeating during their 6-month mission earlier this year, leaving a deficit of meat and milk and a surplus of juice and confectionary.

Apart from essentials such as food, water and fuel, the spacecraft is also delivering New Year presents to the crew from their families and extra food for a slap-up meal over the festive season.

"There are three parcels for the crew, carrying personal things such as letters, videos and photographs," a Russian space agency spokesman said. "They make up 21 kg (44 pounds) of the load."

If the fresh supplies do not make it to the space station, the crew would have to evacuate the orbital outpost and return to earth

on the Soyuz capsule that is docked there.

The crew will also receive scientific equipment needed for the many experiments conducted aboard the orbiting laboratory, opened by NASA and partners in Russia, Europe, Japan and Canada to long-duration crews in 2000.

The station depends entirely on Russia to launch all manned and cargo flights since the United States grounded its Shuttle fleet after the fatal Columbia accident almost two years ago.

Russia, with a space budget only a fraction the size of the United States', has often complained of its financial struggle to keep the \$95 billion station serviced single-handedly. Shuttle flights could resume in May, officials have said.

## Cold wave claims 11 in India

AFP, New Delhi

A cold spell across northern India claimed the lives of 11 people in Uttar Pradesh state, reports said Friday, taking the death toll to 27 since the start of the month.

The Press Trust of India said six of the deaths occurred in Uttar Pradesh's Ballia and Mau areas, one of the worst hit by the cold spell.

State authorities are setting up makeshift shelters for the poor and lighting bonfires, with the temperature dropping to seven degrees Celsius (45 Fahrenheit) in some places.

A thick blanket of fog also descended over much of northern India, throwing road, rail and air traffic into confusion.

At least four New Delhi-bound international flights were diverted to other northern cities overnight while many early morning domestic flights were delayed by several hours, airport officials said.

## Tigers reject Sri Lanka's new offer

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger rebels on Friday formally rejected Colombo's latest offer to revive talks and accused the government's main Marxist partners of undermining a Norwegian-backed peace initiative.

The rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) told peace broker Norway that the Sri Lankan government's latest offer to end a 20-month impasse in peace talks was not acceptable to them.

"The LTTE leadership, having carefully scrutinised the current version of the agenda as presented by the Sri Lanka government, is displeased with its structure and contents," the LTTE said.

In a message posted on the pro-rebel Tamilnet website, the LTTE said President Chandrika Kumaratunga's coalition partner, the Marxist JVP, or People's Liberation Front, was a key obstacle to peace.

The Tigers argued that the JVP was against opening discussions based on the Tiger self-rule proposal for an Interim Self Governing Authority (ISGA) for the island's embattled northeast region.

## Tareq Aziz denies Iraq role in UN scandal

REUTERS, Baghdad

Tareq Aziz, deputy prime minister under Saddam Hussein, denies Iraq exploited the scandal-hit UN oil-for-food program to make billions of dollars, his defense lawyer said on Friday.

A day after his first meeting with the former public face of Saddam's administration, Badhi Aref dismissed speculation that Aziz might testify against his former colleagues or give evidence on alleged corruption at the United Nations.

"We used to offer assistance to parties, institutions and states that stood by Iraq. We helped them via the United Nations because the oil-for-food program was a legitimate program supervised by the UN," the lawyer quoted Aziz as saying.

"This cannot be considered bribery because it was our right to sell oil to those who wanted it and we could not affect the price at all, as it was set by the United Nations itself."

The United Nations has come under scrutiny over corruption allegations in the oil-for-food program supervised.

The program, started in December 1996, allowed Iraq to sell oil to ease the suffering of ordinary Iraqis from UN sanctions imposed over its 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

## RHD Tender Invitation Notice

Bogra Road Division, Bogra

1. Employer	:	Ministry of Communication.
2. Agency	:	Roads and Highways Department.
3. Procuring entry name	:	Executive Engineer, RHD, Bogra Road Division, Bogra.
4. Procuring Entry Code	:	Not use at present.
5. Procuring entry district	:	Bogra.
6. Invitation for	:	Shifting and re-construction of boundary wall, bath room, water tank, septic tank and painting work/re-construction of office boundary wall/supplying breaking hard stone boulders, pea-gravels for repairing damage pavement.
7. Invitation reference No	:	3068.
8. Date	:	30-11-2004.
9. Procurement method	:	Open tendering method (As per the Public Procurement Regulation-2003).
10. Budget & source of fund	:	4936 (168-RBF).
11. Development partners (if applicable)	:	
12. Project/programme code	:	4936 (168-RBF).
13. Project/programme name	:	Shifting and re-construction of boundary wall, bath room, water tank, septic tank and painting work/re-construction of office boundary wall/supplying breaking hard stone boulders, pea-gravels for repairing damage pavement.
14. Tender package No.	:	As stated on SI No 23.
15. Tender package name	:	Re-construction of building/supplying breaking hard stone boulders, pea-gravels for repairing damage pavement.
16. Tender publication date	:	
17. Tender last selling date	:	Up to office hours of 29-01-2005.
18. Tender closing date and time	:	Up to 12:00 Noon of 02-02-2005.
19. Tender opening date & time	:	On 02-02-2005 at 12:15 PM.
20. a. Name and address of the selling tender document (Principal)	:	Road Division, Bogra.
b. Selling tender document (others)	:	a. Executive Engineer, RHD, Planning Division, (P&D), Sarak Bhaban, Ramna, Dhaka. b. Executive Engineer, RHD, Road Division, Gaibandha/Joypurhat/Rangpur. c. Sub-Divisional Engineer, RHD, Road Sub-Division, Bogra/Sherpur/1st Line Workshop Sub-Division, Bogra. a. Superintending Engineer, RHD, Bogra Road Circle, Bogra. b. Executive Engineer, RHD, Road Division, Bogra.
c. Receiving tender document	:	Executive Engineer, RHD, Road Division, Bogra on 02-02-2005 at 3:00 PM.
d. Opening tender document	:	Any individual(s)/firm(s) who fulfil the qualifications criteria stipulated in the tender data sheet (TDS) and other conditions of the tender(s) document(s).
21. Eligibility of tenderers	:	Re-construction of boundary wall/supplying breaking hard stone boulders, pea-gravels for repairing damage pavement.
22. Brief description of goods or works	:	Re-construction of boundary wall/supplying breaking hard stone boulders, pea-gravels for repairing damage pavement.
23. Brief description of related services	:	Re-construction of boundary wall/supplying breaking hard stone boulders, pea-gravels for repairing damage pavement.

Lot No	Description and location of works	Tender security	Time completion	Price of tender documents
68.	Shifting and re-construction of boundary wall, bath room, water tank, septic tank and painting due to widening of Banani-Matidali Road (including Station Road) at 4th (P) KM under Road Division, Bogra during the year 2004-2005.	Tk 15,000/-	30 (thirty) days	Per page x 2/- + 30/-
69.	Re-construction of office boundary wall due to widening of Banani-Matidali Road (including Station Road) under Road Division, Bogra during the year 2004-2005.	Tk 8,000/-	30 (thirty) days	Per page x 2/- + 30/-
70.	Supplying breaking hard stone boulders, pea-gravels for repairing damage pavement from 1st to 26th KM of Bogra-Sherpur-Chandaikona Road at Nishindara RHD stackyard under Road Division, Bogra during the year 2004-2005.	Tk 11,000/-	10 (ten) days	Per page x 2/- + 30/-

24. Name of official inviting tender	:	AHM Mainul Islam Choudhury.
25. Designation of official inviting tender	:	Executive Engineer, RHD.
26. Address of official inviting tender	:	Executive Engineer, RHD, Road Division, Bogra.
27. Contracts details of official inviting tender	:	Tel No. 051-66304 Fax 051-66304.
28. The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all tenders.	:	
Note:	:	1. In under any unavoidable circumstances tender documents selling, receiving & opening disturbed, the next working day will be applicable for the same respectively. 2. Tender No 69 & 70 will not be sold in the office of the Executive Engineer, RHD, Planning Division (P&D), Sarak Bhaban, Ramna, Dhaka & Road Division, Rangpur.

AHM Mainul Islam Choudhury  
Executive Engineer, RHD  
Road Division, Bogra.

DFP-29071-4/12/04  
G-1214

## Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Local Government Engineering Department  
Office of the Executive Engineer, Faridpur

Memo No: LGED/EE/Farid/PM-08/2004-2005/3067

Dated: 01-12-2004

## Invitation for Tender (IFT)

### Tender Notice No. 08/2004-2005

Sealed tenders are hereby invited from the eligible tenderers as defined in the tender documents for the undermentioned works as per terms and conditions stated below:

Sl. No.	Name of contract	Tender security (Tk.)	Time for completion (days)	Price of tender documents (Tk.)
01.	(Part-A) Periodic Maintenance of Shahasari Bazar to Shahasari Station road from ch.0.00m to 1150.00m = 1150.00Rm (Re-seal) under Boalmari Upazila, Dist. Faridpur. (Part-B) Periodic Maintenance of Boalmari GC to Nagarkanda GC via Moyandia Bazar road from ch.0.00m to 3000.00m = 3000.00Rm (Re-seal) under Boalmari Upazila, Dist. Faridpur. (Part-C) Periodic Maintenance of Satoir Bazar to Dadpur UP road from ch.0.00m to 700.00m = 700.00Rm (Re-seal) under Boalmari Upazila, Dist. Faridpur. Est. No. 09/2004-2005 (Code No. 2004009).	36500.00	60	750.00
02.	(Part-A) Periodic Maintenance of Bahirdia Bazar to Mollikpur Bazar via Krishnagar UP Office road from ch.10750.00m to 11750.00m = 1000.00Rm (Re-seal) under Sadar Upazila, Dist. Faridpur. (Part-B) Periodic Maintenance of Karimpur Bridge to Kumar River road from ch.0.00m to 1400.00m = 1400.00Rm (Re-seal) under Sadar Upazila, Dist. Faridpur. Est. No. 10/2004-2005 (Code No. 2004010).	13800.00	45	300.00
03.	(Part-A) Periodic Maintenance of Bakhunda GC to Kanaipur GC via Tambulkhana road from ch.8400.00m to 9400.00m = 1000.00Rm (Re-seal) under Sadar Upazila, Dist. Faridpur. (Part-B) Periodic Maintenance of Hogladangi village to Trimohona road from ch.100.00m to 1100.00m = 1000.00Rm (Re-seal) under Sadar Upazila, Dist. Faridpur. Est. No. 11/2004-2005 (Code No. 2004011).	12600.00	45	300.00
04.	Periodic Maintenance of Maniknagar R&H (Bazar) to Ramnagar Langar Bazar via Ramnagar UP H/O Road from ch.0.00m to 5600.00m = 5600.00Rm (Re-seal) under Nagarkanda Upazila, Dist. Faridpur Est. No. 12/2004-2005 (Code No. 2004012).	36900.00	45	750.00
05.	Periodic Maintenance of Hat Gozara GC to Hat Krishnagar GC road from ch.0.00m to 4150.00m = 4150.00Rm (Re-seal) under Nagarkanda Upazila, Dist. Faridpur. Est. No. 13/2004-2005 (Code No. 2004013).	37800.00	45	750.00
06.	Periodic Maintenance of Talma GC to Rosulpur GC Road from ch.0.00m to 5100.00m = 5100.00Rm (Re-seal) under Nagarkanda Upazila, Dist. Faridpur. Est. No. 14/2004-2005 (Code No. 2004014).	37100.00	45	750.00
07.	Periodic Maintenance of Sadarpur H/O. to Baliahati GC via Dhewkhali Bazar road from ch.0.00m to 2200.00m = 2200.00Rm (Re-seal) under Sadarpur Upazila, Dist. Faridpur. Est. No. 15/2004-2005 (Code No. 2004015).	20200.00	45	500.00
08.	(Part-A) Periodic Maintenance of Krishnapur UP H/O. to Shahapara road from ch.0.00m to 800.00Rm (Re-seal) under Sadarpur Upazila, Dist. Faridpur. (Part-B) Periodic Maintenance of Krishnapur UP H/O. to Bhabukdia Bazar via Rothkhola Bazar at Loshikordia R&H road from ch.0.00m to 1200.00m = 1200.00Rm (Re-seal) under Sadarpur Upazila, Dist. Faridpur. (Part-C) Periodic Maintenance of Krishnapur GC to Faridpur road from ch.0.00m to 1200.00m = 1200.00Rm (Re-seal) under Sadarpur Upazila, Dist. Faridpur. (Part-D) Periodic Maintenance of BRAC Office to Ali Miah Bari road from ch.0.00m to 400.00m = 400.00Rm (Re-seal) under Sadarpur Upazila, Dist. Faridpur. Est. No. 16/2004-2005 (Code No. 2004016).	32400.00	60	750.00
09.	(Part-A) Periodic Maintenance of Kamarkhali R&H to Baliakandi GC via Dumain Bazar road from ch.1500.00m to 1811.00m = 311.00Rm (Re-seal) under Modhukhali Upazila, Dist. Faridpur. (Part-B) Periodic Maintenance of Modhukhali (Mesordia) R&H to Chandpur GC via Jahapur Bazar starting from Meshordia road from ch.13500.00m to 14500.00m = 1000.00Rm (Re-seal) under Modhukhali Upazila, Dist. Faridpur. (Part-C) Periodic Maintenance of Kamarkhali GC to Jamalpur GC via Norkona (Starting from Toll office) road from ch.0.00m to 1250.00m = 1250.00Rm (Re-seal) under Modhukhali Upazila, Dist. Faridpur. Est. No. 17/2004-2005 (Code No. 2004017).	15900.00	60	500.00

1. Name of project	:	Rural Road & Culvert Maintenance Programme.
2. Date, time & place of pretender meeting	:	10 January, 2005, at 12.00 AM and office of the undersigned.
3. Last date, time and places of selling tender documents	:	17 January, 2005, 4.00 PM and a) Office of the undersigned. b) The Upazila Engineer, LGED, Sadar/Sadarpur/Alfadanga/Boalmari/Modhukhali/Nagarkanda/Bhanga/Ch arbhadrason Upazila, Dist. Faridpur. c) The Deputy Commissioner, Dist. Faridpur. d) Additional Chief Engineer (Maintenance), LGED, LGED Bhaban, Agargoan, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207.
4. Last date, time and places of receiving tender	:	18 January, 2005 up to 12.00 AM and a) Office of the undersigned. b) The Upazila Engineer, LGED, Sadar/Sadarpur/Alfadanga/Boalmari/Modhukhali/Nagarkanda/Bhanga/Ch arbhadrason Upazila, Dist. Faridpur. c) The Deputy Commissioner, Dist. Faridpur.
5. Date, time and place of opening of tender	:	18 January, 2005, 3.30 PM and Office of the undersigned.
6. Tender shall be valid for a period of 119 days after bid opening and must be accompanied by the tender security specified in Section-3. The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever. Interested tenderer may obtain further information from the undersigned and purchase the tender documents in cash from the places mentioned above. The tenderer or their authorized representatives are allowed to attend the opening of tenders.	:	

Md. Mominur Rahman  
Executive Engineer  
LGED, Faridpur.

DFP-29308-6/12/04  
G-1218