

Abbas warns of 'difficult impasse' in peace talks

Gaza teen killed in Israeli air raid

AFP, AP, Glasgow/ Gaza City

Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas warned yesterday of an "extremely difficult impasse" if a peace deal is not reached with Israel before US President George W. Bush leaves office in January.

"If President Bush's term ends without an accord we will find ourselves at an extremely difficult impasse, and we Palestinians will have to look at what measures we can take if that is the case," Abbas told AFP on board his flight back to the Middle East which made a stopover in Scotland.

Abbas was in the White House on Thursday to meet Bush who is pushing for a peace deal to resolve

the Israeli-Palestinian conflict before the end of his term early next year.

The Palestinian leader said that Bush "clearly realises that time is short, but he remains hopeful of being able to achieve something."

Bush said after meeting Abbas that a Palestinian state was "a high priority, for me and my administration -- a viable state, a state that doesn't look like Swiss cheese, a state that provides hope."

Abbas has called on the United States to use its influence to implement the so-called "roadmap" for Middle East peace and "achieve Bush's vision of two states" -- an independent Palestinian state living in peace alongside Israel.

In their talks, Abbas said he and the American president clearly stated their positions, and he applauded the Bush administration's active diplomacy to reach an accord by the start of next year.

Abbas added, however, that he did not rule out "slight modifications" to the borders in order to reach a peace agreement with the Jewish state.

At the same time, Abbas admitted there was still a "wide gap" between the Palestinian and Israeli positions on key issues.

"All the issues under discussion are difficult," he said.

"We told President Bush that there are three main obstacles -- continuing to expand Jewish settlements and maintain roadblocks in the occupied West Bank, and the question of borders which we insist must be based on the 1967 borders."

Israel occupied the West Bank

and captured Jerusalem during the 1967 Middle East war, and later annexed it.

Abbas added, however, that he did not rule out "slight modifications" to the borders in order to reach a peace agreement with the Jewish state.

Meanwhile, the teenage daughter of a Hamas chief was killed and eight people were wounded in an Israeli air raid at dawn on the Gaza Strip, Hamas and Palestinian health officials said yesterday.

The 14-year-old, Maryam Talat Mahuf, died when a missile fired by an Israeli aircraft hit her house in Beit Lahia north of Gaza City, they said, adding that the eight others were wounded.



PHOTO: AFP

Palestinian boy climbs up the ruined staircase of a house following a raid in Beit Lahia in the northern Gaza Strip yesterday. A teenager was killed and eight other people were wounded in a dawn raid by Israeli warplanes on the Gaza Strip.

German agency many have spied on Afghan ministers

AFP, Berlin

Kabul believes Germany's foreign intelligence service may have spied on several Afghan ministers, a newspaper said yesterday, following news the agency illicitly monitored the economy minister's emails.

Besides having spied on emails between minister Mohammad Amin Farhang and a reporter for the German news weekly Der Spiegel, the Afghan government also believes Germany's Federal Intelligence Service (BND) also listened in on Farhang's telephone conversations and may have spied on his colleagues, the regional Mitteldeutsche Zeitung reported.

That half a dozen Afghan ministers speak German may have "facilitated the BND's work," the newspaper wrote.



PHOTO: AFP

Sri Lankan troops walk in the grounds of the highly venerated Roman Catholic church of Madhu on Friday, shortly after wresting control over the area from Liberation Tigers for Tamil Eelam (LTTE) guerrillas. Defence officials said the Tiger rebels had withdrawn in the face of a major military advance in the northern district of Mannar.

Lanka fears more bombings

Bus blast toll hits 26

AFP, Colombo

The death toll from a bus blast outside Colombo rose to 26 on Saturday as Sri Lanka warned of more indiscriminate attacks against civilians while security forces remained locked in combat against Tamil rebels.

President Mahinda Rajapakse said Friday's blast was the work of the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) guerrillas who are resisting a major military campaign in the north of the island.

The president in a statement warned that the rebels could resort to further indiscriminate attacks and urged residents to exercise more caution.

A powerful time-bomb ripped through an overcrowded bus, blowing off its roof, as it pulled out of the Piliyandala terminal into rush-hour traffic on Friday on the outskirts of the capital.

"Two more passengers died in hospital and the number of people remaining in hospital this morning is 64," a police spokesman said.

Grief-stricken relatives gathered outside two hospitals to claim the dead from the explosion on the bus, which was jammed with office workers and schoolchildren returning from private classes.

Among those killed were a 10-year-old boy, a Buddhist monk and eight women.

"The president deplored the LTTE bomb attack on a packed bus in Piliyandala, saying terrorists had once again resorted to killing innocent civilians in the face of heavy setbacks in the battlefield," Rajapakse's office said.

The bombing was the "latest in a series of indiscriminate attacks aimed at civilians," Rajapakse said in the statement, appealing to the public to be more vigilant and to help troops to foil the "destructive plans" of the rebels.

"China has indicated that it will be more than happy to supply this equipment to us, which will strengthen our arms in dealing with terrorist activities."

He did not disclose when and what type of equipment Pakistan would purchase from China.

Pakistan to buy anti-terror equipment from China

AFP, Islamabad

Pakistan will purchase equipment from China to fight terrorist activity, Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi said on Friday.

China is one of the closest allies and largest arms supplier of Pakistan, which has been hit by a wave of suicide bombings in which more than 1,000 people have died in the past year.

"Pakistan has expressed the desire to purchase some anti-terror equipment from China," Qureshi told a joint press conference with the visiting Chinese foreign minister Yang Jiechi after their talks in Islamabad.

"China has indicated that it will be more than happy to supply this equipment to us, which will strengthen our arms in dealing with terrorist activities."

He did not disclose when and what type of equipment Pakistan would purchase from China.

Gillani has 'no problem' with Musharraf

PTI, Islamabad

Pakistan Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gillani has indicated that he intends to work with President Pervez Musharraf, saying he does not think that his government "will have any problem" with the former military ruler.

Gillani, who heads the new ruling coalition formed by the Pakistan People's Party and PML-N, also said he did not believe that Musharraf had any intention of using the President's controversial powers to dissolve the parliament and dismiss the prime minister.

"He (Musharraf) has been President for eight years. He has willingly doffed his uniform. And he has recently conducted an election, one that has brought pro-democracy forces into power. I don't think we will have any problem from him," Gillani said in an interview with the Nawa-i-Waqt Urdu media group.

"Zardari has every right to contest the election. As far as my office is concerned, I was made Prime Minister by my party. And I will stay with the party," he said.

using his powers under the controversial Article 58(2b) of the constitution to dissolve parliament in case the judges deposed during last year's emergency are reinstated.

"We don't believe the President has any intention of using the clause," Gillani said. "The people gave us our mandate for the restoration of the constitution. We will have to respect that. And so does the President." While the PPP has indicated that it is willing to forge a working relationship with Musharraf, PML-N chief Nawaz Sharif has been insisting that the President should quit.

Gillani avoided giving a direct reply to a question on the possibility of PPP co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari becoming Prime Minister after contesting by-elections in June.

"Zardari has every right to contest the election. As far as my office is concerned, I was made Prime Minister by my party. And I will stay with the party," he said.



PHOTO: AFP

Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf (L) is speaking with Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi (R) during a meeting in Rawalpindi yesterday. Pakistan will purchase equipment from China to fight terrorist activity, Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi said.

সিলেট গ্যাস ফিল্ডস লিমিটেড

(পেট্রোবাংলার একটি কোম্পানী)

Sylhet Gas Fields Limited

(A Company of Petrobangla)

Invitation for Bid

গাছ দামান, গাছের পরিচাৰ কৰন

এবং পারিবহন বাচন

গ্যাস জাতীয় সংস্থা। এর অপচয় রো

করে জাতীয় দায়িত্ব পালন কৰন

Dated: 21-04-2008

Tender No. SGFL/07-08/FP-56

1. Ministry/Division : Ministry of Power, Energy & Mineral Resource/Energy & Mineral Resource Division.

2. Agency : Sylhet Gas Fields Limited (A Company of Petrobangla).

3. Procuring entity name : Sylhet Gas Fields Limited (SGFL).

4. Procuring entity district : Sylhet.

5. Invitation Ref. No. : SGFL/07-08/FP-56 dated 21-04-2008.

6. Invitation for : Supply of Silicagel.

KEY INFORMATION

7. Procurement method : Open tender method (International Competitive Bidding), Single stage one envelope system.

FUNDING INFORMATION

8. Budget and source of funds : Own source of Sylhet Gas Fields Limited.

PARTICULAR INFORMATION

9. Project name : N/A.

10. Tender publication date : N/A.

11. Tender last selling date : 08-06-2008.

12. Place of tender selling : a) Sylhet Gas Fields Limited, PO Chiknagool, Sylhet-3152.
b) Sylhet Gas Fields Limited, Dhaka Liaison Office, House-4/10, Iqbal Road, Block-A, Mohammadpur, Dhaka-1207.
c) Petrobangla, 3, Kawran Bazar C/A, Dhaka-1215.
d) Titas Gas T&D Company Ltd, 105, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Kawran Bazar C/A, Dhaka-1215.
e) Gas Transmission Company Ltd, Red Crescent Borak Tower (Level 4-6), 71-72, Old Elephant Road, Eskaton, Dhaka-1000.
f) Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration & Production Co Ltd, Shahjalal Tower, 80/A-B, Shiddeswari, Malibagh, Dhaka-1217.

13. Date & time of selling tender document : The tender document will be available from 28-04-2008 to 08-06-2008 within office hours on all working days.

14. Tender closing date & time : 09-06-2008 and 12:15 hrs (BST).

15. Tender opening date & time : 09-06-2008 and 12:15 hrs (BST).

16. Place of tender receiving & opening : Sylhet Gas Fields Limited, Dhaka Liaison Office, House-4/10, Iqbal Road, Block-A, Mohammadpur, Dhaka-1207.

INFORMATION FOR TENDERER

17. Eligibility of bidder : Reputed manufacturer(s)/supplier(s)/firms from all countries except Israel are eligible to participate in the bidding. Likewise the offered materials should be of origin of any country other than Israel. The bidder must have minimum 5 years international business experience in relevant field and also have 5 years supply record other than his own country. The manufacturer or producer must have minimum 5 years experience in manufacturing or producing their offered type of product.

18. Brief description of goods : Silica-gel.

19. Price of tender document : Tk 4,000.00 or US\$ 60.00 (non-refundable).

20. Address of the official inviting tender : Managing Director, Sylhet Gas Fields Limited, PO Chiknagool, Sylhet-3152, Bangladesh. Attn: Deputy General Manager (Procurement), Phone No. 880-821-2871735 (Ext. 372).

21. Special instruction : a) Bid must remain valid for 90 days from the date of closing of the tender.
b) Bidders shall furnish with the bid an acceptable bid security bond in the form of Demand Draft/Pay Order/Bank Guarantee issued by a scheduled bank in Bangladesh or Bank Guarantee issued by any reputed foreign bank duly endorsed with full obligation and liability by a scheduled bank of Bangladesh in the format provided in the tender document amounting to Taka 1,40,000.00 or US\$ 2000.00 or GBP 1000.00 or euro 1400.00 with full obligations & liabilities.
c) The bid bond must remain valid for one hundred and twenty (120) days from the date of closing of the tender.
d) The scope of supply, terms of supply and information required to be furnished by the bidders, etc are included in the tender document.
e) Bid(s) submitted after the deadline for receiving of bids will be rejected and returned unopened to the bidder.
f) The bid must not be submitted by Fax or E-mail. Photocopy of faxes or e-mailed bid from the principal will not be accepted.
g) This tender notice will also be available at Petrobangla website @ www.Petrobangla.org.bd and SGFL website: www.sgfl.org.bd

22. Sylhet Gas Fields Limited reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids or annul the bidding process without assigning any reason.

GD-1984

Deputy General Manager (Procurement)

24 die in Afghan unrest

AFP, Kabul

Insurgents led by the Taliban movement that was ousted from government seven years ago have in recent weeks stepped up attacks on police, seen as a weak branch of the security forces.

More than three dozen Afghan policemen have been killed in attacks this month, according to an AFP tally.

Also Saturday, four suspected Taliban militants were killed when a car they were using to move explosives blew up in the eastern province of Laghman, a provincial official said.

"Four terrorists were killed when the vehicle that they used to transport explosives for terrorist activities exploded. We think they were Taliban," provincial spokesman Abdul Wakil Atak told AFP.

Advantage of this new climate, the people of the two countries can move forward to build a permanent friendship."

Announcing measures to ease travel across the LoC, Dr Singh spoke of features like triple entry permits and completion of the verification process within six weeks. Operationalisation of Kargil-Skardu and Jammu-Sialkot routes are under discussion.

The frequency of the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad and Poonch-Rawalakot bus services should be increased to weekly from the present fortnightly. "However, none of these steps will be effective unless there is a sustained climate of peace," he cautioned.

Dr Singh's comments came at the inauguration of a bridge over the Chenab river in the Akhnoor region of Occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

"There is a growing sentiment among the people in both countries that misunderstandings and problems between them should be resolved through dialogue. Taking

Arijit Kumar Biswas
Maintenance Engineer
Phone : 8031065