

Parties closer to consensus on Nepal power-sharing

THE KATHMANDU POST/ANN, Kathmandu

Nepal's three big parties in the constituent assembly have come closer to a consensus on most of their differences including amendment of the constitution following parleys at bilateral meetings Saturday.

They have agreed to a meeting Sunday morning at Maoist Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal's residence, during which they will set up two tripartite panels—one to prepare a draft of the amendment to the constitution and the other to prepare a package for taking the ongoing peace process to a logical end.

"We have agreed to set up the panels and reach a consensus by day after tomorrow," said Dahal, coming out of a meeting with Nepali Congress leaders at Singhdhar.

He said the new agreement will

cover ways to take the ongoing peace process to a logical end, amend the constitution and prepare a power-sharing deal among the parties.

"We still have pending issues concerning integration of the armies, they (other parties) have called for change in the YCL's working style, return of land and relief to the conflict victims, which is still an unresolved issue and a commission for disappearances and others are yet to be formed," said Dahal, adding, "We have to address all these."

The second issue to be addressed immediately is amending the constitution, he added.

"There is debate over two-third majority for formation and ouster of the government, the constitution has mentioned the names of the seven parties and attached a list of legislators—which are all irrelevant in the present context,"

said Dahal. He said another issue was related to power-sharing. "Discussion on the issues has been quite positive," he said.

The parties have put constitutional amendment, the peace process and power-sharing in that order of priority, according to NC general secretary Bimalendra Nidhi. He said there was an understanding in principle to address the issues in a package and make a strong commitment to refrain from getting involved in the petty game of frequent change of government at least for a few years or until the new constitution is promulgated.

During his meeting with Maoist Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal Saturday, Sitaula said he was surprised the Maoists did not propose Koirala's name, recognising the octogenarian leader's contribution to leading the country to the present stage.

"During my talks, I told them in context that they (Maoists) should have offered the post to Koirala because of his role from thrashing out the 12-point understanding to successful holding of the constituent assembly polls," said Sitaula.

"We are not against the simple majority system for formation and ouster of the government but what we wanted is that there should not be space for the petty game of frequent change of government," said Maoist Chairman Dahal.

UML leader Bhim Rawal said

US First lady in Afghanistan to highlight progress

AP, AFP, Bamiyan/ Kabul

First lady Laura Bush, on a mission to highlight signs of rebirth in war-weary Afghanistan, ventured outside of Kabul on Sunday to an area that symbolises both the destruction of war and Afghanistan's attempt at rebirth.

Mrs. Bush, on her third unannounced visit to the country, flew into the Afghan capital then immediately boarded a helicopter for a 50-minute flight to Bamiyan

Province, the farthest she has travelled from Kabul.

Her chopper touched down in a dusty field at a provincial reconstruction team compound operated by New Zealand. From there she could see the empty niches in a cliffside where two giant Buddha statues once stood.

They were carved into the sandstone cliffs more than 2,000 years ago, but were demolished by the Taliban, which considered them

idolatrous and anti-Muslim, in March 2001. Destruction of the historical and cultural treasures prompted an outcry from the international community.

The first lady's visit comes ahead of a donors conference in Paris, where the US hopes billions of dollars in international aid will be pledged to help the embattled nation. Afghanistan was ruled by the repressive Taliban until US forces invaded following the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

The students' plight made headlines last week when Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice interceded with Israel on behalf of seven students with prestigious Fulbright scholarships awarded by the US government. But hundreds without such powerful allies will likely lose their shot at a good education, given Gaza's sparse offerings.

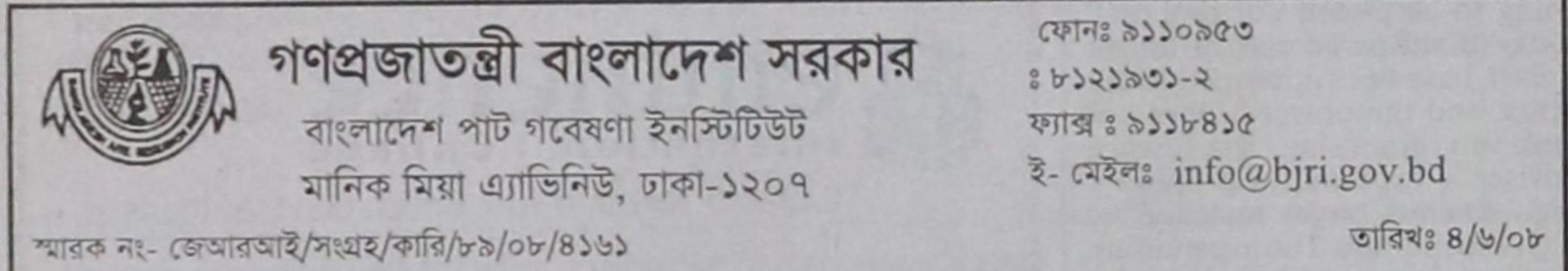
The blockade, imposed after Hamas' violent takeover of Gaza a year ago, is meant to bring down the Islamic militants and inspire Gazans to opt for a more moderate leadership.

But critics say the closure, backed by the international community, is accomplishing the opposite.

Hamas has become more entrenched and Gazans are growing more angry at the West as isolation worsens the strip's poverty, say the critics, who include both Israelis and Palestinians. They add that Gaza is also being robbed of future leaders—the trapped students because they can't get the necessary training.

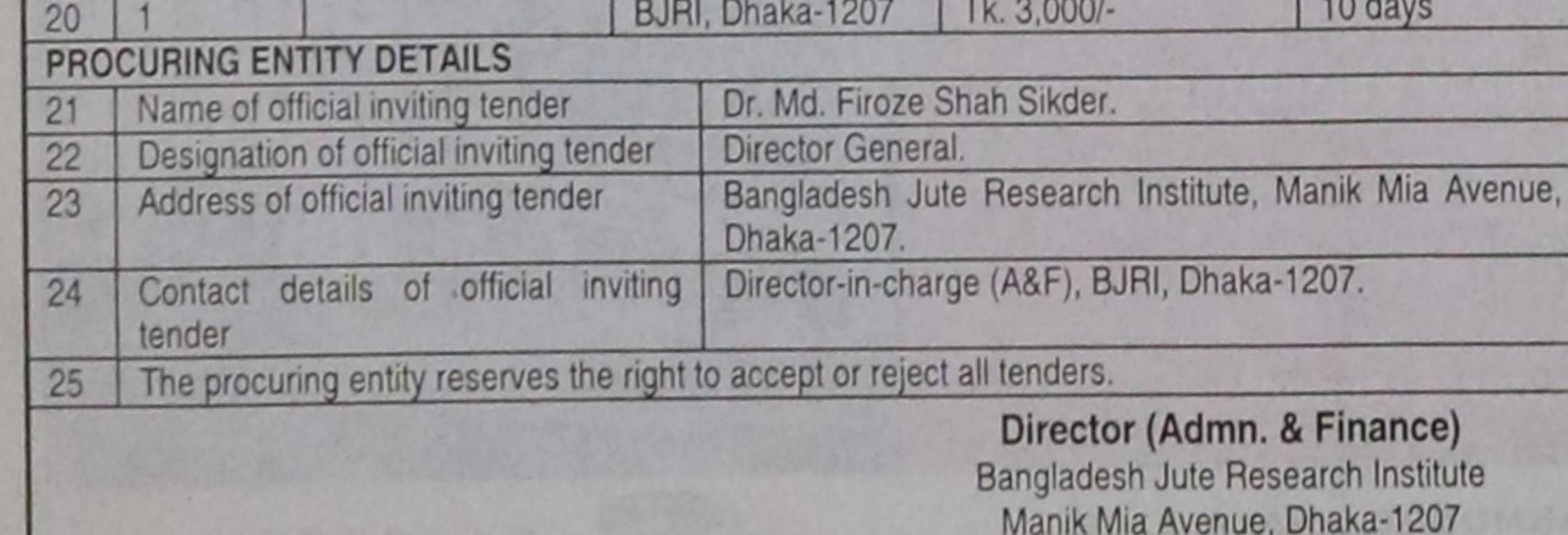


US First Lady Laura Bush (C) greets women business entrepreneurs as they sell their wares at a bazaar in the Bamiyan Province in Afghanistan yesterday. US First Lady Laura Bush flew into Afghanistan on an unannounced visit to meet President Hamid Karzai and visit development projects in an affirmation of support for the troubled nation.



Invitation for Re-Tender

1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Agriculture.			
2	Procuring entity name	Director General, BJRI, Dhaka-1207.			
3	Procuring entity district	Dhaka			
4	Invitation for	Annual Research Report, Program and Highlights (Printing & Binding) of Technological Wing.			
5	Invitation Ref No	JRI/Procure/T-89/08/4161			
6	Date	04-06-2008.			
7	Procurement method	Open Tendering Method (OTM).			
8	Budget and source of funds	GoB.			
9	Project/program name (if applicable)	Revenue budget.			
10	Tender package no.				
11	Tender package name	Annual Research Report, Program and Highlights (Printing & Binding) of Technological Wing.			
12	Tender last selling date	23-06-2008.			
13	Tender closing date and time	Date: 24-06-2008. Time: 2:30pm			
14	Tender opening date and time	Date: 24-06-2008 Time: 3:00pm			
15	Name & address of the office(s)				
- Selling tender document (Principal)		Director (Admn. & Finance) and Procurement and Sale Section, BJRI, Dhaka-1207.			
- Receiving tender document		Board Room, Admn. Building (1st Floor), BJRI, Dhaka.			
- Opening tender document		Board Room, Admn. Building (1st Floor), BJRI, Dhaka.			
16	Eligibility of tenderer	Tenderer will have legal, financial, professional and technical capacity to deliver & have fulfilled the obligations of all tax requirements.			
17	Brief description of goods or works	Annual Research Report, Program and Highlights (Printing & Binding) of Technological Wing.			
18	Brief description of related services	N/A.			
19	Price of tender document	Tk. 200/- (two hundred only).			
20	Lot No	Identification of package	Location	Tender security amount (Tk)	Completion time in days
21	1		BJRI, Dhaka-1207	Tk. 3,000/-	10 days



Hundreds of students still stranded in Gaza

AP, Gaza City

They squander their days watching TV and surfing the Web instead of studying, but it's not for lack of discipline. Gaza students accepted at foreign universities are stuck at home because Israel and Egypt won't let them leave the blockaded territory.

The students' plight made headlines last week when Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice interceded with Israel on behalf of seven students with prestigious Fulbright scholarships awarded by the US government. But hundreds without such powerful allies will likely lose their shot at a good education, given Gaza's sparse offerings.

The blockade, imposed after Hamas' violent takeover of Gaza a year ago, is meant to bring down the Islamic militants and inspire Gazans to opt for a more moderate leadership.

But critics say the closure, backed by the international community, is accomplishing the opposite.

Hamas has become more entrenched and Gazans are growing more angry at the West as isolation worsens the strip's poverty, say the critics, who include both Israelis and Palestinians. They add that Gaza is also being robbed of future leaders—the trapped students because they can't get the necessary training.

Earth is 'beautiful', says Japanese astronaut

AP, Tokyo

Japanese astronaut Akihiko Hoshide, on his first mission in space, said Sunday he was in awe of the Earth as he spoke with his prime minister in Tokyo.

Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda joined a group of students who spoke through a video link with Hoshide, who is on the International Space Station (ISS) to help install Japan's first space laboratory, Kibo.

Hoshide, working 338 kilometers (210 miles) above the Earth, showed students the inside of the bus-size lab.

"Earth, as I see it from here, is very beautiful," he said, pointing to one of the round windows of the lab. "I think to myself it is so wonderful and fragile."

Fukuda, amazed at how sharp the image was, said: "I can see you very clearly."

"Maybe you can see my face getting dark, too," Hoshide replied, referring to his stubble.

37 missing in Ukraine mine blast

AFP, Yenakiyevo

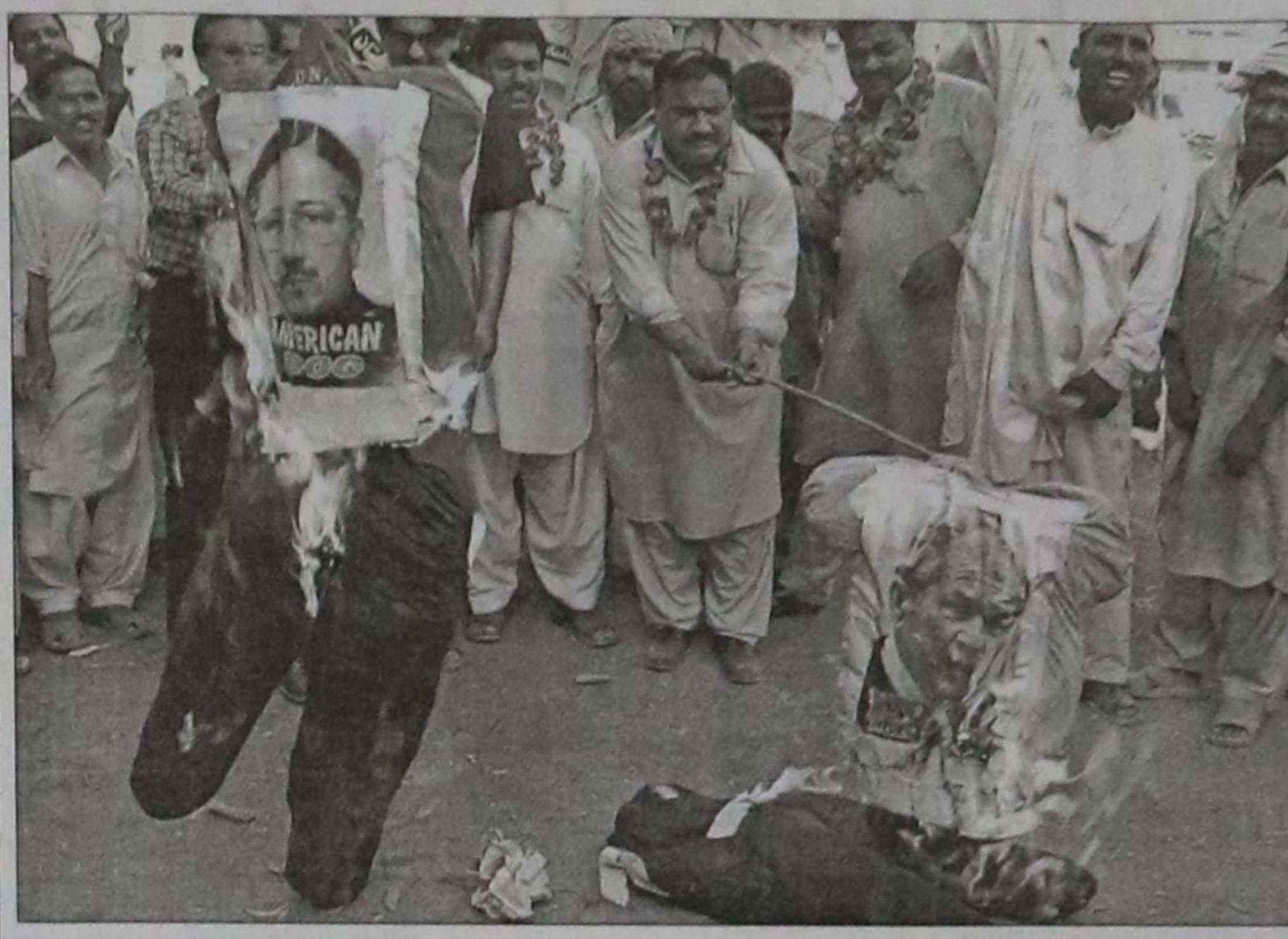
Thirty-seven people were missing Sunday after an explosion ripped through a coal mine in eastern Ukraine, an emergency official said.

"The fate of 37 people who were in the mine when the explosion took place... remains unknown," said Andriy Bondarenko, the regional head of the Emergency Situations Ministry.

The blast took place at around 5:00 am local time (0200 GMT) 1,000 meters below the surface of the Karl Marx mine in Yenakiyevo, some 60 kilometers north-east of the regional capital Donetsk, he said.

The blast severely damaged the entrances to the mine and rescue workers on the scene said they had to reach the affected area.

Three women operating the elevator shaft were hospitalized with serious burns and at least one other person on the surface was injured, said Marina Nikitina, head of local branch of work-safety body the Committee for the Protection of Labour.



Pakistani protesters set fire to an effigy of Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf and his US counterpart George W. Bush in Multan yesterday in support of anti-Musharraf lawyers. The protesters gathered in the city in a bid to persuade fellow citizens to participate in the upcoming June 10 march announced by lawyers to press for resignation of Musharraf.

China, Taiwan look to build trust at talks

AFP, Beijing

China and Taiwan will this week hold historic talks aimed at building trust following decades of angry rhetoric and military tensions that made their relationship one of the world's potential flashpoints.

The four days of meetings in Beijing starting on Wednesday will be the first direct dialogue between the rivals in over a decade and have come about thanks to a dramatic rapprochement between the long-time rivals in recent months.

Establishing permanent direct flights between China and Taiwan and allowing more mainland Chinese tourists to visit the island will be the main topics on the agenda.

However analysts from China and Taiwan agreed that, with mutual distrust and suspicion so entrenched, this week's events were only the first step in a very long march towards a permanent thaw in relations.

Myanmar dead may never be identified

Says Red Cross

AP, Yangon

Tens of thousands of people killed in last month's cyclone may never be identified because their bodies have decomposed so badly and many ended up far from home, an aid organisation said Sunday.

The task of burying an estimated 78,000 bodies has been overshadowed by efforts to assist Cyclone Nargis' 2.4 million survivors, many of whom are still without adequate food, water and shelter, the International Committee of the Red Cross said.

As a result, buried bodies still litter the hard-hit Irrawaddy delta more than five weeks after the storm, while other bodies have been dumped in canals or unmarked mass graves.

Survivors in the delta said they tried to identify bodies but were overwhelmed by the numbers of dead clogging rivers and washing up on beaches.

"Initially, the bodies were identified by relatives and we cremated them after holding religious rites," said Myint Thuang, a survivor from the delta town of Bogalay. "However, after more bodies washed up on the shore and with no one to identify them we buried them in mass graves."

The Red Cross has received reports that some bodies ended more than four miles from their place of origin, he said.

The latest defence ministry figures bring to 4,122 the number

28 rebels killed in Lanka clashes

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's defence ministry said yesterday its forces had killed at least 28 Tamil Tiger rebels in the latest clashes across the north of the island.

The fighting on Saturday in the Mannar, Vavuniya, Weli Oya and Jaffna areas saw one soldier killed, the ministry said. It also said 25 rebels and 34 soldiers were injured.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), however, said that they had killed four soldiers in the Vavuniya area alone. The rebels did not report on their own losses.

Casualty figures in Sri Lanka cannot be independently verified, as the defence ministry bars journalists from reporting from frontline areas or travelling into the rebel-held north.

On Saturday security forces killed at least 13 guerrillas in separate attacks in the north and bombed a rebel base, the military said Saturday.

Air force fighter jets pounded a rebel base in Poonery on Friday, hours after the guerrillas set off bombs in the southern suburb of Colombo and central district of Kandy, the defence ministry said.

The latest defence ministry figures bring to 4,122 the number

of rebels killed since the start of the year, when the government pulled out of a Norwegian-brokered truce with the rebels.

The ministry says it has lost only 340 soldiers during the same period.

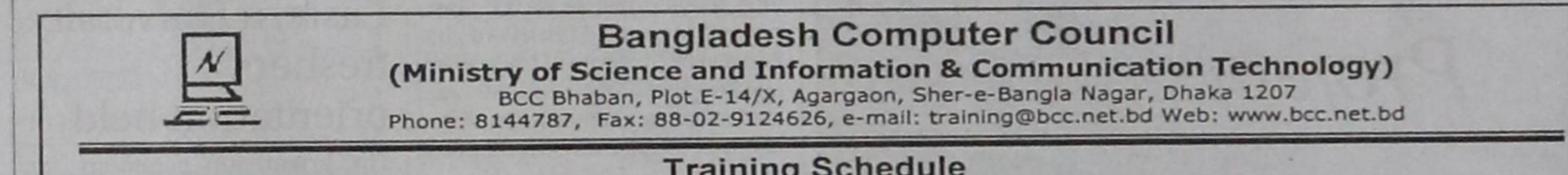
The Tigers are fighting to carve out an independent homeland for minority Tamils in the island's north and east. Tens of thousands of people have died on both sides in more than 35 years of conflict.

Earlier Sri Lankan police detained more than 50 people for questioning following twin bomb attacks blamed on Tamil Tiger rebels that killed 23 civilians, the defence ministry said on Saturday.

The suspects were rounded up near the town of Moratuwa, south of Colombo, where a crowded passenger bus hit a roadside mine during morning rush-hour on Friday, killing 21 civilians, military spokesman Udaya Nanayakkara said.

Five-one people have been picked up for questioning in connection with the Moratuwa blast, Nanayakkara told AFP.

Some of those detained were rounded up on Friday night, while the rest were picked up on Saturday, he said.



Training Schedule

July – December 2008

SL.	Title of the course	Duration (hours)	Starting Date	Course Fee (Tk)	Last Date of Registration	Pre-requisite
1	Application Development using .NET Framework	90 (5pm-8pm)	08-07-08	7000	03-07-08	Graduate, experience in the use of Windows applications, experience in computer programming and database
2	AutoCAD	63 (5pm-8pm)	08-07-08	9000	03-07-08	