

## 10 killed as Thai army helicopter crashes

AP, Bangkok

A Thai army helicopter crashed in an insurgency-plagued area of southern Thailand on Friday, killing all 10 people on board.

The helicopter reported engine trouble before it crash-landed and exploded in Yala province, scene of a bloody Muslim separatist insurgency, said army spokesman Col. Akara Thiprote.

There was no evidence the helicopter had been attacked, he said. Eight soldiers, one police officer and one civilian were killed in the crash.

Other details were not immediately available.

More than 3,000 people have been killed in Thailand's southernmost provinces since the insurgency erupted in early 2004.

Muslims in the three southern provinces of Yala, Pattani and Narathiwat, the majority in Buddhist Thailand's far south accuse the central government of discrimination, especially in jobs and education.

## Security beefed up at UN offices in Pakistan

PTI, Islamabad

The United Nations has beefed up security at its offices in Pakistan in the wake of a suicide car bombing outside the Danish embassy here, an official said in Islamabad.

Security at UN offices has been beefed up as a precautionary measure to ward off any danger to the organisation's staff and property, Amena Kamaal, Communication Advisor to the UN Resident Director, told the Daily Times.

Kamaal rejected the claim that UN offices had been temporarily closed due to the security situation in Pakistan. She said only selected staff members had been asked to stop attending offices for a week.

"Selected staffers have been asked to stay away, but continue to operate from their homes as work is going on inside some of the buildings," Kamaal said.

## Cash crunch threatens food aid for Myanmar's needy: WFP

AFP, Bangkok

A critical shortage of funds threatens a helicopter operation delivering desperately needed food to Myanmar's cyclone survivors, the United Nations said yesterday.

Its World Food Programme (WFP) has delivered rice and high-energy biscuits to more than 675,000 people in the worst-hit Irrawaddy Delta region, but one million survivors remain without foreign assistance.

Ten helicopters were given permission to deliver food and other relief supplies to the delta, but only half of the 50 million dollars needed for the operation has been raised.

## Mugabe vows to remain in power until land returned

AFP, Harare

Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe has warned a week before a run-off election that he will not leave power until land is returned to the majority black population, state media reported yesterday.

"Once I am sure this legacy (of returning land to the black population) is truly in your hands, people are empowered... then I can say: Aha, the work is done," Mugabe said in the Herald newspaper.

"I walk on this land. I farm on this land. I sleep on it.... That is truly our number one legacy."

The government mouthpiece reported that Mugabe made the comments at two rallies in the Matabeleland North province in the country's west ahead of the June 27 presidential run-off.

Mugabe has previously warned he was ready to fight to keep the opposition out of power, and he repeated earlier statements about veterans of the 1970s liberation war.

"The war veterans came to me and said: 'President, we can never accept that our country, which we won through the barrel of a gun, be taken merely by an 'x' made by a ballot pen'."

Mugabe embarked on a chaotic land reform programme at the turn of the decade which saw some 4,000 white-owned farms expropriated by the state.

He has repeatedly portrayed his opponent in the run-off poll, Morgan Tsvangirai, as a stooge of former colonial power Britain and



Indian railway workers survey damaged railway tracks, which connect Orissa with West Bengal, after they were damaged by floodwaters in Midnapore, some 150km south of Kolkata yesterday. Chief Minister of the Indian state of West Bengal Buddhadev Bhattacharjee described the flood situation in the twin districts of Midnapore as 'very bad' with at least 25 people dead and some two millions displaced.

## Lankan forces keep on fighting Tigers: 29 die

AP, Colombo

Fighting between the government forces and Tamil Tiger rebels along the northern front lines killed 26 rebels and three government soldiers, the military said yesterday.

The newly reported fighting took place in Vavuniya, Mannar, Welioya and Jaffna regions bordering the rebels' de facto state in the north Thursday, said a defence ministry official, speaking on condition of anonymity due to government regulation.

Troops have battled for months over territory around the rebels' northern strongholds, promising

they would crush the insurgents by the end of the year.

The rebels have strongly resisted and halted some military advances. Diplomats and other observers say the army has faced more resistance than expected.

In the latest infantry clashes, army troops killed 11 rebels in Vavuniya while separate fighting in the nearby Mannar district left six rebels and three soldiers dead Thursday, the official said.

He said clashes in Jaffna and Welioya killed nine rebels while wounding 33 rebels and eight soldiers.

Rebel spokesman Rasiyah

Ilanthirayan could not immediately be reached for comment.

It was not possible to independently verify the military's claims because journalists are banned from the northern jungles where much of the fighting takes place.

Each side commonly exaggerates its enemy's casualties while playing down its own.

Tamil Tigers have fought since 1983 to create an independent homeland for minority Tamils who have been marginalized by successive governments controlled by majority Sinhalese. More than 70,000 people have been killed.



Members of People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) wave national flags after breaking through police lines in front of the Government House in Bangkok yesterday. At least 8,000 Thai protesters on Friday pushed past a police barricade to the gates of Prime Minister Samak Sundaravej's office, demanding his resignation.

## Thousands of Thai protesters clash with police

AP, Bangkok

Police held back thousands of protesters attempting Friday to punch through a cordon around Thailand's government offices, which demonstrators vowed to peacefully besiege until the prime minister resigns.

One group of about 1,000 protesters managed to break through a line of about 200 police officers and descended upon Government House, but were stopped just short of entering the compound by other security forces. Another group of several thousand pushed against police armed with shields and clubs.

A protest leader, Chamlong Srimuang, said some 10,000 demonstrators were converging on the compound, but their numbers could not be independently verified.

The protesters, spearheaded by the People's Alliance for Democracy movement, claim that Prime Minister Samak Sundaravej's government is a proxy for former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, who was ousted in a 2006 military coup.

The alliance led mass demonstrations before the coup demanding Thaksin step down for alleged corruption and abuse of power.

They now accuse Samak's government of interfering with corruption charges against Thaksin and trying to change the constitution for its own self-interest.

Although facing criminal charges for alleged corruption, Thaksin remains a powerful figure in Thailand.

The protesters, most of them gathered at a major intersection, were within sight of the government seat Friday, but police, equipped with large trucks, tear gas and water cannons, threw a tight ring around the compound.

Reporters saw about a dozen protesters sustain minor injuries during the scuffles. But elsewhere, an almost festive atmosphere prevailed as protesters waved, cheered and chatted with security officials.

Police spokesman Maj Gen Surapol Tuanthong said around 5,000 police were deployed to block roads and prevent "the mob" from getting near Government House, a compound of ornate buildings from the 1920s set on 11 acres of land.

Samak was not expected to be at the compound on Friday.

Government spokesman Wichianchote Sukhotrat said schools and government offices around Government House were ordered to close Friday for safety reasons and "to allow police to work smoothly."

The demonstrators claiming their ranks would swell to 100,000 as reinforcements converge from across the country have been in Bangkok's streets for the past three weeks.

## 4 Pak soldiers killed in firing at border with India

AFP, Islamabad

Four Pakistani soldiers were killed on Thursday in an exchange of fire with unknown attackers at the border with India in disputed Kashmir, the military said.

The soldiers were on a routine patrol along the Line of Control, the de facto border with India, when "unknown miscreants" fired at them, military spokesman Major General Athar Abbas told AFP.

"Two of our soldiers embraced martyrdom at the spot and two others injured later died at hospital," Abbas said, adding that three others suffered minor injuries.

The attackers were hiding in the thick forest in the Hajera sector along the Line of Control on the Pakistani side of the border when they fired at the troops, he said.

Abbas said the soldiers returned fire and afterwards search parties were sent to hunt the attackers.

## Manmohan govt's fate to be decided on June 25: Karat

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE, PTI, New Delhi

Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) general secretary Prakash Karat said on Friday that the Left's next meeting with the ruling United Progressive Alliance (UPA) on the India-US nuclear pact June 25 will decide the government's fate.

"We will come to know whether this government will survive or not on June 25," Karat told reporters in New Delhi.

The Left-UPA coordination committee on the nuclear deal was scheduled for Thursday but was postponed to June 25 after the Left parties objected to New Delhi finalising the India-specific safeguards with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) - a step necessary to take the deal ahead.

In the midst of a battle of attrition with the government, CPI(M) General Secretary on Friday expressed the hope that the UPA

coalition would last its full term.

Appearing in a public platform, Karat did not make any reference to the stand-off on the Indo-US nuclear deal, but made a veiled reference to the issue reminding Prime Minister Manmohan Singh that he had earlier said that UPA was not a one-issue government.

Inaugurating a seminar on OBC reservation here, he spoke of commercialisation of education and asked organisations like Students Federation of India to counter such trends.

"All this I am speaking hoping that the government will continue its full term. We are trying to make serious efforts. Sometime back, the Prime Minister has said that we are not a one-issue government," Karat said.

The CPI(M) leader's comments come against the backdrop of the Left parties' serious opposition to the Indo-US nuclear deal in the context of government's determination to push it ahead at the IAEA.

"We hope that the government

will fulfill its commitments," the CPI(M) leader said.

While the Left have threatened to withdraw support if the government took the next step to finalise the India-specific safeguards agreement with the IAEA, the UPA partners have come out supporting the deal with a rider that any decision on it should not lead to early elections.

Earlier, while addressing a seminar organised by the Students Federation of India, the CPI-M's student wing, Karat said: "We hope this government will complete its term. Efforts are being made for that."

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's government is facing its biggest crisis after its Communist allies refused to allow it to go ahead with the India-specific safeguards pact and the 123 agreement with Washington.

The CPI-M Wednesday hinted it would withdraw support to the government if it went ahead with the nuclear deal.

## NWFP allowed to strike deal with Taliban

THE DAWN, Peshawar

Islamabad has authorised the NWFP government to enter into deals with the Taliban for ensuring peace in the province and called for respecting such agreements.

"The federal government will support the provincial government in its efforts to eliminate extremism and improve security in troubled areas," Rehman Malik, the prime minister's adviser on interior, told a high-level meeting of officials of the federal and provincial governments at the chief minister's secretariat on Thursday.

Awami National Party president Asfandiyar Wali Khan, Chief Minister Ameer Khan Hoti, NWFP government's peace envoy Afrasiab Khattak, senior provincial minister Rahimuddin Khan, federal interior secretary Kamal Shah, NWFP chief secretary Sahibzada Riaz Noor, heads of federal and provincial law-enforcement agencies, all political agents and DCOs attended the meeting, which lasted nine

hours, discussed the law and order situation in the province and the tribal areas.

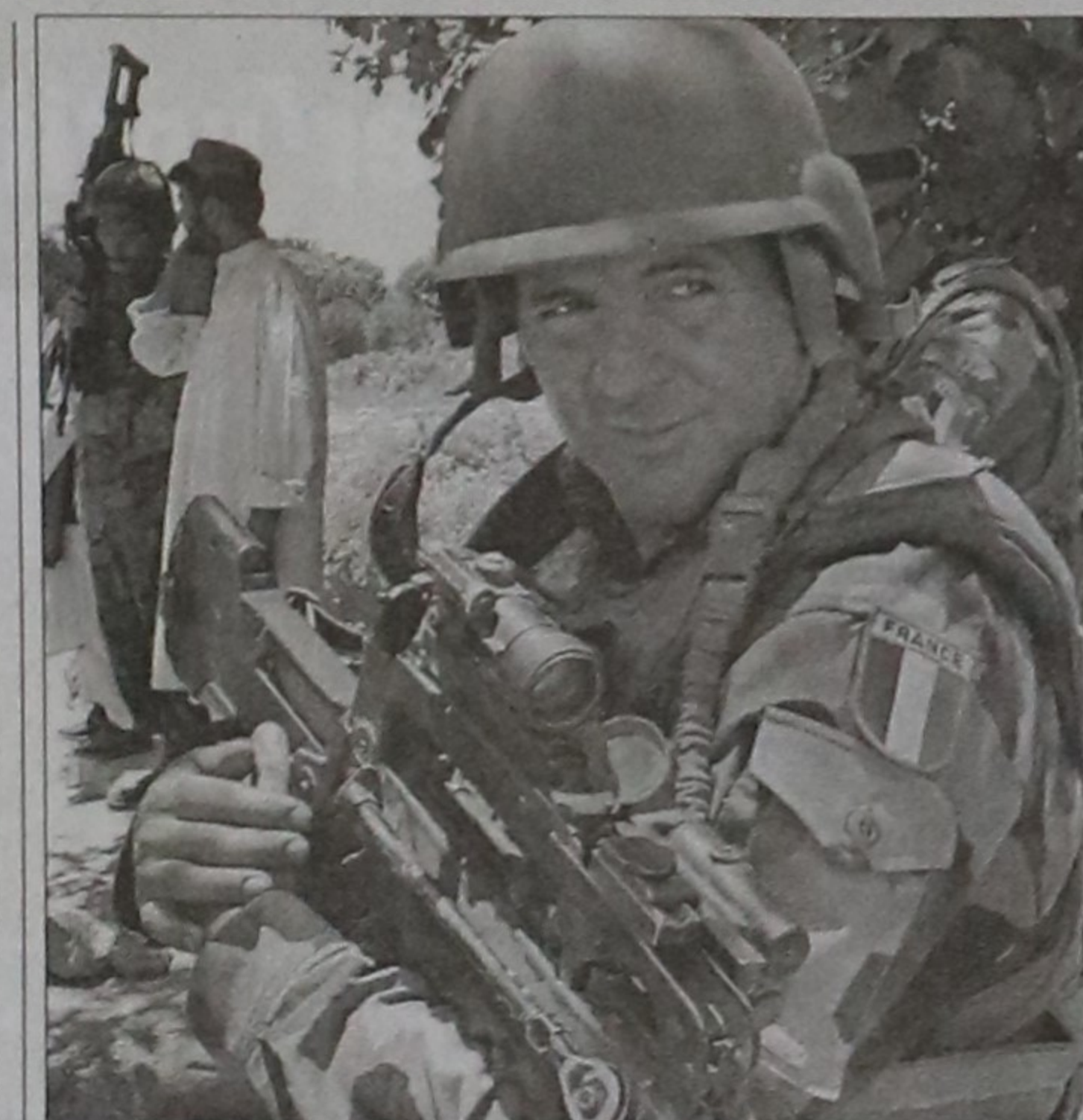
Sources privy to the meeting told Dawn that the provincial government had been directed to chalk out plans, both short- and long-term, for countering militancy.

Under the short-term plan, police strength would be increased and both Frontier Corps and Frontier Constabulary, backed by armoured personnel carriers, would provide force for the security of the provincial capital.

For the purpose, the required number of paramilitary forces would be called from other parts of the country and deployed in and around Peshawar.

The sources said the provincial government had been directed to prepare an extensive long-term security plan outlining recruitment of police force, armament requirements and communication tools.

Malik asked the provincial government to prepare a summary of recommendations for submission to the prime minister.



A French soldier from Nato guards in the Arghandab district of Kandahar province yesterday. A suicide attack on a military convoy killed a US-led soldier and six Afghans in southern Afghanistan, a day after a huge operation to drive Taliban rebels from a key stronghold.



## Fareast Islami Life Insurance Company Ltd.

T K Bhaban (13<sup>th</sup> Floor) 13, Kawran Bazar Dhaka-1215

### INVITATION FOR BIDS (2<sup>ND</sup> RETENDER)

SEALED TENDERS are hereby invited by the undersigned for supply, installation, testing and commissioning of 2x1000 KVA electrical substation including riser busbar trunking for Fareast Islami Life Insurance Co. Ltd. at 35, Topkhana Road, Dhaka from Contractors who have the following qualifications.

- Contractor's Qualifications: Firms (single/joint ventures), who have proven experience in successful supply, installation, testing, commissioning and maintenance of similar work within the past 7 (seven) years in a single tender in any Govt./Semi Govt./Autonomous/ Private Organization of Tk 5 (Five) Million. The intending bidders shall have to apply in their letterhead pad along with the following documents in support of their eligibility and obtain permission for the issuance of the Tender Document.
  - Photocopies of valid Trade License, Tax Identification number with up to date tax clearance certificate and VAT registration certificate.
  - Experience certificate along with the respective "Work Order".
  - Photocopy of valid ABC class Electro-mechanical Contractor and Supervisory license issued by the Bangladesh Electricity Licensing Board.
- Tender Documents will be issued only to the contractors or their authorized representatives on cash payment (nonrefundable) of Tk. 2,000/- (Taka two thousand) only from the Accounts Department, FILIC during office hours from 21.06.2008 to 02.08.2008.
- A pre-bid meeting will be held on 01.07.2008 at 11:00 am.
- Earnest Money at the rate minimum 1% (One percent) of the total bid amount in favour of Fareast Islamic Life Insurance Co. Ltd. in the form of Bank Draft/Pay Order from any Schedule Bank of Bangladesh must be submitted along with the tender without which the tender shall be rejected outright.
- Tender will be received in the Head Office up to 12:30 hours on 03.08.2008 and will be opened on the same day at 14:30 hours in presence of Bidders who may like to be present. No Tender shall be received after the designated date and time.
- For any clarification regarding preparation and submission of Tender, the tenderers may contact the undersigned or the consultants BCL-DECON, House No. 95A, Road No. 4, Block-F, Banani, Dhaka-1213. Telephone: 986 2713-6.
- The work must be completed in all respect within 8 (Eight) Calendar months.
- Fareast Islami Life Insurance Co. Ltd. reserves the right to accept any tender and reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Sd/-  
Managing Director