

Pakistani Muslim groups ink peace accord after nine killed

AFP, Peshawar

Shia and Sunni Muslim groups in Pakistan's remote northwest have signed a peace accord after days of sectarian clashes in which at least nine people were killed, an official said yesterday.

The violence first erupted on Friday in the town of Hangu in the mountains near the Afghan border -- a region where fighting between rival sects claimed dozens of lives in the past two years.

Army helicopter gunships on Sunday carried out strikes against radical Muslim militant hideouts, before the leaders of the two sides sealed a peace deal.

"The Shia and Sunni Muslim groups signed a written agreement to cease fire and vacate bunkers on hilltops," local district official Mujibur Rehman told AFP.

Rehman said the ceasefire was "by and large holding" but a security official said an isolated incident occurred Monday, with a brief exchange of gunfire in the village of Passkeley that prompted the army to shell militant positions.

One paramilitary soldier on the ground was accidentally killed in the incident, the official said.

A curfew also remained in force in Hangu. "We will take strict action against anyone who tries to violate the curfew," Rehman said.

Shias account for about 20 percent of Pakistan's 160 million, Sunni-majority population.

The groups usually coexist peacefully but outbreaks of sectarian violence have claimed more than 4,000 lives across Pakistan since the late 1980s.

Shibu Soren resigns, deputy CM Marandi also quits

PTI, Ranchi

Bowing to mounting pressure by the allies following his defeat in the Tamar assembly bypoll, Jharkhand Chief Minister Shibu Soren yesterday resigned from his post, shortly after his deputy Stephen Marandi put in his papers.

Ending the five-day long speculation on his continuance in the top post, Soren drove to the Raj Bhavan here to submit his resignation to Governor Syed Sibte Razi. However, before Soren could make it to the Governor's house, Marandi, who had been most vocal on the issue of the Chief Minister's resignation after his defeat to Jharkhand Party nominee Gopal Kirshna Patar at Tamar, arrived in the Raj Bhavan and put in his papers.

Bombs aimed at security forces kill 9 in Baghdad

AP, AFP, Baghdad

A series of bombs targeting Iraqi security forces ripped through busy areas in Baghdad on Monday, killing at least nine people, police said.

The violence began when two vehicles parked about 50 yards apart exploded in quick succession just after 7 a.m., as a police patrol passed by a bakery in a mainly Shia area.

The road, which runs through a commercial district, is frequently used by police and army convoys in the eastern New Baghdad neighbourhood, residents said.

S African SC rules against Zuma in graft case

AFP, Johannesburg

South Africa's Supreme Court of Appeal on Monday overturned a ruling that tossed out corruption charges against ruling party chief Jacob Zuma, opening the possibility of new prosecution.

The ruling dealt a major blow to Zuma, leaving graft charges hanging over his head as he leads the African National Congress (ANC) into general elections, in which he is a frontrunner for president.

Judge Louis Harms read out the verdict in a nationally televised hearing, saying the lower court had overstepped its authority in throwing out the charges with a ruling that had implied political meddling in Zuma's prosecution.

US losing 'war for hearts and minds' of Muslims

THE DAWN, Washington

The Gaza conflict appears to have widened the traditional divide in the United States between the left-leaning liberals and the mainstream politicians and has also dealt a severe blow to US efforts for winning the hearts and minds of Muslim masses.

For the past two weeks, anti-war groups have been holding protest rallies against the Israeli aggression almost daily. The biggest rally was held outside the White House on Saturday, which brought tens of thousands of people from across the United States. Most of the participants were the same who come to all anti-war rallies. And the main organisers Brian Becker, Cindy Sheehan, Ramsey Clark, Cynthia McKinney are known anti-war activists.

What is new is the participation of a large number of Muslims and Arabs. Even a cursory look at the names of the organisations associated with these rallies show how the Gaza conflict has mobilised the Arabs and Muslims against the Israeli aggression.

The organisers of these rallies included the Muslim American Society Freedom, Free Palestine Alliance, American Muslim Task Force, National Council of Arab Americans, Al-Awda International Palestine Right to Return Coalition, Council on American Islamic Relations, American Muslims for Palestine, American Muslim Alliance, US Palestinian Community Network, Iranian-American Friendship Committee and the Middle East Children's Alliance.

And they were able to bring thousands of their supporters to the rally. Protesters waved Palestinian flags, wore keffiyeh -- a traditional Palestinian headress -- and some even came in Shalwar Qamiz.

This marked a change in the attitude of the US Muslims and Arabs who traditionally stay away from political activities, preferring instead to focus on their businesses and professions.

"There goes Bush's campaign to win Muslim hearts and minds," said a protester who identified herself as a member of the group called Act Now to Stop War and End Racism.

Almost 250 likely killed in Indonesia ferry disaster

AFP, Polewali

Around 250 people missing after a ferry capsized in heavy seas off Indonesia's Sulawesi island are probably dead, officials said Monday, with bad weather hampering the search for survivors.

As rescuers scoured the heaving seas, survivors told how they escaped when disaster struck as they slept -- one by clinging to a bunch of bananas.

But Transport Minister Jusman Syafii Djamal said there was little hope any of the missing passengers and crew members would be found alive more than 24 hours after the 700-tonne ferry sank off western

Sulawesi.

"It seems that due to the weather conditions the chance is little, but we still hope," he added.

He said 22 survivors had been rescued so far, including the captain and 17 passengers, but there was no sign of almost 250 other passengers and crew who were on board when the Teratai Prima listed and sank early Sunday.

"We have intensified the search this morning," he added. "Eight patrol boats from provincial search and rescue teams are already in the area, and the navy as well as the air force are also involved in today's search."

Karzai extends sympathy, support to India after Mumbai attacks

AFP, New Delhi

Afghan President Hamid Karzai pledged "solidarity" with India in the fight against terrorism during a visit Monday in the aftermath of the Mumbai attacks that claimed 165 lives.

Karzai, who arrived here Sunday on his second visit to India in five months, held talks with Premier Manmohan Singh and Foreign Minister Pranab Mukherjee on "the challenges posed by terrorism" in the region, a government source said.

A foreign ministry statement said both sides urged countries to honour their "obligations to prevent terrorism... originating from territo-

ries under their control since terrorism emanates from the sanctuaries and training camps and the sustenance and support received by the terrorist groups".

The statement, which did not refer to Pakistan by name, described the November 26-29 Mumbai siege as "deplorable" and added that Karzai's visit was aimed at expressing "Afghanistan's solidarity with India".

Karzai's talks with Indian leaders comes within days of a trip to Kabul by Pakistan's President Asif Ali Zardari last week.

India and Afghanistan enjoy cordial relations but both have a difficult relationship with Pakistan.

Thai elections strengthen new Abhisit govt

AP, Bangkok

Thailand's ruling coalition strengthened its grip on power Monday after winning the most seats in parliamentary by-elections against allies of ousted Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra.

Unofficial results showed Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva's Democrat Party and its coalition allies capturing as many as 20 of the 29 parliamentary seats at stake in Sunday's polling. Election Commissioner Apichart Sukhakanont said.

An official tally was to be released later Monday.



Employment Opportunity

Women are especially encouraged to apply. Smokers need not apply.

RDRS Bangladesh, invites applications from qualified persons for the following positions for immediate appointment :

1. Head of Microfinance (based in Rangpur)

Salary : Consolidated Tk. 40,000 (negotiable for exceptionally deserving candidates)

Requirements : Minimum Masters preferably in Business, Accounting, Economics with minimum 8 years of working experience in NGO microfinance. This is a senior management position. The candidate will be responsible for overall field operation of RDRS microfinance programme. Requiring extensive field visit, at least 10 days in a month. Knowledge of donor liaison, budget control and report writing with excellent communication and leadership skills necessary. Candidates drawing salary less than Tk. 30,000 need not apply. **Age:** maximum 40 years (may be relaxed for exceptionally experienced candidate).

2. Project Development Coordinator (based in Dhaka/Rangpur)

Salary : Consolidated Tk. 40,000 (Negotiable for exceptionally deserving candidates)

Requirements : Minimum Masters in any discipline with sound knowledge of NGO led development. Minimum 8 years experience in senior management position with responsibility for project development, resource mobilisation and strategic leadership. Ability to explore and identify new funding opportunities/donors, write submit and pursue project proposals with budget. Knowledge of donor liaison, budget control and report writing with excellent communication and computer skill is necessary. The candidate will be responsible to build good working relations with existing and potential funding agencies and must be willing to make frequent field visits. **Age:** maximum 40 years.

3. Advocacy Coordinator (based in Dhaka)

Salary : Consolidated Tk. 40,000 (Negotiable for exceptionally deserving candidates)

Requirements : Minimum Masters, preferably in social science with at least 8 years experience in development, development communication, human rights and rights based approach. Excellent communication skills in English and Bangla are required and communication skills issues i.e. rights based approaches programme development and advocacy issues. Expertise for writing and pursuing project proposal related to advocacy activities is essential. Capability and experience to maintain effective networking and relationship with civil society, professionals, researchers, NGOs network and media is necessary. The candidate will identify research and information needs, and prepare reports and must be willing to undertake frequent field visits. **Age:** maximum 40 years.

4. Research and Evaluation Coordinator (based in Rangpur)

Salary : Consolidated Tk. 40,000 (Negotiable for exceptionally deserving candidates)

Requirements : Minimum Masters, preferably in Statistics. Minimum 8 years experience in research, monitoring and evaluation. Ability to organize survey, mobilise resources, negotiate with research institutions and provide input for advocacy. Knowledge on research methodology/type, IT, computer application, report writing and database management is necessary. Excellent communication and leadership skills desirable. **Age:** maximum 40 years.

5. Programme Manager (Finance & Accounts) based in Rangpur

Salary : Gross Tk. 18,000 per month (Negotiable for exceptionally deserving candidate)

Requirements : Masters in Accounting/ MBA major in Finance/CA Inter pass/CA course completed with 3 years working experience in accounting in any reputed organisation/ Firm. Proficiency is required in MS word, Excel with knowledge of accounting software like ACCPAC, Tally and will good communication skills. **Age:** Maximum 40 years (may be relaxed for deserving candidates).

6. General Service Manager (based in Dhaka)

Salary : Gross Tk. 18,000 per month

Requirements : MBA/Masters with 2-3 years experience in administrative functions, good writing and communications skills in English and Bangla. Knowledge of procurement procedure, transport management, guesthouse operation etc will be given preference. **Age :** Maximum 35 years.

7. Public Affairs Manager (based in Dhaka)

Salary : Gross Tk. 18,000 per month

Requirements : Minimum Masters in Social Science. 2-3 years experience in dealing with Government Departments, good writing and communications skills in English and Bangla. **Age :** Maximum 35 years, may be relaxed for experienced candidates.

8. Programme Manager (Monitoring) based in Rangpur

Salary : Gross Tk. 18,000 per month (Negotiable for exceptionally deserving candidates)

Requirements : Minimum Masters preferably in Statistics/Economics/ Sociology with no third division/class. Minimum 5 years experience in Monitoring and Evaluation. Expertise on database management, analysis and communications skills, report writing skills are necessary. Proficiency in MS Excel, MS Access, MS Word and PowerPoint is an important requisite. Practical experience in conducting impact surveys, programme audits and case studies is needed. Ability and willingness to drive motorcycle for extensive field visits is essential. **Age :** Maximum 40 years (may be relaxed for deserving candidates).

9. Senior Monitoring Officer (based in Rangpur)

Salary : Gross Tk. 10,000 per month

Requirements : Minimum Master's in preferably in Statistics/ Economics with no third division/class in academic career. The candidate should have minimum 2 to 3 years experience in Monitoring and have sound knowledge of monitoring tools, database management and good analytical and Computer skill preferably in MS-Excel, MS-Word, MS-Access and SPSS. The Candidate must have good communication and report-writing skills, willingness to drive motorcycle and make frequent field visit. **Age :** Maximum 35 years.

10. Senior Manager (Social Organisation) for Empowering the Poor through Federations Project

Salary : Consolidated Tk. 14,000 - 15,000 per month

Requirements : Minimum Master's in Social Science with 2-3 years experience in CBO management, Organisational capacity building and Right Based Approach (RBA) interventions. Excellent computer, communications and report-writing skills, willingness to drive motorcycle and make frequent field visit. Candidates with valid Motorcycle driving license are preferred. He/she will be responsible for preparing work plan to implement and manage project activities, establish and strengthen CBOs, maintain liaison with GO and NGOs. **Age :** Maximum 35 years.

11. Enterprise Supervisor for the Project Char Livelihoods Programme based in Char Area

Salary : Consolidated Tk. 18,000 per month

Requirements : DVM/AH graduate with 1-2 years experience. Good communication skills in English and Bangla. The incumbent will be responsible for writing reports, assessing training needs and conducting trainings, extension and adoption of technologies and information at group level. The incumbent must have willingness to make field visit frequently. **Age :** maximum 35 years (may be relaxed for highly deserving candidates).

12. Livestock Service/Livestock Officer for the Project Char Livelihoods Programme based in Char Area

Salary : Consolidated Tk. 18,000 per month

Requirements : DVM/AH graduate with 1-2 years experience. Good communication skills in English and Bangla. The incumbent will be responsible for writing reports, assessing training needs and conducting trainings, extension and adoption of technologies and information at group level. The incumbent must have willingness to make field visit frequently. **Age :** maximum 35 years (may be relaxed for highly deserving candidates).

13. Manager (Environment & Disaster) based in RDRS working area

Salary : Gross Tk. 10,000 per month

Requirements : Minimum Master's in Environmental Science/ Geography/ Forestry/ Disaster Management with 1-2 years experience related with climate change and disaster management in any NGO. Experience of using PRA tools and techniques, developing training materials/modules especially on DRR and CCA will be preferred. Must have willingness and ability to make frequent field visit using motorcycle. **Age :** maximum 35 years (may be relaxed for highly deserving candidates).

14. Paramedics for the Char Livelihoods Programme based in Char Area

Consolidated Salary : Monthly Tk. 8,500/-

Requirements : Diploma in Nursing/Trained Paramedics/ Medical Assistant from any recognized institution. Candidates experienced in Primary Healthcare Programme in any NGO will be preferred. Frequent field visits are required. **Age :** maximum 35 years (may be relaxed for highly deserving candidates).

15. Field Supervisor for Legal Education and Gender Aware Leadership Program

Salary : Consolidated Tk. 6,490 per month

Requirements : Minimum Masters in Social Science/Bachelor Degree with experience in Social Sector. Experienced in Legal project is preferred. **Age :** Maximum 35 years.

How to apply : Qualified applicants should apply to the Human Resources Coordinator, RDRS Bangladesh, Radhaballabh, Jail Road, Rangpur within **25 January 2009** with detailed CV including **contact telephone / cell phone number**, 3 copies of recent passport size photographs, copies of all academic and experience certificates. Please enclose a **bank draft of Tk.100 for positions 1- 14 and Tk. 50 for the position of field supervisor (Sl. no. 15) as non-refundable commitment fee in favor of RDRS Bangladesh**, drawn on any scheduled bank in Rangpur. Applicants are requested to write the name of the position applied for on the envelope. Only short-listed candidates will be called for interview. Any persuasion will disqualify candidature.



Ferry survivor Daeng Gassing (L) helps Rosina Daeng Kinang (C) as she reacts in the town of Pare Pare Monday after learning that her husband and her grandson are victims of a ferry accident off the coast. Around 250 people missing after a ferry capsized in heavy seas off Indonesia's Sulawesi island are probably dead.