PHOTO: AFP

Sri Lanka's assistant foreign secretary Prasad Kariyawasam (C) speaks as South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) secretary general Dr. Sheel Kant Sharma (R) and Mahini Colonne (L) of Sri Lanka's foreign ministry look on, during a meeting of foreign ministers from South Asian nations in Colombo yesterday.

Indian delegation in Pakistan for peace

ANI, *Lahore*

A 13-member Indian delegation, comprising eminent civil society members, journalists, peace and human rights activists, crossed the Wagah border on Sunday in a bid to promote peace and friendship between India and Pakistan.

The delegation includes eminent Indian personalities like former Indian diplomat and journalist Kuldip Nayar, renowned filmmaker Mahesh Bhatt, social activist Swami Agnivesh, historian and academician Prof KN Panikar, former diplomat Salman Haider, human rights activist Prof Kamal Mitra Chenoy, journalist Seema Mustafa, Sandeep social activist Pandey, social scientist Kamla Bhasin, etc.

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) Chairperson Asma Jahangir, South Asian Free Media Association (Safma) Secretary-General Imtiaz Alam and many other representatives of the civil society at the border warmly welcomed the delegation on Sunday.

The News quoted Bhatt as saying that the main objective of the mission was to promote peace and build trust between the two countries.

He symbolised the Indo-Pak situation with a long dark night but hoped that there was a silver lining in every cloud.

The days of tension between the two countries were numbered, he said, adding that peace and friendship would prevail over the region. He said the Indian delegation had come to light candle of peace across the border to shed bad omens of the Mumbai attacks.

'India will respond to Pakistan queries'

Mumbai gunman to be formally charged this week

PTI, AFP, *New Delhi/ Mumbai*

India yesterday promised to respond to any information sought by Pakistan in connection with probe into the Mumbai attacks but underlined that the request should come through official channels only.

External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee said India will cooperate "as and when" necessary but ruled out a joint investigation in the attacks.

"Whatever information we get from Pakistan, we respond to it. But information must be made available through official channels and not through media," he told reporters here.

He said India is ready to cooperate with Pakistan "as and when it is necessary" in its investigation into the Mumbai attacks and in this direction referred to the material provided to Islamabad about linkages in that country. "As far as joint investigation is concerned, I have told you we are having investigation," he said.

After being provided the dossier of evidence on Mumbai attacks, Pakistan has sought more information and in this regard given a list of 30 questions. India has said it is examining it and will provide whatever information is possible.

Mukherjee made the statement as Pakistan's High Commissioner Shahid Malik met Foreign Secretary Shivshankar Menon to discuss aspects related to the Mumbai attacks.

Meanwhile, Indian police questioning the lone surviving gunman involved in the attacks in Mumbai are to formally lay the first charges against him this week, officials said Monday.

Pakistani national Mohammed Ajmal Amir Iman -- also referred to as Kasab -- was arrested during the November 26-29 siege of Mumbai, India's financial capital.

A Mumbai police official, who asked not to be named, said the charges were likely to be submitted in a city court Tuesday.

Taliban free abducted Pak official in exchange for militants

PTI, *Islamabad*

The Taliban who had kidnapped a top civil official in the restive Swat valley in Pakistan's NWFP on Sunday, have released the official in exchange for two militants, raising question marks over a peace deal struck between the hardline religious group and the Pakistan government.

Taliban spokesman Muslim Khan said the official, Kushal Khan, and his guards had been released in exchange for two militants who were arrested in Peshawar last week.

Though a peace pact is in force between Taliban backed hardline religious groups and the provincial government banning hostilities the Taliban insisted on a swap for the official's release.

Kushal Khan, who was recently appointed to the District Coordination Office, and his six guards were abducted on Sunday on the outskirts of Mingora, the main city in Swat.

"The government has released our two men and they will soon release another," the Taliban spokesperson told reporters in Swat.

"The government violated the agreement by arresting our men in Peshawar and killing one in Dir. Therefore, we had to do this," Khan said, referring to the official's abduction.

However, the Swat peace pact covers only the Malakand division in the NWFP, official reports had said. It is not clear how an arrest of a Taliban cadre in provincial capital of Peshawar was construed by the group as a violation of the deal.

Earlier, the Taliban had denied reports about the official's abduction, saying he was their "guest" and had been picked up for "discussing important matters".

Australia likely to cut immigration, says minister

AFP, *Sydney*

Australia will likely cut the number of skilled immigrants allowed into the country next year, following the global economic downturn, the government said Monday.

"I expect the numbers of our programme to drop next year as a reaction to the economic circumstances," Immigration Minister Chris Evans told reporters.

He gave no indication of the size of the cut, but said the government would also reconsider which occupations should be on the critical skills list.

"We will probably have a formal look at that in the next couple of weeks," Evans said.

Around 190,300 migrants were projected to arrive over 2008/09, with skilled workers accounting for most places in a programme designed when the forecast was for rapid economic growth and a skills crisis.

Nato airstrike kills 16

Suicide bombers kill Afghan policeman

AFP, *Herat*

A Nato air strike in Afghanistan killed up to 16 militants overnight while a twin suicide attack killed a policeman outside a government anti-drugs office, officials said yesterday.

Afghan security forces called in Nato warplanes to fend off scores of militants who attacked a police post in the northwestern province of Badghis.

"We requested air support from the international forces. As a result of the aerial bombardment, 16 Taliban have been killed," Ikramuddin Yawar, police chief for western Afghanistan told AFP.

Ten rebels were wounded, he added.

Yawar had earlier put the death toll at "higher than eight". Deputy provincial governor for Badghis, Abdul Ghani Saberi said initially that eight rebels died and 15 were wounded.

The Nato-led International Security Assistance Force confirmed carrying out an air strike in the remote province. It said there were casualties but an alliance spokesman was unable to specify how many.

The Taliban-led insurgency against the Western-backed Afghan government and foreign troops has recently spread out of its heartland in southern and eastern Afghanistan to the northwest and southwest of the country.

PHOTO: AFP

Afghan bystanders and security personnel inspect the site of a suicide attack in Zaranj city of south-western Nimroz province yesterday. Two suicide bombers blew themselves up outside an anti-drugs office in Afghanistan, killing a policeman, while a Nato air raid killed at least eight rebels.

Secret US unit training Pak commandos

ANI, *Bara, Pakistan*

Over 70 United States military advisers and technical specialists are secretly training Pakistani commandos to battle al-Qaeda and the Taliban in the country's lawless tribal areas more effectively.

The New York Times quoted American military officials as saying that US Army Special Forces soldiers are training Pakistani Army and paramilitary troops, providing them with intelligence and advising on combat tactics.

They do not conduct combat operations, the officials added.

They make up a secret task force, overseen by the United States Central Command and Special Operations Command.

It started last summer, with the support of Pakistan's government and military, in an effort to root out Qaeda and Taliban operations that threaten American troops in Afghanistan and are increasingly destabilising Pakistan.

Pakistani officials have vigorously protested American missile strikes in the tribal areas as a violation of sovereignty and have resisted efforts by Washington to put more troops on Pakistani soil.

President Asif Ali Zardari, who leads a weak civilian government, is trying to cope with soaring anti-Americanism among Pakistanis and a belief that he is too close to Washington.

Despite the political hazards for Islamabad, the American effort is beginning to pay dividends.

SILVA METHOD

২৪ সহস্রাধিক বাংলাদেশীসহ বিশ্বের ১৩১টি দেশে আজ দুই কোটি'রও বেশী মানুষ নিজেদের জীবন নিজেরাই বদলে ফেলেছেন SILVA মন নিয়ন্ত্রণ পদ্ধতি প্রয়োগ করে। এই পদ্ধতিতে ব্রেনের আলফা রিদম সৃষ্টির কৌশল আয়ত্তের মাধ্যমে মনের বিশাল শক্তিকে কেন্দ্রীভূত করে দৃষ্টিভঙ্গীর আমূল পরিবর্তন ঘটিয়ে পজিটিভ চিন্তা চেতনার মাধ্যমে কাঙ্খিত আর্থিক সফলতাসহ উন্নতি করতে পারেন : পারিবারিক সম্পর্ক তৈরীতে, শারিরীক ও মানসিক স্বাস্থ্য, স্মরনশক্তি, লেখা-পড়া, খেলাধুলা, ব্যবসা, চাকুরী, পদোন্নতি ও পারস্পারিক সম্পর্ক ইত্যাদি ক্ষেত্রে। মুক্তি পেতে পারেন স্নায়ুচাপ, দুরারোগ্য ব্যধি, মানসিক দূর্বলতা, মাদকাসক্তি, বদঅভ্যাস, দুঃশ্চিন্তা, হতাশা, অস্থিরতা, বদমেজাজ, অনিদ্রা, মাইগ্রেন ও টেনশন ইত্যাদি থেকেও।

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INTRODUCTORY SEMINAR এ
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Career Opportunity

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2) Age Limit: Maximum 55 years as on 12-03-2009. Age limit may be relaxed in case of a suitable candidate(s).

3) Work Experience: Minimum 10 years practical experience in Executive position in an Aircraft Maintenance Organisation. Sound knowledge on engineering and maintenance methodology is essential.

4) Job Profile:
(i) Strong understanding of Aircraft Engineering & Maintenance System/Management.
(ii) Knowledge of international aviation and safety regulations.

5) Candidate Profile:
(i) The incumbent will be hands-on result-oriented achiever, good in planning, organizing and managing the functions to fulfill the job.
(ii) Proven record of leadership and ability to work as a team leader.

06. Salary: Negotiable.

Important: Those who have applied earlier need not to apply again.

Interested candidates fulfilling the requisite qualifications are requested to send their applications attaching 03 copies of recent passport-sized photograph to the "Deputy General Manager, Human Resource, Biman Bangladesh Airlines Ltd., Head Office, 'Balaka', Kurmitola, Dhaka-1229" latest by 12-03-2009.

Deputy General Manager
Human Resource
Biman Bangladesh Airlines Limited
'Balaka', Kurmitola, Dhaka-1229

D-130

Prabhakaran sends his wife, younger son abroad by sea

IANS, *Colombo*

Tamil Tiger chief Velupillai Prabhakaran, facing an unprecedented military thrust into his very last stronghold in northeast Sri Lanka, has sent his wife and the younger son to an undisclosed location abroad, a media report said Sunday.

The state-run Sunday Observer, quoting the intelligence reports, said that Prabhakaran, 54, has sent his wife Madivadani and his younger son, 10-year-old Balachandran, abroad by sea.

অরণ্যক Arannayk Foundation

Solicitation for Expression of Interest to Serve on the Board of Directors

I. Background:

The Governments of Bangladesh and the United States jointly established the Arannayk Foundation (Bangladesh Tropical Forest Conservation Foundation) in 2003 as the Tropical Forest Conservation Fund (TFCF) under the bilateral agreements that the two governments signed within the framework of the US Tropical Forest Conservation Act (TFCA). The Arannayk Foundation serves as the Secretariat of the TFCF and implements environmental programs in Bangladesh through local organizations. Arannayk's main objective is to help protect forests and associated biodiversity assets in Bangladesh. The fund supports forest conservation activities implemented by relevant organizations such as NGOs, academic and research organizations.

The TFCF is governed by a seven member Board of Directors; one each from the US and Bangladesh Governments, and the remaining five representatives from a broad range of **civil society, scientific/research and academic, and community organizations involved in forestry and environmental protection and development**.

II. Objective:

The Government of Bangladesh is soliciting expressions of interest from individuals from organizations highlighted above to serve as members of the Board of Directors of the Arannayk Foundation for three years commencing from July 2009. The positions are purely honorary in nature.

III. Board Member Responsibilities:

The Board of Directors pursues the objectives of the Foundation as set forth in the Memorandum of Association and manages and oversees the affairs, in accordance with the Articles, including the responsibility to make grants or provide other financial assistance to stakeholders. The Board of Directors exercises full management and financial control of the Foundation.

IV. Qualification:

Board members should have a demonstrated commitment to forest biodiversity conservation, with interests, knowledge, and experience related to conservation of biodiversity and tropical forests, and a capacity for leadership in this field. They should be recognized by peers and colleagues within their respective communities as "bridge-builders" of national standing.

Individuals must have at least a bachelor degree and be fluent in Bangla and English. Individuals should have at least 15 years of relevant professional experience and leadership capability with commitment to forest biodiversity conservation. Individuals are expected to have proven skills in strategic planning, financial management, business plan development, grant proposal review and fund raising. Individuals must have a reputation for public spiritedness, honesty in financial and personal spheres, strategic mindset, fairness in decision-making based on facts, non-partisan in matters related to conservation priorities, and commitment to problem-solving. The organization with which s/he is associated must be a recognized organization either registered with NGO Bureau or any other accredited associations.

Desired additional individual qualifications include:

- Demonstrated abilities in senior management areas such as adaptive management, objectives achievement, staff evaluation and motivation, grant proposal review, and grant evaluation.
- Demonstrated organizational development skills such as fund raising, priority setting, managing organizational growth, advanced information management, and donor proposal development and review.
- Proven skills in public presentation, meeting management, coordination and liaison skills, and conflict management.
- Computer literacy (ability to use a computer for preparing documents, receiving and sending email, etc.)

V. Evaluation Criteria:

Eligibility of the interested individuals will be rated by using the following evaluation criteria:

Criteria	Points
Academic Relevance (Education, Language, Computer Literacy and Other Skills as illustrated in Section IV)	20
Experience	
Organizational Management	20
Prior Board Membership	20
Leadership	
Contribution to the National Development Process	10
Contribution to Environmental Protection and Conservation	10
Breadth of Experience (fund-raising, business plan development, and fiscal processes)	20

VI. Selection Process:

A committee consisting of representatives from both the US and Bangladesh governments and the current Board of Directors, who represent leading environment and development NGOs in Bangladesh, will review the applications to select new Board members.

Interested individuals and organizations that meet the above criteria are requested to submit their expression of interest within **15 March 2009** to the Post Box No. A-24, C/O. Daily Star, 19, Karwan Bazar, Dhaka 1215.

A project financed by the European Union

UNDP Bangladesh

Request for Proposals (RFP)
for
The provision of residential training in supporting capacity building of the female volunteers of CHT in community development approaches and basic interpersonal competency development skills under the Gender Cluster of UNDP-CHTDF

The Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility (CHTDF), United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Bangladesh, seeks proposals from interested and well-qualified organizations to **"The provision of residential training in supporting capacity building of the female volunteers of CHT in community development approaches and basic interpersonal competency development skills under the Gender Cluster of UNDP-CHTDF** under UNDP-CHTDF. The solicitation documents have been uploaded on the UNDP website http://www.undp.org.bd/proc.php_more.

The deadline for submission of RFPs will be **9 March 2009; 05:00 pm.**