



Indian schoolchildren perform during the Republic Day parade in New Delhi yesterday. India celebrated its 62nd Republic Day under heavy security, with tensions running high in Kashmir over efforts by Hindu nationalists to hold a rally in the troubled region's state capital. Security was especially tight in New Delhi where large sections of the capital were sealed off for the annual parade of military hardware.

PHOTO: AFP

INDIA REPUBLIC DAY

Kashmir stirs while India celebrates

AFP, New Delhi

India celebrated its Republic Day yesterday under heavy security, with tensions running high in Kashmir over efforts by Hindu nationalists to hold a rally in the troubled region's state capital.

Security was especially tight in New Delhi where large sections of the capital were sealed off for the annual parade of military hardware.

Around 35,000 police personnel, including 15,000 members of the paramilitary forces, were deployed across the city for the event, which is always considered a possible target of militant attack.

Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono was the guest of honour.

Snipers manned rooftops along the parade route, while helicopters and unmanned surveillance drones monitored the area from above.

In Muslim-majority Kashmir, where an anti-India insurgency has claimed thou-

sands of lives since 1989, a strict curfew was enforced in the summer capital, Srinagar.

The streets were deserted apart from the large numbers of security personnel who manned barbed-wire barricades on the roads.

"No procession or gathering would be allowed in any part of the city, today," Srinagar district magistrate Meraj Kakroo said.

A senior pro-independence separatist politician, Yasin Malik, was arrested along with a handful of activists as they tried to stage an impromptu protest in the city centre.

The Kashmir Valley is usually tense on Republic Day, but particularly so this year because of a drive by India's main opposition, the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), to march to Srinagar and hold a special rally to raise the national flag.

Authorities had blocked road links between Kashmir and neighbouring states on Tuesday and turned back thousands of BJP activists gathered on the state border.

Papuans rally for freedom

AFP, Jayapura, Indonesia

Hundreds of Papuans protested yesterday rejecting the region's special autonomy within Indonesia and demanding a referendum on self-determination.

Carrying a wooden coffin covered with a black cloth which said "Special Autonomy is Dead in Papua", more than 1,000 activists, students and church leaders protested in front of the provincial parliament in Jayapura, witnesses said.

"Independence for Papua, reject special autonomy," they shouted.

"Indonesia the coloniser, Indonesia the oppressor, Indonesia the robber."

New Lebanon PM prepares to form govt

Streets quiet

AFP, Beirut

Lebanon's Hezbollah-backed new premier was preparing yesterday for talks on forming a government in the deeply divided country as calm returned to the streets after protests over his appointment.

Prime minister designate Najib Mikati, a moderate billionaire businessman, was to make protocol visits to five of his predecessors before launching talks on Thursday with parliamentary groups.

Security was tight and several schools remained closed, but traffic returned to normal following a "day of rage" by supporters of outgoing premier Saad Hariri.

Anti-riot troops patrolled the streets of Beirut and the northern port city of Tripoli, a

Sunni bastion and Mikati's hometown, where protests the day before had turned violent. There were no casualties.

Banners reading "Mikati, appointed by Khamenei," Iran's supreme leader, remained hoisted in Tripoli as tanks were deployed outside Mikati's home and offices.

Residents of Tripoli said they planned to set up a tent in a city square around noon to protest his appointment.

Under Lebanon's power-sharing system, the premier must be a Sunni Muslim.

Mikati is a Sunni, but supporters of Hariri, backed by Saudi Arabia and the United States, view his appointment as a bid by the Shiite militant Hezbollah, which is backed by Syria and Iran, to gain more political clout.

Tunisia issues intl warrant for ousted president

AP, Tunis, Tunisia

Tunisia issued an international arrest warrant for ousted President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali yesterday, accusing him of taking money out of the North African nation illegally.

Ben Ali, who fled to Saudi Arabia after being driven from power this month by violent protests, was also being charged with illegally acquiring real estate and other assets abroad, Justice Minister Lazzar Karoui Chebbi said.

Meanwhile, Tunisia braced for fresh protest yesterday to quit government.

US ends India tech restrictions

AFP, Washington

The United States said it was ending export restrictions for India's defense and space industries, eyeing trade with a nation shunned for more than a decade over its nuclear weapons program.

President Barack Obama's administration also said it would welcome India into the club of nations that regulate export controls, bringing New Delhi full circle from an outcast to a member of international weapons controls.

The United States took major groups off a blacklist, including the Indian Space Research Organization, which leads India's space program, and the weapon-designing Defense Research and Development Organization.

Previously, the United States barred exports to the organizations of material and technology that could have military use.

"These actions will open important new opportunities for our companies and governments on cooperating in the defense and space areas," said Robert Blake, the assistant secretary of state for South Asia.

Karzai opens Afghanistan parliament

AFP, Kabul

President Hamid Karzai opened Afghanistan's parliament yesterday, ending a week-long stand-off with lawmakers who had threatened to inaugurate the legislature with or without him.

The ceremony held in a national assembly compound comes four months after the country held its second post-Taliban parliamentary elections, the results of which have met with massive controversy over claims of widespread fraud.

Karzai urged the MPs to work together for Afghanistan's future.

Crucial test for EC, govt

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More than six lakh voters are expected to exercise franchise in the by-election to Habiganj-1 and Brahmanbaria-3 constituencies following the deaths of two AL lawmakers.

Many senior leaders of the two parties have visited the electoral areas and joined the election campaigns for their party candidates.

The ruling party is determined to defeat its archrival in the polls to prove that its popularity remains intact as reflected in the ninth parliamentary elections.

The main opposition BNP seeks to defeat the ruling party in the elections to prove the point that the government has lost its popularity.

BNP has repeatedly demanded that the army be deployed in the two parliamentary constituencies to ensure free and fair polls there.

A BNP delegation met election commissioners Muhammed Sohul Hussein and M Sakhawat Hossain at about 12:00noon yesterday, and placed the demand for army deployment.

"Polls might not be free and fair in the two constituencies if the army is not deployed," Nazrul Islam Khan, a BNP national standing committee member, told reporters after the meeting with the two election commissioners.

The BNP leader later told reporters at the BNP central office that the EC has repeatedly asked the government to deploy army in the two constituencies. But the government has yet to respond to the request, he said.

"The government has to take the responsibility, if the ruling party men rig the polls in the absence of the army," Nazrul said.

Election Commissioner Sohul Hussein said the EC had asked the government to deploy the army.

"We do not know why the government did not respond to our call," he told reporters.

He said Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) members will stand guard in polling stations in addition to other law enforcers.

Considering the importance of the by-polls, the EC has already engaged at least 50 election officials in the two constituencies "as silent observers" to monitor the situation.

On information from them, the commission will take instant action against any anomaly, said a senior EC official.

Members of law enforcement agencies including Rab have been deployed in and around the polling stations to maintain law and order.

No outsiders, even lawmakers or central leaders of political parties, were allowed to stay in the two constituencies after January 25 midnight, the last day of electoral campaign.

The EC has been keeping a close eye on the constituencies since the announcement of the poll schedule.

The main contest will be between the AL and BNP-nominated candidates in the two constituencies.

AL-nominated candidate Mushfiq Hossain Chowdhury and BNP's Sheikh Sujat Mia are running for the parliament seat in Habiganj-1 while Ubaidul

Moktadir Chowdhury of AL and Khaled Hossain Mahub of BNP for Brahmanbaria-3.

MUNICIPAL POLLS

Grassroots leaders of both AL and BNP are contesting for the mayoral post in the polls to 12 municipalities in nine districts.

Nearly 3.14 lakh voters are expected to cast votes to elect 12 mayors and 148 councillors.

In the polls to 243 municipalities between January 12 and 18, BNP-backed candidates had edged ahead of their rivals in AL.

BNP-supported candidates won 92 of 236 mayoral posts and AL-backed contestants 88 in seven divisions. Rebel candidates from AL won 22 and those from BNP 11.

The election results in Parbatipur of Dinajpur, Magura, Charfashion of Bhola, Madhabdi of Narsingdi, Jajira of Shariatpur, Madan of Netrakona, Madaripur, Daganbhuiyan of Feni, Chokoria, Moheshkhali and Teknaf municipalities in Cox's Bazar might be a deciding factor for the two parties' strength.

Explain formation

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It also extended its earlier order for a week that had directed Maj Gen (ret'd) Nurul Islam Shishu, the then military official involved in formation of the military tribunal, to appear before the court.

The court on December 18 summoned Shishu, who is now in the USA, to appear before it on January 26 (yesterday).


The HC bench said legal action would be taken against Shishu if he fails to comply with its order.

During the hearing of the writ petition on the trial of Taher, the bench yesterday further requested Lawrence Lifschultz to send a statement on the military trial through email. Lifschultz, a veteran US journalist and writer, had covered the trial of Col Taher.

Earlier on January 18, the court requested him to appear before it at his convenience by January 26 for placing statement.

Additional Attorney General MK Rahman told the court that the government has communicated the journalist through email, but he said he could not visit Bangladesh due to his personal problems.

Barrister Rakanuddin Mahmud appeared for Inu and Rabiul, while Deputy Attorney General ABM Altaf Hossain stood for the government.



Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
Emergency 2007 Cyclone Recovery and Restoration Project, Bangladesh (Component A)

Invitation for Bids for Procurement of Watering Cans
Credit No. 4507 – BD, Project ID No. UTF /BGD/ 040 /BGD, Bid Package No.2G8.C, Lot 2

The People's Republic of Bangladesh has received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the Emergency 2007 Cyclone Recovery and Restoration Project, and it intends to apply part of the proceeds toward payments under the contract for the Procurement of Watering Cans. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the supply of 16550 Nos. of Watering Cans against Lot 2 under Package No. 2G8.C. Bidders having a minimum of 3 (three) years of experience in the supply of the tendered items are only encouraged to participate. The delivery period is 8 (eight) weeks from the date of the Notification of the Award.

Bidding will be conducted through the national competitive bidding procedures as specified in the World Bank's *Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits*, (current edition), and is open to all eligible bidders as defined in the guidelines.

Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from and inspect the bidding documents from the office of FAO Representation in Bangladesh at the address below during office hours i.e. 08:00 to 16:30 hours. A complete set of bidding documents in English may be purchased by interested bidders on the submission of a written application to the address below and upon payment of a non refundable fee of Tk.1,500.00. The method of payment for the tender documents will be in cash against a written receipt.

All bids must be accompanied by a bid security for an amount of Tk. 150,000.00 (One Hundred Fifty thousand) only.

Bids shall be delivered to the address below by 02:00 p.m. on 23 February 2011. They will be opened immediately thereafter, in the presence of bidders' representatives, who choose to attend, at the address below. Late bids will be rejected.

FAO Representation in Bangladesh
House#37, Road#8
Dhanmondi, Dhaka-1205
Tel: 880-2-8118015/126
Fax: 8802-2-811 3446

The publishing of this notice and the receipt of bids does not commit FAO in any way to any party.



United Commercial Bank Ltd.
Information Technology Division
Corporate Head Office, Dhaka

TENDER NOTICE
IT Equipments

United Commercial Bank Ltd. is inviting Sealed Quotations from reputed Dealers/Distributors/Resellers for the supply and installation of **Computer, Rack Server, Printer (Dot Matrix & Laser), UPS, External Dat Drive, Network Equipments (VPN Router, Switch, Rack & UTP Cable etc)** as per our terms and conditions.

Collection of Schedule: Tender Schedule may be collected from IT Division, United Commercial Bank Ltd., Corporate Head Office, Bulu's Center, Level- 3, Plot-CWS-(A)-1, Road No-34, Gulshan Avenue Dhaka-1212 on all working days during office hours **from 30 to 31 January 2011** on payment (non-refundable) of Tk. 1,000/= as PO/DD for each schedule in favor of "United Commercial Bank Ltd".

Submission of Schedule: Tender Schedule to be submitted in two different sealed envelopes through (1) Technical Offer and (2) Financial Offer both in a single envelope clearly mentioning **"Quotation for Computer, Server, Printer, UPS and Others Equipments"** in the top of the envelope. Tender will be dropped in the designated Tender Box kept at the IT Division, United Commercial Bank Ltd. Corporate Head Office, Bulu's Center, Level- 3, Plot-CWS-(A)-1, Road No-34, Gulshan Avenue Dhaka-1212, **within 03.00 PM on 9th February 2010.**

The Bank authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all of the tenders in full or in part without assigning any reason and also not bound to accept the lowest bidder.

Executive Vice President.