

Afghanistan, Pakistan upgrade peace efforts

REUTERS, Kabul

Afghanistan and Pakistan have upgraded a joint commission for peace in a bid to end Afghanistan's near-decade old insurgency, and have the support of the US for the move, leaders of the two countries said yesterday.

Pakistani Prime Minister Yusuf Raza Gilani said he and former Afghan President and Peace Council chief Burhanuddin Rabbani would lead talks involving the military and intelligence chiefs from both sides of the border for the first time.

"Today's visit, I believe has been one of the most historical and unprecedented meetings, because all the stakeholders were with us," Gilani said, at a joint news conference with Afghan President Hamid Karzai.

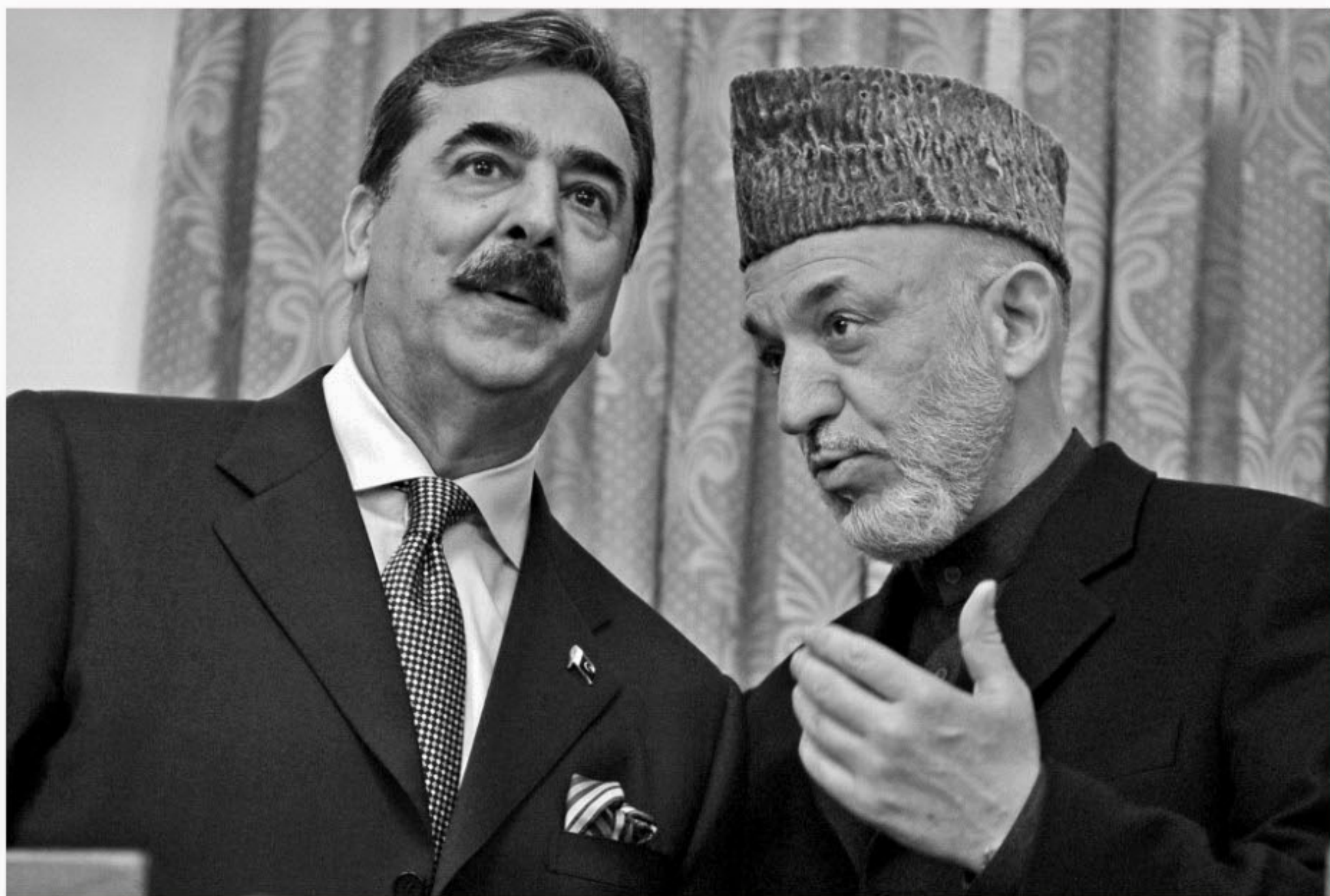


PHOTO: AFP

Afghan President Hamid Karzai (R) speaks to visiting Pakistani Prime Minister Yusuf Raza Gilani (L) before the start of a press conference in the presidential palace in Kabul yesterday.

Afghan suicide blast kills five foreign troops

AFP, Jalalabad

A Taliban suicide bomber wearing an army uniform killed five foreign troops and four Afghan soldiers yesterday in a brazen attack at the Afghan army's eastern headquarters.

It was the deadliest single incident this year against foreign forces in war-torn Afghanistan and comes amid a wave of suicide attacks on security targets, three months before foreign forces start a limited pullback.

The latest strike was at an army base in the Gambiri desert area in Laghman province, near Jalalabad city, the de facto capital of Afghanistan's east.

"Five International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) service members died following an insurgent attack in eastern Afghanistan today," ISAF said in a statement.

Afghanistan's defence ministry said that four Afghan army personnel were killed and eight people were wounded, including four translators.

Spokesman General Mohammad Zahir Azimi added that the ministry was investigating the possibility that the attacker was a member of the Afghan army, rather than someone who had simply bought a uniform

for the attack.

"We cannot totally rule out the possibility right away. It takes time to do some investigations," Azimi said.

A Taliban spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, claimed responsibility for the attack in a telephone call to AFP.

The blast came a day after the provincial police chief of Kandahar in southern Afghanistan, Khan Mohammad Mujahid, was killed in a suicide bombing claimed by the Taliban in which his two bodyguards also died.

Yesterday's attack is thought to be the worst single attack against foreign forces since December, when six US troops were killed in a blast at an outpost in Kandahar province.

There has been a recent spike in suicide bombings -- a key Taliban tactic -- in Afghanistan, with authorities reporting nine in the last few days.

About 130,000 international troops are stationed in Afghanistan, two-thirds of them from the United States, battling the Taliban and other insurgents.

Limited foreign troop withdrawals from seven relatively peaceful areas of the country are due to start in July.

Nigeria votes in crucial presidential election

AFP, Lagos

Nigerians gathered at polling stations yesterday for a crucial presidential election as Africa's most populous nation bids to hold its cleanest polls for head of state in nearly two decades.

President Goodluck Jonathan is the clear favourite in the election.

His main challenger is ex-military ruler Muhammadu Buhari, who benefits from significant support in the country's north and has developed a reputation as an anti-graft figure.

Actual voting was to begin at 12:30pm local time.

More than 73 million people registered to vote in the vast West African nation.

The first attempt at holding parliamentary polls on April 2 had to be called off as material and personnel failed to arrive in a large number of areas.

SRI LANKA WAR CRIMES REPORT Leaked UN report calls for independent probe

AFP, Colombo

A UN panel has called for an independent inquiry into "credible" allegations that Sri Lanka committed war crimes and crimes against humanity in its final 2009 offensive against Tamil Tiger rebels.

The panel of experts, appointed by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, submitted its report last week, and leaked excerpts were published yesterday in Sri Lanka's pro-government Island newspaper.

The leaked report detailed "credible allegations" which, if proven, indicate a wide range of violations by both the government and the rebels, "some of which would amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity".

Specifically, it cited charges of government shelling that knowingly targeted civilians, hospitals and humanitarian targets in "no-fire zones", as well as the denial of humanitarian assistance to victims of the fighting.

It said that "tens of thousands" of people died between January and May 2009 in the final government offensive that resulted in the defeat of the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), ending a brutal, decades-old ethnic conflict.

"Most of the civilian casualties in the final phases of the war were caused by government shelling," the leaked document said.

It also listed alleged violations by the rebel forces, saying they had intentionally used civilians as a human shield.

A copy of the panel's report, which the UN had scheduled for release next week, had been sent to the Sri Lankan government which responded last Wednesday by calling it "fundamentally flawed" and "biased".

Syria's emergency law to end Says Assad

AFP, Damascus

President Bashar al-Assad said yesterday the emergency law in force in Syria for nearly 50 years will be abolished within a week, and expressed his sadness at the deaths of protesters.

"The juridical commission on the emergency law has prepared a series of proposals for new legislation, and these proposals will be submitted to the government, which will issue a new law within a week at the most," he said.

The emergency law, in force since 1963, imposes restrictions on public gatherings and movement, authorises the interrogation of any individual and the monitoring of private communications and imposes media censorship.

In a televised address, Assad also expressed his sorrow over the deaths of an estimated 200 people killed in a month long protests.

Investors swindled thru'

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properties of both equities and a debt instrument. It usually carries no voting rights, but may carry a dividend, and may have priority over common stock in payment of dividends and in the event of liquidation.

A rush to issue preference shares by listed companies was seen in 2009 and 2010. Eight companies raised Tk 1,182.98 crore by issuing convertible preference shares last year, the report said.

They include Beximco Pharma, Summit Power, Aftab Automobiles and People's Leasing and Financial Services Ltd. These companies raised Tk 410 crore, Tk 300 crore, Tk 180 crore and Tk 120 crore from the capital market by selling convertible preference shares.

"In the markets of other countries, it is observed that preference shares are issued when the market goes through a bearish trend or floatation of IPO is not supportive. Sometimes, a new

company or an old one floats preference shares to create confidence among investors in the company. But in Bangladesh, the issuer companies resorted to manipulation to raise money from people, not to create confidence among investors in their companies," the report said.

"Although the companies were not qualified to issue right share or premium share, some of them raised money from the market by preference shares. All these were possible for the weakness in the guidelines of the Securities and Exchange Commission."

The features of convertible preference shares are not uniform as the SEC has no specific guideline on issuance of preference shares. There have been allegations that the compa-

nies took approval from the SEC to their own benefit in absence of a guideline.

Company directors took away money by converting preference shares into ordinary shares. There are also allegations of shoddy conversion and illegal placement trading of preference shares, mostly during their maturity period. Conversion of preference shares with short maturity period is not seen in other countries in the world, the report said.

In most cases, debenture with maturity period of several years and preference shares with a condition for conversion are floated in the capital market, and the holders of debenture or preference shares get interests or profits at a certain rate.

But in Bangladesh's capital market, most preference shares are issued for only 2-3

months. Summit Power and People's Leasing and Financial Services Ltd raised money by issuing preference shares only for a month, the report said.

A commission of 25-45 percent has been given during conversion of preference shares into ordinary ones. But the comparative conversion rate has been fixed in such a way that the issuer company gets a higher premium. For instance, 10 preference shares are convertible to three ordinary shares after the maturity period. It means the conversion ratio is 10:3.

One or two companies set the conversion rate and a premium price directly to avoid the complex process. For example, Summit Power fixed the conversion price of each preference share at Tk 118.27 against a face value of Tk 10, the report said.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh				
Headquarters Border Guard Bangladesh Peelkhana, Dhaka				
Invitation of Tender (National)				
1.	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Home Affairs.		
2.	Agency	Border Guard Bangladesh.		
3.	Procuring entity name	Director General, Border Guard Bangladesh.		
4.	Procuring entity code	Not applicable.		
5.	Procuring entity district	Dhaka.		
6.	Invitation for	Tender (National)	Goods	Single lot
7.	Invitation reference No.	900/7(Vehicle)/Purchase-04/EME.		
8.	Date	11 April 2011.		
KEY INFORMATION				
9.	Procurement method	Open Tendering Method (OTM).		
FUNDING INFORMATION				
10.	Budget and source of fund	GOB.		
11.	Development partners (if applicable)	Not applicable.		
PARTICULAR INFORMATION				
12.	Tender package No.	G-4 (Veh 2010-2011).		
13.	Tender package name	Procurement of vehicle.		
14.	Tender publication date	16 April 2011.		
15.	Tender last selling date	05 May 2011 (office hour).		
16.	Tender submission date and time	08 May 2011, 1100 am.		
17.	Tender opening date and time	08 May 2011, 1130 am.		
18.	Name and address of the office(s)	EME Branch HQ Border Guard Bangladesh Peelkhana Dhaka-1205		
19.	Place/date/time of pre-tender meeting	If necessary to be intimated later.		
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER				
20.	Eligibility of tenderer	As per tender document.		
21.	Brief description of goods	Supply of 6 (six) of units SUV (Jeep) as per technical specification with accessories, spare parts and related services (as per tender document).		
22.	Brief description of related services	As per tender document.		
23.	Price of tender document	Tk 2,000.00 (two thousand) only.		
24.	Lot	Description of goods	Location	Tender security amount
	Single lot	06 (six) units of SUV (Jeep)	Dhaka	9,00,000
				4 weeks
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS				
25.	Name, designation, address and contact details of official inviting tender	Lieutenant Colonel Mohammad Ayub Chowdhury, psc, EME CEME EME Br, Admin Directorate, HQs Border Guard Bangladesh, Peelkhana, Dhaka-1205. Telephone No: 9650001 Extension-127 Fax No : 9650245 (attention CEME).		
Important Notes:				
a. The procurement entity reserves the right to cancel all or any of the tender without assigning any reason and information whatsoever.				
b. Tenderer may obtain further information from official mentioned above during normal office hours except govt holiday.				
c. In case, tender opening day becomes a public holiday, the opening date will be shifted to next working day, however, timing will remain unchanged.				
CEME For Director General				
GD-1792				

Asian nations

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Ministers and officials of 11 labour supplying nations and some of the labour receiving countries, mainly from the Gulf and Southeast Asia, are expected to attend the meet.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the programme to be held at Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel. The title of this consultation, fourth of its kind is "Migration with Dignity".

Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam are members of the Colombo Process. Nine labour importers -- Bahrain, Kuwait, Malaysia, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen -- have been invited as observers.

The process that started its journey in 2003 in Colombo aims at facilitating dialogues among the member states and the labour importing countries to strengthen migration management both in the Asian region and in the labour markets, according to the alliance website.

The time is very crucial for the millions of Asian migrants working in the Arab countries, as the recent political unrest in Libya has already forced hundreds of thousands of migrants return home, while in Yemen and Bahrain many are in trouble being jobless due to thinning of businesses.

Already, 35,000 Bangladeshi migrant workers have returned home, majority of them being penniless. Some also died. Many thousand Indians, Filipinos and other nationals fled the destinations.

At such a juncture, Asian labour sending countries are contemplating how they could work together to protect their migrant population during emergencies in

the destination countries.

"We want to see that migrants are not made targets and are secure during their (Arabs) domestic unrest," Dr Zafar Ahmed Khan told The Daily Star.

The programme will allow participants to compare experiences, in general, of past emergencies and, in particular, of the global financial crisis, says a document of the Colombo Process website.

It will initiate discussion on "possible avenues of collaboration and potential institutionalization of response to emergencies directly affecting overseas workers with the aim of minimizing the negative impact on both migrant workers and the national economies".

The other issues that will feature the ministerial consultation include setting minimum wage for the migrant workers, Zafar Ahmed Khan said, adding that Expatriates' Welfare Minister Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain has already visited India, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka in an effort to have a common stance in favour of the migrants.

He said the process is still non-binding. After the Colombo meeting in 2003, the alliance met in the Philippines in 2004 and in Indonesia in 2005. Since then there was no meeting of the alliance as no country agreed to be the host.

Bangladesh is organising the meeting mostly at its own funding, while the International Organization for Migration is also making some contribution alongside providing secretarial support.

Khan said, "The meeting will also try to finalise the modalities of the alliance. For example, how the process will continue and how the financing would be arranged."

 Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha Rajuk Bhaban, Dhaka-1000 www.rajukdhaka.gov.bd			
Memo No. RAJUK/PD(MIS)/04-31/10/Admn./			
Date: 10-4-2011			
Invitation for Re-Tender			
Notice No. RAJUK/MIS/Tender-02/2010-2011 (Re-Tender-1 st)			
1.	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Housing and Public Works.	
2.	Agency	Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (RAJUK).	
3.	Procuring entity name	Chief Engineer, Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (RAJUK).	
4.	Invitation for	Tender for goods.	
5.	Invitation Ref No.	RAJUK/MIS/Tender-02/2010-2011 (Re-Tender-1 st)	
6.	Date	10/04/2011	
7.	Procurement method	Open tendering method (OTM).	
8.	Source of funds	RAJUK's own fund.	
9.	Project name	Computerization and Management Information System (MIS) in RAJUK.	
10.	Tender publication date	18/04/2011	
11.	Tender schedule last selling date	08/05/2011 (during office hour).	
12.	Tender submission date & time	09/05/2011 at 02:00pm.	
13.	Tender opening date and time	09/05/2011, 03:00pm. Tenderers or their authorized representatives are allowed to attend.	
14.	Name & address of the office(s)	Address Selling tender documents Manager, Sonali/Janata/Agrani Bank Ltd, RAJUK Bhaban Corp. Branch, Dhaka. Receiving tender documents Member Dev./Admin & Land/Planning/Estate/Finance, Chief Engineer/Superintendent Engineer (P&D), Project Director (MIS), Executive Engineer-Design/Central/South Dhaka (RAJUK) Division, Dhaka.	
15.	Place of opening tender documents	Office of the Project Director (MIS), RAJUK & Convener, TOC (5 th Floor), Room No-522, RAJUK Bhaban, Dhaka at 02:30pm.	
16.	Eligibility of tenderer	(a) Genuine firms/companies having minimum 5 years overall experience in the supply of goods and related services. (b) The tenderer shall have a minimum of 3 (three) years of specific experience in the supply of similar goods and related services. (c) The tenderer must have a minimum liquid asset/working capital/credit facilities of Tk 30 (thirty) lac. (d) Other required eligibility and conditions of the tenderer are shown in tender documents. Necessary supporting documents are to be submitted with the tender.	
17.	Price of tender documents (Tk)	Tk 1,000/- (one thousand) only (non-Refundable)	
18.	Name of the tender	Location	Tender security amount (Tk)
	Supply & installation of professional grade large/wide format (Map) Scanners and Mid Range & High Range Automatic Document Feeder (ADF) Scanners for MIS Section under the Project of Computerization & Management Information System (MIS) in RAJUK (under package-GD3)	MIS Section, RAJUK Bhaban (5 th floor), Dhaka-1000	Tk 85,000/-
19.	Name of official inviting tender	Engr. Khondkar Salahuddin.	
20.	Destination of official inviting tender	Chief Engineer, RAJUK.	
21.	Address of official inviting tender	4 th Floor, Rajuk Bhaban, Dhaka-1000.	
22.	Contact details	Project Director (MIS), RAJUK Bhaban (5 th Floor), Dhaka-1000. Telephone: 9552663, 9570110 Fax: 9563591 E-mail: pdmis@rajukdhaka.gov.bd	
23.	The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders.		
24.	Special instruction: <ul style="list-style-type: none">If the tenderer submits any false/incorrect or forged certificate, the tender security may be forfeited.If the office will remain closed on tender receiving and opening date due to govt. decision the tender will be received and opened on next office working day on the same time.This tender notice is brief and the details of tender are mentioned in the tender document.		
Engr Khondkar Salahuddin Chief Engineer, RAJUK			
GD-1763			