

**ETHNIC VIOLENCE**  
**Myanmar govt rejects Asean talks offer**

AL JAZEERA ONLINE

Myanmar has rejected an offer by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) to open talks aimed at quelling deadly communal violence there, according to the regional bloc's chief.

Surin Pitsuwan said on Tuesday he proposed setting up tripartite talks between Asean, the UN and Myanmar's government to prevent the violence from having a broader regional impact.

But he said Myanmar turned down the offer to discuss the bloodshed in the western Rakhine state that has led to about 180 deaths since June.

The bloodshed has pitted Buddhists against minority Rohingya Muslims.

"Myanmar believes it is their internal matter, but your internal matter could be ours the next day if you are not careful," Surin, Asean's secretary-general, said after delivering a speech at a forum in the Malaysian capital, Kuala Lumpur.

Fresh fighting in Rakhine this month resulted in another 88 people being killed and added to the thousands of homes torched, with tens of thousands of Rohingya Muslims now living in overcrowded camps.



PHOTO: AFP

Indian schoolchildren pose with marigold flowers as they pay tribute to the late former Indian prime minister Indira Gandhi on the occasion of her 27th death anniversary at a school in Amritsar yesterday. Indira Gandhi was assassinated by her Sikh bodyguards in 1984, four months after she ordered troops into the Golden Temple in Amritsar to flush out Sikh militants fighting for an independent state.

**Evacuation as cyclone Nilam hits India's southeast coast**

AFP, Chennai

Thousands of people were evacuated yesterday from their homes in south-east India as a cyclone slammed into the coast, killing two people, according to reports, and causing an oil tanker to run aground.

Cyclone Nilam struck the historic port of Mahabalipuram, 50 kilometres south of Chennai, and is forecast to cross the states of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh overnight.

The Press Trust of India (PTI) reported that strong winds forced an oil tanker to run aground off the Chennai coast yesterday afternoon,

and said one of the ship's 37 crew members drowned when the lifeboat carrying him capsized.

Rescuers searched frantically for six remaining crew members reported missing in the accident.

Officials in Tamil Nadu state evacuated thousands of people living close to the coast earlier in the day.

The latest bulletin from the India Meteorological Department predicted that winds gusting up to 85 kilometres (49 miles) an hour would trigger heavy rain along India's southeastern coast before the cyclone weakened overnight.

In the former French colony of

Pondicherry, a 46-year-old man drowned when he was swept into the turbulent sea while walking along the coast, PTI reported.

The Tamil Nadu government ordered fishermen not to go out to sea until the cyclone weakened.

Local authorities said they were preparing helicopters and boats for any emergency. Existing cyclone shelters, schools and community halls have also been identified to serve as potential relief camps.

The last cyclone in India struck in the same southeast region in January, claiming 42 lives and leaving a trail of destruction across Tamil Nadu.

**Taliban can run for Afghan president: EC**

AFP, Kabul

The Taliban and other insurgent leaders could stand as candidates in Afghanistan's next presidential polls, to be held in April 2014, Afghan top poll official said yesterday.

"We are even prepared to pave the ground for the armed opposition, be it the Taliban or Hezb-i-Islami, to participate in the election, either as voters or candidates," the top official told a news conference.

The vote, scheduled for April 5, 2014, is seen as crucial to Afghan stability after the withdrawal of Nato troops.

**Opium cultivation doubled in Asia: UN**

AFP, Bangkok

Opium cultivation in Southeast Asia has doubled over the last six years as growing demand for heroin in China and the rest of Asia lures more farmers to grow poppies, the UN said yesterday.

Opiate users in East Asia and the Pacific now account for about a quarter of the world total, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime said in a report.

China alone has more than one million registered heroin users, and consumes most of the drug in the region, it said, adding farmers in Laos and Myanmar are pushing into increasingly remote land to avoid their crops being destroyed by authorities.

The findings cast doubt over the future of opium eradication programmes that were successful in driving down cultivation in both countries in the decade until 2006.

With prices rising, cultivation in Laos soared 66 percent to 6,800 hectares in 2012, and by 17 percent to 51,000 hectares in Myanmar, the world's second largest producer after Afghanistan, according to UN estimates.

The study estimates opium produced by Laos and Myanmar to be worth \$431 million in 2012, a third more than the previous year. Farm-gate prices per kilogram reached \$1,800 in Laos amid scarce supply, and \$520 in Myanmar.

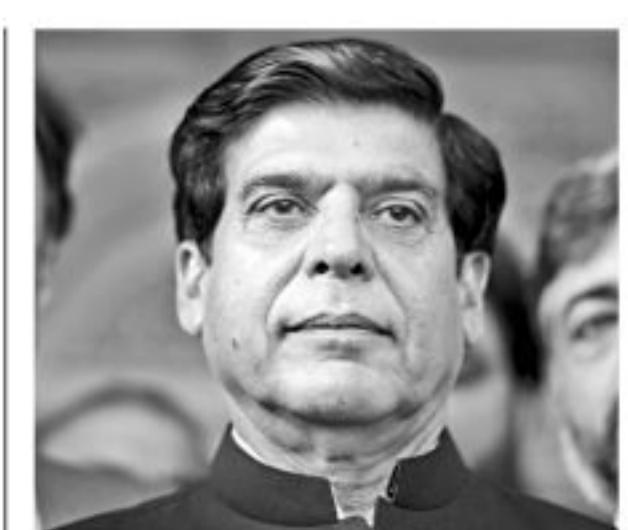
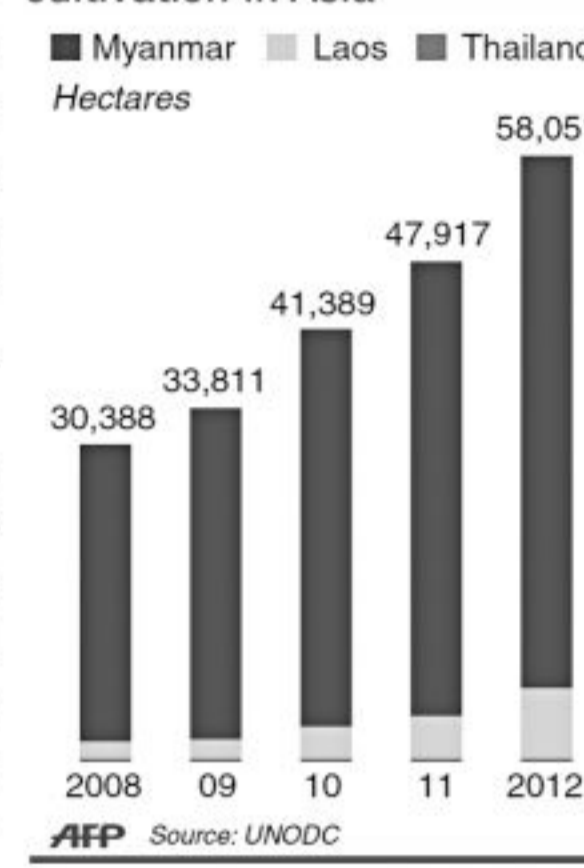
The number of people engaged in cultivation has risen in parallel with up to 38,000 "opium growing households" in communist Laos and 300,000 in Myanmar.

The rise indicates Myanmar farmers -- mainly in north-eastern Shan state -- will only turn away from opium cultivation if alternative livelihoods are available, the report said.

In the 1980s, Myanmar was the world's largest producer of illicit opium, until it was replaced by Afghanistan in 1991.

Cultivation there has been so successful that Afghanistan's poppy crop covered more than 131,000 hectares in 2011, two-and-a-half times more than Myanmar's this year.

**OPIUM IN THE "GOLDEN TRIANGLE"**  
Rising land use for opium cultivation in Asia



**Pak PM vows to hold free, fair polls**

APP, Islamabad

Prime Minister Raja Pervaiz Ashraf yesterday said the government was committed to holding of free, fair and transparent general elections as it would further help strengthen democracy in the country.

Addressing the federal cabinet, the Prime Minister said the government was about to complete its five-year term, which would be a major milestone. He said the international community was appreciative of the measures taken by the present government for holding of transparent election.

The Prime Minister said he would start a series of public meetings across the country to hold a free and fair election.

The National Assembly is likely to be dissolved on January 16 or 17, a daily newspaper quoted its sources as saying. If the National Assembly is dissolved in January, the constitutional limit for holding polls will be 90 days.

**Arms brought for Ulfa**

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Asked about the unloaded boxes, the workers said there were machinery parts inside them.

Rasul and Alauddin looked for the owner of the goods, but to no avail.

At one stage, five to seven persons came forward. Two of them introduced themselves as Hafiz and Ulfa leader Abul Hossain.

Abul asked the cops why they had gone there and what they wanted.

As sergeant Alauddin wanted to see the ship-

ment documents and goods, Hafiz said they had no document and the goods were arms and ammunition.

Alauddin informed CMP deputy commissioner Abdullah Hel Baki of the situation over the phone.

"Hafiz and Abul Hossain threatened us, saying we might be fired as all the government organisations concerned had been informed about the unloading of the arms cache," Rasul told the court.

When Hafiz and Abul were taken to Ahadur Rahman, the then OC of Karnaphuli Police Station, the duo admitted that the goods were arms brought for Ulfa and the government high officials knew about it.

"Later I came to know that Abul Hossain was actually the NSI official, Maj Liakat Ali," mentioned the witness.

Rasul said he saw Din Mohammad, Mariam alias Badni member, Jasim and trawler owner Haji Sobhan at the jetty.

On April 2, 2004, around 1,500 wooden boxes containing submachine guns, AK-47 assault rifles, submachine carbines, Chinese pistols, rocket shells and launchers, hand grenades and bullets were seized from two vessels at the jetty of CUFL.

Two cases were filed the next day with Karnaphuli Police Station under the Special Powers Act and arms act for smuggling and seizure of arms.

Trial in the cases got underway on November 29 last year.

**Long wait to recover**

FROM PAGE 1

regions. As many as three lakh Bangladeshis live in the half a dozen states affected by the storm. However, as yet, no major cases of injury or deaths of Bangladeshis have been reported.

A Bangladeshi journalist in the US, Monjurul Islam, told The Daily Star that to his knowledge, most Bangladeshis living in most vulnerable parts of New York or New Jersey had moved inwards to safer places.

"Bangladeshi Americans are no strangers to the impacts of cyclonic storms and instinctively, we take it quite seriously. So those

living in wooden houses have moved to those made of bricks," he said.

"It is a contrast to many Americans living in New York's coastal areas who refused to evacuate their houses, arguing that they had never seen the Atlantic become so furious and that they wanted to see it.

"We don't take such risks," said Monjurul.

Some forty lakh evacuated people are yet to return to their homes. More than 80 lakh homes have no power, and many areas, including the lower Manhattan, are still underwater.

Although New Yorkers have been worst hit by the storm, expats living in New Jersey, Connecticut,

Virginia, Maryland and Florida have also been bearing the brunt of the hurricane.

"I have no hot water, and over 88 percent area of my town has no power," said Sharbari Ahmed from Connecticut. "There is quite a bit of devastation and damage as we live very near the water. It is very tough right now. People's porches and roofs have been thrown off and flung through the air," she added.

Local people and the administration are trying their best to resume daily activities, but it is difficult to prove given the realities on the ground.

It might take well over a week to see the subway

and commuter train systems functional again and opening of many of the bridges.

"My children's schools are closed, but I have started to go to work, which is not far from here. It's very difficult for those commuting to the city, though, especially, for those without a car. The MTA buses have started to run today but the subway shows no signs of opening," said Kazi Iffat Jahan, who lives in Queens, one of the worst affected regions of the city.

Her house did not have any power or water, and it would take at least a week before the power connections could be repaired, she added.

**Millions struggle after Sandy strike**

FROM PAGE 1

New York. Some federal offices, schools and Wall Street have reopened.

Officials said the cost of clearing up after the storm may cost \$30-40b (£18-24b).

It will take days or weeks to recover from the massive power and mass transit outages, said officials.

With six days to go before the November 6 elections, President Barack Obama will visit storm-ravaged areas of the New Jersey shore, where Sandy made landfall on Monday.

He will be accompanied by Republican Governor Chris Christie, a vocal backer of presidential challenger Mitt Romney.

Nevertheless, Christie has praised Obama and the federal response to the storm.

"America is with you. We are standing behind you and we are going to do everything we can to help you get back on your feet," Obama said Tuesday.

New York City authorities were meanwhile struggling to restore vital services and clear debris after a wall of storm-driven seawater flooded lower Manhattan, swamped road and rail tunnels and triggered fires.

"Restoring power and mass transit remain the two biggest challenges in the days ahead," New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg

told reporters Tuesday, as rescue crews and utility workers surveyed an apocalyptic scene.

New York Residents spent Tuesday surveying the damage, confronting surreal scenes of flooded subway tunnels, a ship thrust ashore onto a railway track and cars bobbing like corks in submerged New York City parking lots.

The New York subway system, much of which was flooded by seawater, was still gripped by what management dubbed its worst disaster in its 108-year history, and the New Jersey coastline remains a scene of sprawling devastation.

More than eight million homes and businesses

from the Carolinas to Maine were without power, the Department of Energy said, with outages increasing as the still-formidable storm moves west towards the Great Lakes.

Three US nuclear power reactors remained shut and a fourth on alert, after storm waters wreaked havoc with transmission networks and cooling systems, but authorities insisted there were no risks to the public.

Forecasters warned that flooding would continue along the densely-populated mid-Atlantic coast and 7,400 National Guardsmen remained mobilised in 11 states to provide emergency relief.

**Fareast Islami Life Insurance Company Ltd.**  
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**INVITATION FOR TENDER**  
Single-Stage, Two-Envelopes system

**Tender Notice no: 01/2012-13**

Sealed tenders are hereby invited from the eligible contractors @ Single Stage, two envelopes of Technical & Financial offers respectively for the under mentioned work as per terms and conditions stated below:

|    |                                                      |                                                                                                                                                       |
|----|------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1  | Procuring Entity (Employer)                          | Fareast Islami Life Insurance Company Limited represented by Project Incharge, Fareast Tower, 35 Topkhana Road, Dhaka-1000                            |
| 2  | Sources of Funds                                     | Fareast Islami Life Insurance Company's Own Fund                                                                                                      |
| 3  | Procurement Method                                   | OTM @ Single Stage, Two envelopes system of Technical & Financial offers                                                                              |
| 4  | Eligibility of Tenderers                             | First Class enlisted Contractors of Govt./Semi-Govt./Autonomous/ Semi-Autonomous Organization having sufficient experiences on static pile load test. |
| 5  | Name & Address of the office Selling Tender Document | Office of the Project Incharge, Fareast Islami Life Insurance Company Limited, Fareast Tower, 35 Topkhana Road, Dhaka-1000                            |
| 6  | Name & Address of the offices receiving Tender       | - do -                                                                                                                                                |
| 7  | Name & Address of the office Opening Tenders         | - do -                                                                                                                                                |
| 8  | Last Date and Time for Selling Tender Document       | Date: 14/11/2012, Time: 04:00 PM                                                                                                                      |
| 9  | Last Date and Time for Tender Submission             | Date: 15/11/2012, Time: 02:30 PM                                                                                                                      |
| 10 | Date and Time for Tender Opening                     | Date: 15/11/2012, Time: 03:00 PM                                                                                                                      |
| 11 | Brief Description Works                              |                                                                                                                                                       |

| Tender No. | Name of works                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Location                                | Price of Tender Document.      | Tender Security Amount | Time for Completion |
|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
|            | Construction of Shore Piles and One Test Pile including Static Pile Load test in connection with Construction of Multi-Storied (18 Storied) Office-Cum-Commercial Tower Building at Laxmipur Crossing, Chandipur, Rajshahi. | Laxmipur Crossing, Chandipur, Rajshahi. | Tk. 5000 (Five Thousand) only. | Tk. 10.00 (Ten) Lac.   | 60 (Sixty) days.    |

a) If communication is disrupted on the date of receiving and opening the Tender(s), Tender(s) will be received on the next working day.  
b) Tender shall be valid for a period of 120 days after tender opening and must be accompanied by the tender security specified above. The authority reserves the right to accept or reject all tenders without assigning any reasons whatsoever. The interested eligible Contractors may obtain further information from the undersigned and purchase the tender documents in cash/bank draft. The tenderer or their authorized representative is allowed to attend the opening of tenders.

**Ekrumul Ameen FCA**  
Managing Director

**REQUEST FOR QUOTATION (RFQ)**

**PROMOTION OF DEVELOPMENT AND CONFIDENCE BUILDING IN THE CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS (CHT)**

The Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility (CHTDF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Bangladesh, seeks quotations from interested and well qualified organizations for the following RFQ,

**"RFQ for Printing of Wall Calendars, Annual Dairy with Boxes and Desk Calendars for 2013"**

The RFQ along with the detail specification and instruction for submission can be downloaded from UNDP website: [http://www.undp.org.bd/proc\\_detail.php?id=418](http://www.undp.org.bd/proc_detail.php?id=418)

The deadline for quotation submission is **8th November, 2012 04:30 pm (Local Time)**