

‘Won’t allow democracy to be murdered like this’

India SC slams defacing of ballot papers in Chandigarh mayoral polls

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

India’s Supreme Court yesterday called the defacing of ballot papers by a returning officer in the recently concluded mayoral polls in Chandigarh a mockery of democracy.

Taking note of a plea of an Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) councillor alleging wrongdoing in polls, the top court also issued notices to Chandigarh authorities, including the civic body to preserve the ballots and the video of the incident.

A bench of Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra expressed their displeasure after watching the video of the electoral proceedings and said that, prima facie, the returning officer, was “defacing” the ballot papers.

“This is a mockery of democracy. We are appalled by what has happened. We will not allow democracy to be murdered like this,” the Chief Justice said.

“It is clear that he (returning officer) has defaced the ballot paper. Why is he looking at the camera? Why is he looking like a fugitive? This man has to be prosecuted. Is this the way a returning officer behaves?” Justice Chandrachud observed.

The observation comes after one of the AAP councillors had moved the top court challenging a Punjab and Haryana High Court order that refused to grant any interim relief to the party seeking fresh mayoral polls in Chandigarh.

BJP had on January 30 swept the Chandigarh mayoral polls against the Congress-AAP alliance.

‘Will not hesitate’ to respond to US attack

Tehran warns as White House refuses to rule out possibility of hitting targets inside Iran

AFP, Tehran

Iran said yesterday it “will not hesitate” to respond in the event of US attacks on its territory after the White House declined to say whether strikes on Iran were ruled out.

White House National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan said Sunday the US will press on with its retaliation against Iran-backed groups in Iraq and Syria.

Asked whether the United States would rule out the possibility of striking Iran directly, Sullivan told NBC, “it would not be wise for me to talk about what we’re ruling in and ruling out.”

“If (Iran) chose to respond directly to the United States, they would be met with a swift and forceful response from us,” he said.

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US National Security Advisor
JAKE SULLIVAN

Iran’s foreign ministry spokesman Nasser Kanani hit back yesterday, saying: “The Islamic Republic has shown that it has always reacted decisively to any threat to its security, territorial integrity and sovereignty.”



Iran “will not hesitate to use its capabilities” to respond to any attacks on its soil, said Kanani during his weekly press briefing.

He nonetheless reiterated that Iran “does not seek to aggravate tensions and crises in the region”.

Regional tensions have soared since the October 7 outbreak of the Israel’s offensive in Gaza, drawing in Iran-backed groups in Iraq, Syria, Yemen and Lebanon.

The US military said it carried out airstrikes against five missiles in Yemen later on Sunday.

The strikes came a day after US and UK forces launched a wave of air raids against Yemen’s Iran-backed Houthis –

their third round of joint military action in response to the rebels’ persistent attacks on shipping.

The Houthis say their attacks in the Red Sea are in solidarity with Palestinians in war-battered Gaza.

The US military struck targets in Syria and Iraq overnight on Friday to Saturday, in retaliation for a January 28 drone attack on a base in Jordan that killed three US soldiers.

The Islamic republic condemned the strikes in Yemen, Syria and Iraq.

President Joe Biden has blamed “radical Iran-backed militant groups” for the attack in Jordan, but said the United States does not seek a wider conflict in the Middle East.

Canada extends ban on foreign ownership of housing by 2 yrs

REUTERS

Canada on Sunday announced a two-year extension to a ban on foreign ownership of Canadian housing, saying the step was aimed at addressing worries about Canadians being priced out of housing markets in cities and towns across the country.

Canada is facing a housing affordability crisis, which has been blamed on an increase in migrants and international students, fuelling demand for homes just as rising costs have slowed construction.

“As part of using all possible tools to make housing more affordable for Canadians, the ban on foreign ownership of Canadian housing, which is currently set to expire on January 1, 2025, will be extended to January 1, 2027,” Canadian Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland said in a statement.

The Canadian government has said foreign ownership also has fuelled worries about Canadians being priced out of housing markets in cities and towns across the country.

Last month, Canada announced an immediate, two-year cap on international student permits and said it would also stop giving work permits to some students after graduation as it seeks to rein in record numbers of newcomers seen aggravating a housing crisis.

Welcoming the announcement, the University of Toronto said it would work with all levels of government on the allocation of study permits.

Rapid population growth fuelled by immigration has put pressure on services such as healthcare and education, and has helped drive up housing costs. These issues have weighed on Liberal Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s support, with opinion polls showing he would lose an election if one were held now.



“When I speak of turnover, I have in mind something serious that does not concern a single person, but the direction of the country’s leadership. It is a question of the people who are to lead Ukraine. A reset is necessary, I am talking about a replacement of a number of state leaders, not only in the army sector. I am reflecting on this replacement. Is a question for the entire leadership of the country.”

Ukrainian President VOLODYMYR ZELENSKY on replacing several senior officials



REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (CONSULTING SERVICES – FIRMS SELECTION)

Country: The People’s Republic of Bangladesh

Project: Urban Health, Nutrition and Population Project (UHNPP)

Credit No.: 7402-BD

Assignment Title: Strengthening of Government Outdoor Dispensaries under Civil Surgeon Office

Contract No: UHC/SD-2/STRENGTHENING/WB/2023-24

EOI Reference No: UHC/Proc/SD-2/STRENGTHENING/WB/2023-24/3234, Date: 05/02/2024

The People’s Republic of Bangladesh has received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the Urban Health, Nutrition and Population Project (UHNPP), and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

The consulting services (“the Services”) include furnishing a number of key professionals and support personnel for providing expanded patient services in 10 (ten) Government Outdoor Dispensaries, 1 (one) Thana Health Complex, and 1 (one) Hospital (aggregately called “facilities” here), under the office of the Civil Surgeon, Dhaka. The services are generally required during the morning hours (09:00 AM to 03:00 PM), and the evening hours (03:00 PM to 09:00 PM).

More specifically, the service provider will make available Medical Officers (36), Nurses (48), Medical/ Lab Technologist (24), Supervisors (3) with required competencies and qualifications. In addition, the service provider will make available 96 support personnel in various categories.

The Terms of Reference (TOR) containing details of the assignment is available for download from the website of the Client at: <http://dghs.portal.gov.bd/site/view/tenders>.

The Directorate General of Health Services now invites eligible firms/ organizations (“Service Providers”) to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Service Providers should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services. Shortlisting will be on the basis of information provided by the service providers in the format below:

| | | | |
|--|----------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| A. Name of the firm/ organization. | | | |
| B. Contracts of similar size and complexity completed in the past three financial years (please list in the form below). | | | |
| Sl | Contract Title | Contract Value (equivalent BDT) | Contract Completion Date |
| 1. | | | |
| 2. | | | |
| 3. | | | |
| 4. | | | |
| 5. | | | |
| C. Number of years in the service provision business: | | | |
| D. Average annual turnover from service provision during the past three financial years: | | | |
| E. Number of professional staff working full time for the service provider: | | | |

Note: Please do not attach any documents (e.g. contracts, financial statements, curriculum vitae) at this stage.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to Section III, paragraphs 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the World Bank Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers, dated November 2020. (“Regulations”), setting forth the World Bank’s policy on conflict of interest.

Service Providers may associate with other firms to enhance their qualifications, but should indicate clearly whether the association is in the form of a joint venture and/or a sub-consultancy. In the case of a joint venture:

- Please fill up the information tables separately for each member of the joint venture.
- All the partners in the joint venture shall be jointly and severally liable for the entire contract, if selected.

A Service Provider will be selected in accordance with the Fixed Budget Selection (FBS) method set out in the Regulations and to be specifically set out in the Request for Proposals.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours, which is 09:00 to 16:00 hours, Sunday through Thursday.

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by fax, or by e-mail) by February 20, 2024.

Dr. Md. Rizwanur Rahman
Director, DGHS, and Line Director, Upazila Health Care (UHC)
Shastho Bhaban (5th floor), Mohakhali
Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh.
E-mail: uhc@ld.dghs.gov.bd (Please write: “Attention: Dr. Md. Rezwanur Rahman” in email body)

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Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Superintending Engineer, RHD

Sylhet Road Circle, Sylhet.

Phone: 0299-6631506

E-mail : sesyl@rhd.gov.bd

Invitation for Tenders

For Non-Consulting Services

| GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | Ministry/Division | | Ministry of Road Transport and Bridge/ Road Transport and Highway Division | |
| 2 | Agency | | Roads and Highways Department | |
| 3 | Procuring Entity Name | | Superintending Engineer, RHD, Road Circle, Sylhet. | |
| 4 | Procuring Entity Code | | Not Applicable | |
| 5 | Procuring Entity District | | Sylhet | |
| 6 | Invitation for | | Supply, Installation, Commissioning, Operation and Maintenance of a Real-Time Web-Based Toll Collection System and weigh scale system of Raniganj Bridge Toll Plaza at 31st KM of Pagla-Jagannathpur-Raniganj-Aushkandi Road (R-241) under Sunamganj Road Division during the year 2023-2024. | |
| 7 | Invitation Ref No | | 35.01.9162.010.07.5-745.24-590 | |
| 8 | Date | | 05-02-2024 | |
| KEY INFORMATION | | | | |
| 9 | Procurement Method | | Procurement of Non-Consulting Services, (Open Tendering Method) (National) | |
| FUNDING INFORMATION | | | | |
| 10 | Budget and Source of Funds | | GOB | |
| 11 | Development Partners (if applicable) | | None | |
| PARTICULAR INFORMATION | | | | |
| 12 | Project / Program Code (if applicable) | | None | |
| 13 | Project Name (if applicable) | | None | |
| 14 | Tender Package No. | | 02/PSN/SRC/2023-2024 | |
| 15 | Tender Package Name | | Supply, Installation, Commissioning, Operation and Maintenance of a Real-Time Web-Based Toll Collection System and weigh scale system of Raniganj Bridge Toll Plaza at 31st KM of Pagla-Jagannathpur-Raniganj-Aushkandi Road (R-241) under Sunamganj Road Division during the year 2023-2024. | |
| 16 | Tender Publication Date | | 05-02-2024 | |
| 17 | Tender Last Selling Date | | 04-03-2024 and 04.00 pm | |
| 18 | Tender Submission Date and Time | | 05-03-2024 and 12.00 pm | |
| 19 | Tender Opening Date and Time | | 05-03-2024 and 01:00 pm | |
| 20 | Name & Address of the office(s) | | | |
| | Selling Tender Document (Principal) | | Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD, Road Division, Sunamgonj | |
| | Selling Tender Document (Others) | | (i) Office of the Divisional Commissioner, Sylhet Division, Sylhet. (ii) Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Sylhet. (iii) Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD, Road Division, Sylhet. (iv) Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD, Procurement & Documentation Division /Planning Division-I, Sarak Bhavan, Tejgaon, Dhaka. | |
| | - Receiving Tender Document | | (i) Office of the Additional Chief Engineer, Sylhet Zone. Sylhet. (ii) Office of the Divisional Commissioner, Sylhet Division, Sylhet. (iii) Office of the Superintending Engineer, RHD, Sylhet Road Circle, Sylhet. | |
| | - Opening Tender Document | | Office of the Superintending Engineer, RHD, Sylhet Road Circle, Sylhet. | |
| 21 | Place/Date/Time of Pre-Tender Meeting | | N/A | |
| INFORMATION FOR TENDERER | | | | |
| 22 | Eligibility of Tenderer | | As described in the Tender Document | |
| 23 | Brief Description of Services | | Supply, Installation, Commissioning, Operation and Maintenance of a Real-Time Web-Based Toll Collection System and weigh scale system of Raniganj Bridge Toll Plaza at 31st KM of Pagla-Jagannathpur-Raniganj-Aushkandi Road (R-241) under Sunamganj Road Division during the year 2023-2024. | |
| 24 | Price of Tender Document (Tk) | | 4000 | |
| 25 | Package No | Identification of Package | Location | Tender Security Amount (Tk) |
| | 02/PSN/SRC/2023-2024 | Supply, Installation, Commissioning, Operation & Maintenance and weigh scale system | Raniganj Bridge Toll Plaza at 31st KM of Pagla-Jagannathpur-Raniganj-Aushkandi Road (R-241) | 30 (Thirty) Lakh |
| | | | | Completion Time in Weeks / Months |
| | | | | 36 Months |
| PROCURING DETAILS | | | | |
| 26 | Name of Official Inviting Tender | | Ahsan Uddin Ahmed | |
| 27 | Designation of Official Inviting Tender | | Superintending Engineer, RHD | |
| 28 | Address of Official Inviting Tender | | Office of the Superintending Engineer, RHD, Sylhet Road Circle, Sylhet | |
| 29 | Contact details of Official Inviting Tender | | Phone: 0299-6631506 E-mail sesyl@rhd.gov.bd | |
| 30 | The Procuring Entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all of the Tender at any time without assigning any reason whatsoever. This notice will be available on RHD website www.rhd.gov.bd and on CPTU website www.cptu.gov.bd . | | | |

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(Ahsan Uddin Ahmed)
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Superintending Engineer, RHD (C.C.)
Sylhet Road Circle, Sylhet.