

Vajpayee-Jamali summit likely in late June

AFP, Islamabad
Late June may be the earliest "tiered" dialogue between Pakistan and India, as proposed by Pakistani Prime Minister Zafarullah Jamali, gets underway, officials said yesterday.

formal invitation to Vajpayee to come to Pakistan for talks.
Full diplomatic ties including ambassadorial-level representation and fully-staffed missions, sporting ties, and air, bus and rail links are being resumed "to set the stage for a meaningful dialogue with India," the prime minister said.

prime-ministerial summit, extensive groundwork would have to be laid to avoid another failure, officials said.
Senior officials at ambassador or deputy secretary level, "will meet probably sometime in late June to do the initial spadework like setting an agenda," a government official said.

a summit between Jamali and Vajpayee.
The Daily Star correspondent pallab Bhattacharya adds from New Delhi: India has described as "inadequate" the response from Jamali to the hand of friendship extended by Vajpayee.
Official sources here said the Pakistani Premier had not at all addressed India's core concern over cross-border terrorism emanating from Pakistan.

Alleged killer talked to Hasan, witness says

COURT CORRESPONDENT
Mohammad Moslem Howlader, 13th prosecution witness in the Shazneen rape case and a domestic help at her (Shazneen's) house, gave deposition before the court yesterday.
Later, he was cross-examined by lawyers of the principal accused Shahidul Islam alias Shahid.
The hearing took place for about two hours in the second Special Tribunal for Prevention of Women and Children Repression.



An Indian soldier stands guard in front of a gutted house after an attack by tribal rebels in Simna Colony, 25km off Agartala in Tripura. At least 21 people were shot dead and eight wounded yesterday in two attacks.

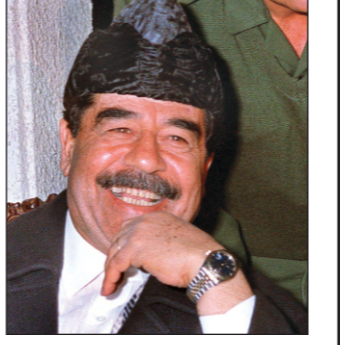
Protesters storm town hall in Karbala

AFP, Karbala
Around 50 protesters stormed the town hall in the city of Karbala yesterday, breaking doors and windows before being dispersed by Iraqi police.
Deputy Mayor Ali Abdul Hussein Kammuna said 'the assailants' were connected to the ousted regime of Saddam Hussein and angry at their exclusion from the new city council established by the Shiite clergy after US troops seized the area a month ago.
He said police were able to evict the demonstrators after about half an hour, firing just a few warning shots in the air.
An AFP correspondent said the damage to the town hall was not serious, but eight US military vehicles were posted outside amid a tense atmosphere in the city.
US troops could be seen giving riot control training to Iraqi police at a nearby police station but US officers said their forces had not been involved in the morning's disturbances.

The deputy mayor said the 50 people who stormed into the town hall broke away from a larger demonstration by around 120 people led by an Iraqi army general, Shaker Shamri, who had proclaimed himself governor when US troops first arrived.
The demonstrators were demanding that the city council be expanded to include their representatives, he said.
The protest came after Saddam loyalists, led by local tribal dignitary Abdul Mahdi al-Salami, attempted to elect a rival city council earlier in the day.
Their meeting was brought to a halt by supporters of the existing city council, Kammuna said, although he insisted no violence was used.
A leading Shiite cleric in the city, Sheikh Abdul Mahdi al-Salami, also insisted the demonstration was peaceful.
Head of the committee

Sydney paper says it has tape recorded by Saddam this week

AFP, Sydney
An Australian newspaper reported yesterday that its staff in Baghdad had obtained an audiotape allegedly recorded this week by deposed Iraqi president Saddam Hussein.
The Sydney Morning Herald said two men gave the tape to its staff after being unable to deliver it to correspondents for the Arab TV station al-Jazeera.
In the 15-minute recording, allegedly made by Saddam on Monday, a "tired-sounding" voice calls on Iraq's people to unite in an underground war against the US-led occupying forces, the newspaper reported.
"We have to go back to the secret style of struggle that we began our life with... your main task is to kick the enemy out from our country," the voice is quoted as saying.
"Through this secret means, I am talking to you from inside Great Iraq and I say to you, the



main task for you, Arab and Kurd, Shia and Sunni, Muslim and Christian and the whole Iraqi people of all religions, your main task is to kick the enemy out from our country," it said.
The speaker made several references to the occupation of the country since Saddam's regime was ousted last month and accused US forces of carrying out looting of antiquities at

Naushin murder Father gives deposition

COURT CORRESPONDENT
Five more prosecution witnesses in the baby Naushin murder case were cross-examined in the Second Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka, yesterday.
Judge Hossain Shahid Ahmad adjourned the hearing till today.
Mohammad Nazrul Islam, the 6th prosecution witness as well as father of the victim, broke down in tears while he was giving his deposition before the court.
In his deposition, Nazrul told the court that at about 1:40 pm on May 9, 2002, he along with his daughter Naushin went to Uttar Badda

Alleged police brutality Day-labourer died of heart attack, probe body says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi
A three-member probe committee formed to investigate the alleged police brutality causing Tuesday's death of a day-labourer of Ekbarpur village here has reportedly found no evidence to confirm the allegation.
"Abdul Gaffar had been suffering from heart ailments since 1998 and died of heart attack", a member of the committee preferring anonymity told The Daily Star yesterday.

Additional SP of Rajshahi Arzul Haque along with other committee members ASP Sadar Circle Mozammel Haq and First District Intelligence Officer Aftab Uddin yesterday visited the spot. They talked to the victim's family members, residents of the area, Mougachhi UP chairman, UP members and police officials of Mohonpurthana.
The committee, which was formed following a directive from police headquarters in Dhaka, is likely to submit its report today to the Superintendent of Police (SP)

of Rajshahi Anwar Kamal.
Abdul Gaffar, 45, died in the early hours of Tuesday after a group of eight policemen led by SI Sanullah allegedly beat him up for refusing to lead them to the house of one Abdul Mannan, an absconding accused in a case, sources said.
"The policemen will face stern action if the committee finds the allegation to be true", said SP Anwar Kamal.
Gaffar's body that bore cuts and bruises was buried without autopsy.

Hasina, Danish envoy talk politics ahead of BDF meet

UNB, Dhaka
Danish Ambassador to Bangladesh Neils Severin Munk called on opposition leader Sheikh Hasina at her house yesterday, mainly exchanging views on domestic political affairs.
The ambassador sought the opposition opinion about the working of democracy and parliament, governance, law and order and functioning of NGOs in Bangladesh.
The opposition opinion is important for the donors before the Bangladesh Development Forum (BDF) meeting set for May 17-18 in Dhaka.
Sheikh Hasina highlighted the major reforms and successes in advancing democracy and development during her 5-year rule. She said Awami League, as a grassroots party, believes in democracy and economic development of the people.
She alleged that the present ruling party was "deliberately" making the parliament ineffective by not allowing the opposition to discuss vital national issues.



(From left) Law Minister Moudud Ahmed, Engineer Qamrul Islam Siddique and Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya attend a seminar organised on Engineers' Day yesterday to mark the 55th founding anniversary of Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB). The IEB and The Daily Star jointly organised the seminar.

Hizbut Tauhid sets fire to opponent's mosque

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal
Cadres of the radical group Hizbut Tauhid set fire to a mosque of their opponents yesterday at the Shakokati village of Gouranadi upazila under Barisal district following the public lynching of their comrade.
According to police and local sources, members of the fundamentalist sect set fire to the Khalifa Bari mosque in the early hours of yesterday after Hizbul activist Saiful was beaten to death during a clash with the public on Monday.
Hemayet Master, Imam of the mosque lodged a case with Gouranadi police station accusing the Hizbut Tauhid of arson. Two other cases were lodged with the Kalkini police station in connection with Saiful's death.

JCD men beat up DU hall student

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Activists of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) allegedly beat up a resident of the AF Rahman Hall of Dhaka University on Tuesday night for refusing to carry out their orders.
Mohammad Mehedy Hasan, a second-year student of sociology, was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) with multiple injuries.
Hall students said the JCD leaders of the AF Rahman Hall asked Hasan to come to the hall's guestroom at about 11:00 Tuesday night. As he did not turn up, some JCD men went to his room on the first floor and dragged him down to the guestroom.
The JCD activists -- Murad, Sumon, Mehedy, Lucky, Madhu, Sanil and Intiaz allegedly beat him up with iron rods and sticks, leaving him critically injured. They also asked him to leave the hall.

One gunned down at Mugdapara

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Armed assailants gunned down an alleged criminal at Mugdapara of Sabujbagh in the early hours of yesterday.
The victim was identified as Sahidul Islam Zakir, 25.
He was called out of his residence at about 1:30am yesterday. The gang took him to Mugdapara and shot him thrice in the chest and abdomen.
Zakir was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where he died at around 4:00am yesterday. The autopsy was done yesterday.
According to police, the young man was an active member of the Kana Mannan group and was a listed criminal.
Police suspects Zakir might have been killed on account of intra-party rivalry.
A case was filed in this regard but none was arrested till last night.

Globalisation readiness is the key challenge IEB founding anniversary seminar observes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Bangladesh has great potential in several sectors and has to prepare itself to meet the challenge of globalisation.
This was the observation of the speakers addressing a seminar organised on the occasion of the Engineers' Day yesterday, marking the 55th founding anniversary of the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB).
The IEB and The Daily Star jointly organised the seminar on "Bangladesh and the Challenge of Globalisation." Dr. Debapriya Bhattacharya presented the keynote paper. Barrister Moudud Ahmed, the minister for law and parliamentary affairs, was the chief guest and Mahfuz Anam, editor of

The Daily Star, was present as special guest.
Dr Debapriya analysed different key factors of globalisation. He said the challenge for the country is to improve the microeconomic fundamentals in the era of globalisation.
He also said Bangladesh has achieved stability in the macroeconomic sector. "Sound macroeconomic policies and stable political and legal institutions are necessary, but they may not be enough to ensure a prosperous economy. Competitiveness is rooted in a nation's microeconomic fundamentals."
Barrister Moudud Ahmed gave some examples of fast developing countries and said something must have gone wrong with

Bangladesh's approach towards development.
The minister said globalisation was a reality and the country has to look for ways to meet the challenge.
Prof. AM Shafiqulha, Prof. M Anwarul Azim and Prof. Anwar Hossain addressed the seminar among others. Engineer Qamrul Islam Siddique chaired it.
Mahfuz Anam said government failures to take appropriate and timely decisions were mainly responsible for much of the failure to achieve the desired level of development. He pointed out that no government of the country took lessons from the past. "They wanted to outwit their political rivals."

More women opt for open contest in UP polls

REAZ AHMAD
Women preferred open contest to reserved seats in the Union Parishad (UP) polls this year, says a survey.
The number of female candidates for chairmanship climbed to 232 in 2003 from 102 in 1997, according to the survey carried out by the Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC) on the elected representatives to the UPs.
Similarly, the number of female competitors for general membership shot up to 617 in 2003 from 456 in 1997.
Women's greater participation in the polls to open seats shows "they (women) became wiser", Grameen Bank Chairman Professor Muhammad Yunus told a discussion, organised by the Local Government Consultative Group (LGCG), on Tuesday.
Prof Yunus, spearheading a campaign to strengthen local government institutions in Bangladesh, believes women will empower themselves through greater participation in the elections to open seats.
The women elected to reserved

seats in the 1997 polls had no clear job descriptions and many of them were neglected and even harassed by their male counterparts elected to open seats, say NGO activists and people working with the local government institutions.
The trend of women's competition for open seats -- more than before -- manifests their bitter experience of being elected to reserved seats, say NGO activists.
Reserved seats have shored up women's confidence in their ability, but a lack of chance of playing effective roles under those seats has instilled frustration into them. Dr Hossain Zillur Rahman, head of the PPRC, told The Daily Star.
The last Awami League government introduced three member posts exclusively for women, besides one chairman post and nine member posts in each UP. It paved the way for women to run for chairman and general member as well as for reserved seats.
In 1997, 3.6 per cent of the women candidates vied for each reserved seat, but the percentage declined to 3.1 in 2003.
Many women elected from the

Involvement of technocrats in policy-making sought

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg
Involve technical experts in policy-making to attain economic development and global competitive standards, said speakers at a seminar marking the 55th anniversary of Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB) yesterday.
The Chittagong chapter of IEB organised the seminar at the IEB, Chittagong Centre auditorium.
The fact that engineers have no part in formulating national policies causes inefficient utilisation of resources, speakers observed.
Engineer Mahmudur Rahman,

Table with 3 columns: Date, Sun Rises, Sun Sets. Rows for May 8 and May 9.

Table with 3 columns: Prayer, Azan, Jamaat. Rows for May 8 and May 9.

FRIDAY in the Star WEEKEND MAGAZINE. POWER Failing The Public. Advertisement for a magazine.

Before coming back to power BNP promised a 'country free of corruption, mosquito and load-shedding.' Now when the nation is plunged into an energy crisis, a certain quarter is subscribing to the idea of importing electricity, while energy experts believe local gas and other alternative sources can be used to produce electricity at an affordable price. The notion of self-sufficiency seems to be foreign to the ears of the policymakers.
SWM's cover story focuses on the grossly neglected energy crisis that has inflicted a heavy loss on the country's businesses and impeded urban life.