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It is survival that Narasimha Rao seems to be after, not credibility. Punjab and Kashmir, the two running sores, have acquired new edge. The Rao gov't has no policy either to diffuse the situation or to isolate the separatists
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NEWS BRIEFS

Freedom fighters meet Khaleda

The members of Central Command Council of Bangladesh Freedom Fighters' Association led by its chairman Mahfuzur Rahman met Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at her Sugandha office in Dhaka Friday, reports BSS.

100 AL workers join BNP

Over one hundred workers of Awami League of Ward No Seven of Mirpur thana led by its president Al-Haj Siddiqur Rahman Friday night met Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and joined the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), imbued with the ideals of the party. Welcoming them the Prime Minister called for united efforts for economic uplift which she said was essential to preserve democracy, reports BSS.

DUCSU students' convention Sunday

Dhaka University Central Students' Union (DUCSU) will hold a students' convention at the Engineers' Institution on May 24. Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia will open the convention to be attended by elected office-bearers of colleges and universities of the country, reports UNB.

Kala Farook arrested

Police arrested former parliament member Lutfor Rahman Bhuiyan alias Kala Farook along with a girl early Friday. A DMP press release said Farook and Nasima (23) were arrested from near Hotel Sundarban

Suchinda resigns, may leave Thailand



Suchinda Kraprayoon

BANGKOK, May 22: Thai Prime Minister Suchinda Kraprayoon has resigned, high reliable sources said here late today, reports AFP.
No official confirmation was immediately available.
The sources also said that Suchinda, the target of massive demonstrations since he became Prime Minister in early April, had an audience with Thailand's constitutional monarch, Bhumibol Adulyadej, this evening.
Suchinda, a former armed forces chief seen by opponents as little less than a military dictator, was believed to be about to leave the country, the sources said. They did not indicate where he was to go.

Reuters says, leaders of Thailand's government coalition said today they supported changes to the constitution which would make unelected Prime Minister Suchinda Kraprayoon step down.
"All five coalition parties have reached a unanimous decision to amend the constitution," Montree Pongpanit of the Social Action Party told a news conference attended by all five leaders.
The decision follows the worst political unrest in two decades. At least 40 people and possibly twice that number were killed by troops firing on anti-Suchinda crowds in Bangkok.
Suchinda, the former ar-

Mantu, Majlish lead rival bodies of Dhaka dist AL

By Staff Correspondent

The split in the Dhaka District Awami League took a firm shape Friday with the formation of two committees, one headed by its incumbent President Shamsuddoha Khan Majlish and another by expelled General Secretary Mostofa Mohsin Mantu.
The committees were formed in two separate biennial councils — one at Savar and another at the Engineers' Institution in the city.
Witnesses said that gathering in Dhaka was bigger than that at Savar.
Meanwhile, a group of unidentified armed men yesterday tried to set ablaze the arch erected on the occasion of the council at Savar, thana sources said adding that "their attempts were foiled."
Our DMCH correspondent adds: Mother and nephew of Savar Thana Jubo League leader Lucky were seriously injured when some unidentified men hurled hand-made bombs at his house.
Savar Thana source could not confirm the incident.
A political source said that incidents were related to the council conference of Dhaka District AL.
Meanwhile, AL Presidium member Zohra Tajuddin and former MP Maj Gen (Retd) Khalilur Rahman were present
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Shantibahini guns down two more

CHITTAGONG, May 22: Members of Bangladesh Security Forces today recovered two bodies of non-tribals from Barabil under Matiranga Upazila of Khagrachhari hill district, reports BSS.
According to official sources here, when a group of daily non-tribal labourers were working in the field yesterday suddenly the tribal insurgents fired on them indiscriminately from nearby jungle. On receiving the information, the security forces appeared there but no one was found dead on the spot that moment.
However, the security forces through their special raid recovered from deep jungle the bodies which were identified as Mohammad Abdul Ilye (30) and Mohammad Hossain Ali (35).
The hands of the victims were tied behind and there were several marks of bullet injury on two bodies, the source said.



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia addressing a public meeting at Joynagar in Keraniganj upazila, Dhaka yesterday. — PID photo

Efforts to destroy BNP will fail: PM

By Staff Correspondent

KERANIGANJ, May 22: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia Friday sounded strong warning against those disturbing the development programmes initiated by her party.
"Guard against those who create anarchy, terrorism or hamper the on-going development efforts," she called upon her countrymen.
The Prime Minister was addressing a public meeting at Joynagar in Keraniganj Friday afternoon.
"All efforts to destroy BNP would fail as our party is integrated with the people and the land," she told the rally. However, she did not elaborate.
Begum Zia listed different development programmes of the present government and urged the entrepreneurs to set up more industries for giving the country's economy a solid base.
"Set up more industries... we are with you, she assured and said that her government would extend all possible facilities to the entrepreneurs.
Presided over by Keraniganj thana BNP president Mohammad Najmuddin, the meeting was also addressed among others by Agriculture, Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control Minister M Majidul Haq, Information Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda, Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, State Minister for Civil Aviation
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National body for children's rights planned

By Sohail Manzur

The government plans to set up a multi-sectoral national standing review committee under the Ministry of Social Welfare to promote and protect children's rights.
The committee's job will be to make proposals with regard to the planning and implementation of the programmes that the government has initiated to fulfil certain objectives relating to the rights of the children.
The body will also monitor the progress of the programmes that are being implemented.
The committee, proposed by the Joint Government-UNICEF Advisory Group (JGUAG) will be made up of representatives from relevant ministries and government agencies, Shishu Adhikar Forum and professionals including lawyers, doctors, academicians, social workers and media experts.
A full-time executive secretary will be seconded from the Shishu Academy to assist the committee.
The convention on the rights of the child, which was ratified by Bangladesh in August 1990, contains a full statement of the basic rights of children and records the commitment of States Parties
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Council session of Dhaka District Awami League (Mantu faction) being inaugurated by hoisting flags at Engineers Institution yesterday. — Star photo

Section 144 continues

Goutam Dewan won't withdraw resignation letter

RANGAMATI, May 22: The section 144 imposed in the town following Tuesday's clash between two rival groups of students continued for the third day today with the authorities firm to maintain peace and harmony at any cost, reports UNB.
The clash between Pahari Chhatra Parishad (Hill Students' Council) and Sarbadalya Chhatra Parishad (All-Party Student Council) left a dozen people injured and over fifty houses and shops burnt.
Goutam Dewan, Chairman of Local Government Council of Rangamati Hill District, today refused to withdraw the resignation letter he submitted accepting the responsibility of failure to contain the Tuesday's trouble.
Dewan had a close door meeting this morning with Minister for Environment, Forest, Fisheries and Livestock Abdul Al Noman.
Council sources said the meeting which lasted for about three and a half hour at the local Circuit House however ended without Dewan agreeing to withdraw his resignation.
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Heavy fighting between Uzbek militia, Hekmatyar forces

KABUL, May 22: Heavy shelling shook Kabul today after overnight fighting between Uzbek militia and fighters of holdout Mujahideen leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar left an unknown number of casualties, reports AFP.
Heavy shelling from the city's suburbs to unspecified locations outside Kabul continued for almost 40 minutes Friday as residents said the activities were confined to the Darul Amand and Karte Naw provinces.
Today's fighting flared after reported attacks by the militia on Hekmatyar's Hezb-i-Islami force in the suburbs of Chehalsatoon and Tapa Maranjari, a spokesman said.
"We are in a defensive position, but if necessary we will retaliate," said Hezb-i-Islami spokesman Qutbuddin Hilal in Kabul.
He said the overnight fighting "lasted two to three hours" but added that he had no ready reports of casualties from either side.
The fresh fighting between the two rival groups followed the announcement of a five-point peace accord by a Mujahideen council providing for a withdrawal of all opposing forces from Kabul.
The commission headed by Maulvi Jalaluddin Haqqani also announced a permanent end to the fighting and ordered withdrawing fighters to deposit their heavy guns and tanks with the new Islamic government in Kabul.
"We spoke to Haqqani and we are waiting," the Hezb spokesman said.
Hekmatyar insists on the withdrawal of the lawless militiamen as a pre-condition to his joining the three-week-old interim administration.
The spokesman said the Uzbek militia led by former General Abdul Rashid Dostam wanted to "sabotage" the accord as it also seeks the withdrawal of such "Mercenary" groups.
Meanwhile, Defence Minister Ahmed Shah Masood, an arch-rival of Hekmatyar, told a Pakistani delegation Thursday night that he was ready to withdraw all forces from Kabul provided he was assured the city would not be attacked in the future.

SKOP goes on 48-hour strike from July 7

By Staff Correspondent

The Sramik Karmochari Otkya Parishad (SKOP) has announced that it will go on a nationwide 48-hour general strike from July 7 to force the government accept its five-point demand and materialise the Government-SKOP agreement reached earlier.
The programme was announced at a national convention of the SKOP representatives held at the Teacher-Student Centre of Dhaka University yesterday.
The convention after a day-long discussion also decided that the SKOP central leaders would start a four-day tour of districts and the industrial areas from June 27, to drum up support of their demands.
Besides, public meetings will be held at four divisional
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Ramos takes lead: Massive fraud alleged Santiago begins indefinite fast today

MANILA, May 22: Presidential candidate Miriam Defensor Santiago said Friday she will begin an indefinite fast to protest 'wholesale' fraud in the May 11 presidential election, reports AP.
More than 100 of her supporters gathered Friday night at the Media Citizens Quick Count center to begin a vigil for truth as their anti-graft champion dropped to third place in the presidential race.
Mrs Santiago said in a statement that she would enter a suburban Manila hospital Saturday to begin fasting to the death if necessary.
She said she would subsist on a liquid diet until the government of President Corason Aquino stops the alleged delay and manipulation of election returns.
With just over 55 per cent of ballots counted Friday, Media Citizens Quick Count, a private group authorized by the government to count the vote, said Ramos was leading the presidential race with 3,131,746 votes, or 24 per cent of the votes counted.
Industrialist Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco was second with 2,269,812 votes or 17.5 per cent and Mrs Santiago was in third with 2,238,382 votes or 17.3 per cent.
Mrs Santiago accused the government of delaying the vote count in areas where she is strong to condition the people into accepting a Ramos victory.
Fidel Ramos held his lead for the presidency Friday, but an official of the agency counting the ballots said massive fraud had been discovered in three areas where the former defence secretary is ahead.
Mrs Aquino supports Ramos, her former defence secretary. Her chief aide, Franklin Drilon, acknowledged there had been scattered fraud but said it was not widespread enough to affect the election's outcome.
Proof of extensive cheating would discredit the entire election and precipitate a political crisis that could undermine the nation's democracy, particularly since Mrs Aquino took office in a 1986 uprising triggered by electoral fraud.
Some fear that if no candidate is proclaimed president, the military may step in to maintain public order.
Ramos expressed confidence the would be proclaimed the winner.
"Unless people who like to be magicians during elections get in the way, I shall be en route to eventual victory in the first democratic polls in more than a generation," Ramos said.
Jarvis Bondoc, an official of Media Citizens Quick Count, the quasi-official private group authorized to tally votes, wrote in Friday editions of The Manila Times that vote-padding had been discovered in the provinces of Pampanga, Tarlac and Misamis Oriental, where Ramos is leading.
If such practices were widespread, Bondoc wrote, "that presidential candidate could garner hundreds of thousands of spurious votes."

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