

Ordnance depot blast kills 13 troops in Kashmir

NEW DELHI, Mar 29: An Indian Army General and 12 soldiers and officers were killed when an explosion rocked an army ordnance depot today in Kashmir's turbulent summer capital of Srinagar, officials said here, reports AFP.

Seven others including officers from New Delhi were injured, an army spokesman said in New Delhi, describing the depot explosion as an accidental 'tragedy'.

A top general and some other high-ranking officers were among those killed in the blast, which triggered a massive fire in the ordnance store, other military sources said.

"We have ordered an enquiry into the tragedy, but the explosion was definitely not caused by the terrorists," the army spokesman said.

Major-General BW Bernandes, a veteran of two Indian wars with Pakistan, and an expert in anti-insurgency operations, was instantly killed in the blast.

Sources said the explosions occurred when a team of army assessors from New Delhi led by their commander were inspecting the stored explosives.

Officials said the blast ignited an unspecified quantity of stored explosives captured by Indian soldiers from

Fresh clash near Sayedabad bus terminal

By Staff Correspondent

Two groups of armed men clashed again near the Sayedabad Bus Terminal yesterday in which six children were injured.

According to police and local people, it was fresh violence by two groups of local hoodlums at the same place where transport workers clashed over the control of the terminal on Sunday and Monday.

Police on duty however said the situation was under control.

Of the victims in yesterday's clashes, nine-year-old Mainu and seven-year-old Jahanara were admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH). Four others — Badsha, 8, Munir, 7, Najma, 10, and Mohammad Hossain, 11 — were given first aid.

The children sustained splinter injuries from the crackers exploded sporadically by the warring groups.

The clash that erupted around 11 in the morning lasted half an hour disrupting movement of transport in the area for some time.

AL petition

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to press the matter, is expected to give his observations on the issue today.

Abdus Sobhan, Bar-At-Law, went to the EC office yesterday to inform the commission of the AL decision not to pursue the petition because the hearing was "useless" after the official announcement of the results of the by-election held March 20.

The petition, originally moved by AL advisory council member KS Nabi, Bar-At-Law, had urged the EC not to publish the gazette notification declaring the BNP candidate elected.

Indian police raid

From Page 1 Col 7

Director General of Commerce, Sharma said. When the landlady and others tried to stop them, the police told them, "We are Indian policemen, and we have come to apprehend a murdered Babloo Singh — who has reportedly rented the house."

But the Indian police had mistaken the house, thinking it belonged to another retired officer, Madan Krishna Shrestha, and ransacked the rooms, Sharma said.

The police grabbed one of the occupants — a Nepal Industrial Development Corporation official, pointed a revolver at him and asked where Babloo Singh was, Sharma said.

When the landlord told the police officers that he did not have any tenants, according to Sharma, the policemen left, saying, "Sorry we have been misinformed."

The Indian police then went to the house of Madan Krishna Shrestha, which is rented to an Indian businessman from New Delhi.

Shrestha said, the businessman was in New Delhi for the past two months, but his Nepalese employee was staying in the house. The Indian police pinned down the Nepalese employee and demanded to be told where Babloo Singh was, Shrestha said.

Some of the police officers ransacked the rooms and took cash and four gold rings.

The Nepalese Home Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba said he had no prior knowledge of the raid by Indian police officers.

Neither the Foreign

Secretary nor other officials knew about it in advance, but they and the Home Minister were inquiring into the matter, a Home Ministry official said, adding that the Home Minister submit his report to the House in a day.

A Home Ministry official said the Indian police did not seek permission to enter private houses in the Nepalese capital.

Atish Sinha, a senior official at the Indian embassy said, "We are not in a position to make any comment on the incident until we get complete reports about it."

Meanwhile Reuter adds: Nepal protested to India today about a weekend raid on houses in Kathmandu by men who claimed to be Indian policemen, Home Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba said.

"In view of the seriousness of this incident, his majesty's government summoned the Indian ambassador and has handed over a strong protest letter," Deuba told Parliament.

Deuba said the Nepali government had ordered a high-level inquiry into the incident and a senior Nepali police officer, Rewat Thapa, had been suspended from duty on suspicion of conniving in the raid.

Deuba denied opposition accusations that the government of Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala had made a secret deal with New Delhi on security matters.

"There has not been any kind of understanding with any foreign country to allow their policemen to enter Nepal and conduct their own investigation," he said.



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia caressing a handicapped child during her visit to the Metropolitan Kita Medical and Rehabilitation Centre in Tokyo yesterday. — PID photo

Japan assures increased aid

(From Page 1 Col 5)

Ambassador to Japan Mahbubul Haq and Additional Secretary of the Economic Relations Division, Sadat Hossain while the Japanese side included the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Tsutomu Hata, Cabinet Secretary Mashayoshi Takamura, Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh Shigeo Takenaka and five senior officials of different ministries.

The two countries expressed their desire to increase their cooperation for peace and stability in Asia as well as in the larger international context.

Japan also agreed to raise its funding to SAARC for conducting various studies from 300,000 dollars to 500,000 dollars.

During the talks held in a "most cordial atmosphere" Begum Zia thanked Japan for its support to Bangladesh's development efforts and informed her Japanese counterpart in Bangladesh by her government through a number of steps to facilitate foreign investment.

Begum Zia also mentioned the measures taken by her government for socio-economic development, particularly human resources uplift.

She said that promotion of friendship to all' was the cardinal principle of Bangladesh's foreign policy and added it was because of this that Bangladesh made persistent efforts to strengthen peace and stability in South Asia and beyond.

Begum Zia said Bangladesh wholeheartedly supports a global role for Japan befitting the economic super power as well as Tokyo's bid for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council.

Begum Zia, who is also the current chairperson of the SAARC, explained the regional forum's role in promoting co-operation and understanding for the benefit of the entire peoples of South Asia.

Bangladesh, she said, emphasised friendly relations with all its neighbours.

She also informed the Japanese Prime Minister about the adverse effects on a vast population in a large part of Bangladesh of the Ganges water withdrawal upstream by neighbouring India.

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ment sectors as well as the programme for production.

He responded positively to encourage private Japanese investment in Bangladesh.

He said his government would consider negotiations for signing an agreement with Bangladesh for promotion and protection of investment.

Prime Minister Hosokawa praised Bangladesh's role in the UN peacekeeping operations and said the Japanese army felt very happy to work with the Bangladesh peace-keeping forces.

Hosokawa praised various steps taken by the present government in Bangladesh to attract foreign investment and expressed the hope that earmarking of an exclusive industrial estate for investments from Japan would be conducive to such investment.

Both the Prime Ministers described the Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge, the work on which is due to start soon, as a milestone in the relations between the two countries.

They said that the bridge would not only link two areas of Bangladesh but also bring the two countries still closer.

Begum Zia invited Hosokawa to visit Bangladesh. The Japanese Premier accepting the invitation said he would visit Bangladesh at a mutually convenient date.

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Beef-eaters in Delhi beware!

NEW DELHI, Mar 29: The city administration today outlawed the slaughter of cows in the Indian capital and warned that beef-eaters could go to jail for up to five years if they smuggled cattle in for consumption, reports AFP.

New Delhi's Hindu-revivalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) city government also banned the sale of canned beef and imported steaks, and said violators would face huge fines, as well as prison.

The bill outlawing cow slaughter could affect a huge percentage of the non-vegetarians among New Delhi's eight million residents, who can neither afford mutton nor white meat.

The city's entire Muslim population would be hard-hit, residents said.

Some 10,000 goats and 3,000 cows end up on lunch or dinner tables of the city residents every day.

Warm reception to Khaleda

TOKYO, Mar 29: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia was this morning accorded a warm ceremonial welcome by the Japanese Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa at the Akasaka Palace where she is staying, reports BSS.

The entire cabinet came to the Akasaka Palace and the Japanese Premier introduced the members of his cabinet to the Bangladesh Prime Minister.

A large contingent drawn from the Japanese Self Defence Army gave her a guard of honour.

Japanese and Bangladeshi schoolchildren lined up waving miniature flags of Bangladesh and Japan to welcome the Prime Minister.

Large flags of the two countries fluttered all around the city in the chilly spring wind.

The entourage members, Foreign Minister Mostafizur Rahman, Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman, Prime Minister's Special Envoy M Morshed Khan, State Minister for Social Welfare Fazlur Rahman, seven accompanying MPs, the team of businessmen and entrepreneurs as well as senior journalists, were present at the ceremony to receive the Bangladesh leader.

Bangladesh Ambassador to Japan Mahbubul Haq and the Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh Shigeo Takenaka were also present in addition to members of the Bangladesh community in Tokyo as well as the wives of the Bangladesh embassy officials.

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The Midnight File

Post-election violence claims 5 in Turkey

ANKARA, Mar 29: Five people were killed and several others wounded today in a post election clash between supporters of Turkey's ruling True Path Party and its Islamic rival, the semi-official news agency Anatolia said. Fighting began in Patnos, in the eastern province of Agri, after the True Path candidate for mayor in Sunday's local elections began to celebrate his victory, reports AFP.

Serb artillery leaves 6 hurt in Gorazde

SARAJEVO, Mar 29: Six children were wounded in a fierce Bosnian Serb artillery attack on the Muslim safe haven of Gorazde in eastern Bosnia today, UN aid workers said. The bombardment was unleashed as the mainly Muslim Bosnian parliament prepared to endorse a Muslim-Croat peace federation and rebel Serbs in Croatia met Zagreb Government negotiators in hopes of signing a ceasefire, reports Reuter.

Kim gets no assurances from China on N-issue

BEIJING, Mar 29: South

Korean President Kim Young-sam apparently received no assurances that China would intervene with North Korea on nuclear issues, Kim said Tuesday only that he and Chinese leaders agreed dialogue should continue, reports AP.

After two days of talks in Beijing, Kim told a news conference that the two sides "have been trying to resolve this issue through dialogue and persuasion, and we will not renounce our efforts for dialogue in the future."

Kim's China visit was the second leg of a diplomatic tour aimed at easing mounting tension on the Korean Peninsula over suspicions that Pyongyang is developing nuclear weapons.

After meetings in Japan last week, Kim came to Beijing to urge China to intervene with North Korea, its ally in communism.

If he received any promises of Chinese assistance, Kim did not say so. Instead, he repeatedly stressed that China and South Korea agree that more talks are needed.

Both Chinese and South Korean Foreign Ministry officials have opposed a US proposal for sanctions against North Korea, urging the United Nations instead to adopt a milder statement pressing Pyongyang to allow full inspection of its nuclear facilities.

North Korea denies that it has a nuclear weapons program, but has refused to allow international inspectors access to a key nuclear facility.

Kim said he and his Chinese counterpart, Jiang Zemin, who also is Communist Party general secretary, "had a very intensive discussion of the North Korean nuclear problem" during their two hours of talks Monday. But he refused to give details.

Foreign ministers from the two sides met for more than three hours Monday to discuss the same issue, but no details were released.

Other nations have looked increasingly to China to mediate with its ally, but Beijing has consistently played down its influence with North Korea, saying it can play only a limited role.

Korean nuclear issue.

AFP adds: The United States Sunday strengthened its military presence in South Korea with the arrival of combat aircraft from bases in Japan and the Pacific, the North Korean news agency said today.

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বিদ্যুৎ গ্রাহকদের জ্ঞাতার্থে

বিদ্যুৎ বিলের অর্থ নগদে অথবা চেকে নির্ধারিত ব্যাংকে জমা দিতে হয়।

বিদ্যুৎ বিলের অর্থ নগদে অথবা চেকে বিদ্যুৎ উন্নয়ন বোর্ডের কোন কর্মকর্তা/কর্মচারীর হাতে না দেয়ার জন্য সম্মানিত গ্রাহকদের অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে।

বাংলাদেশ বিদ্যুৎ উন্নয়ন বোর্ড

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

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OECD chief calls on Khaleda

TOKYO, Mar 29: The Japanese Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECD) President Akira Nishigaki today called on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at the Akasaka Palace, reports BSS.

They discussed increasing cooperation between OECD and Bangladesh to step up infrastructure development in Bangladesh needed for facilitating private investment, particularly Japanese private investment.

The Prime Minister said that fast development of the energy sector and communication as well as telecommunication were priority areas for her government.

She thanked the OECD, a Japanese government agency, for its commitment to co-finance the Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge and said a number of more bridges would have to be built including a bridge on the river Rupsha to facilitate optimum utilisation of the Jamuna Bridge.

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Tofael on Rafiq's remarks

From Page 1 Col 8

licence to even an elected government to deny people's voting right by using arms and amassing wealth through corruption," Tofael said. The opposition was not allowed to discuss in parliament the allegation of corruption against 17 ministers and the massacre in Hebron, he alleged.