

Kim warns against pitfalls of aid as DPRK faces famine

SEOUL, June 21: His nation facing famine, North Korea's leader Kim Jong Il has warned that international aid is a "noose" by which foreign countries will seek domination, the Communist country's official news agency said Saturday, reports AP.

Kim, in a treatise carried by the Korean Central News Agency, exhorted his people to unite to fight against imperialism. KCNA said the work was published June 19.

"The imperialists' aid to other countries is a noose with which to further plunder and subjugate them," Kim wrote.

The work appears to be part of efforts to maintain the central government's tight hold on the population in the face of the massive foreign aid it needs to fend off starvation for an estimated one-fifth of the population.

But while warning of the

dangers of international assistance, Kim also said that some things from abroad should be allowed into the country so that the North can become stronger.

"We must introduce the good and advanced things from foreign countries but must not mechanically imitate or give absolute importance to them," Kim wrote.

South Korea's official North Korea watcher, Naewoe, Press, said, however, that the call does not seem to indicate possible wider openings in the future, since Kim also warned against giving importance to things brought in from outside.

The International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies warned Friday that one fifth of the North's population — five million people — is threatened by starvation. According to the World Food Programme, North Korea

is totally dependent on foreign aid until the fall harvest.

But the aid should not fool the people into trusting "imperialists" or abandoning their Communist ideals, Kim wrote.

"The revolutionary party and people must resolve their problems with their own decision and judgment to meet their own demands and interests. If they fail to maintain their own views and faith under pressure from outside forces, they will end in dependence and national ruin," he wrote.

The work was titled "On Preserving the Juche Character and National Character of the Revolution and Construction."

Juche is the North's ruling ideology of self-reliance that has guided it on its path of isolation for decades. That seclusion has helped the country maintain tight control over its population.

"The revolutionary party and people ... should always maintain an unshakable stand for independence against imperialism and they should not allow the slightest expression of illusions about the imperialists," Kim exhorted.

The North's current massive food shortage is the result of two straight years of floods that wiped out harvests and left fields barren. But the North's economy has been shrinking since the fall of Communism in Eastern Europe left it without aid and trading partners.

Decades of agricultural mismanagement has also left the mountainous land more vulnerable to floods.

In hopes of propping up its downward spiraling economy, the North recently opened a free-trade zone near its border with China and Russia. But investors have been slow in coming.

Gujral to open India's first science city

CALCUTTA, June 21: Prime Minister Indira Kumar Gujral will formally inaugurate India's first science city here on July 1, reports PTI.

Director General of science city Saroj Ghosh told newspaper on Friday that the prime minister would inaugurate the first phase of the two-phase project, constructed by the National Council of Science Museums (NCMS).

The first phase includes a sophisticated 2,200 capacity convention centre, the largest in the country, eight seminar halls, a science park to be operated by the visitors, "space odyssey", "dynamotion", the first of its kind in the world and the 370-capacity hi-tech space theatre.

However, Dr Ghosh said, the second phase of the project, which included the science exploration hall, was under a cloud following the centre's decision to drastically reduce the budgetary allocation for the NCMS.

While the 1996-97 budget had provided Rs 14 crore for NCMS, the amount was slashed to five crore rupees in the current budget.

ROK govt orders arrest of 120 students

SEOUL, June 21: The South Korean government ordered the arrest today of the 120 most wanted student radicals by the end of next month, reports AFP.

The order came as Prime Minister Koh Kun met his cabinet ministers to seek ways of hunting down radicals in the federation of student councils, known as Hanchongryon.

"The centre of Hanchongryon must be eliminated in order to secure stability and establish law and order," the prime minister was quoted as saying by his spokesman.

Koh said the government was determined not to tolerate any longer "illegal and pro-enemy" activities by Hanchongryon, which he noted the government had branded as "pro-enemy."

Albanian polls must be held on schedule, agree Italy, US

DENVER, June 21: The United States and Italy agreed on Friday that general elections in Albania must go ahead as planned next week despite violence, Italian Foreign Minister Lamberto Dini said.

"We are in any event convinced that the situation in two to three months time would not be very different. So let's go ahead with the elections," Dini told Reuters after meeting US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright ahead of the Group of Seven Summit here.

"We are in full agreement that we must go ahead with the elections on June 29," he said. More than 1,500 people have been killed in Albania this year and about 50 have died in the past week as the election campaign draws to a close.

Kabila terms reports of Rwandan massacre as lies

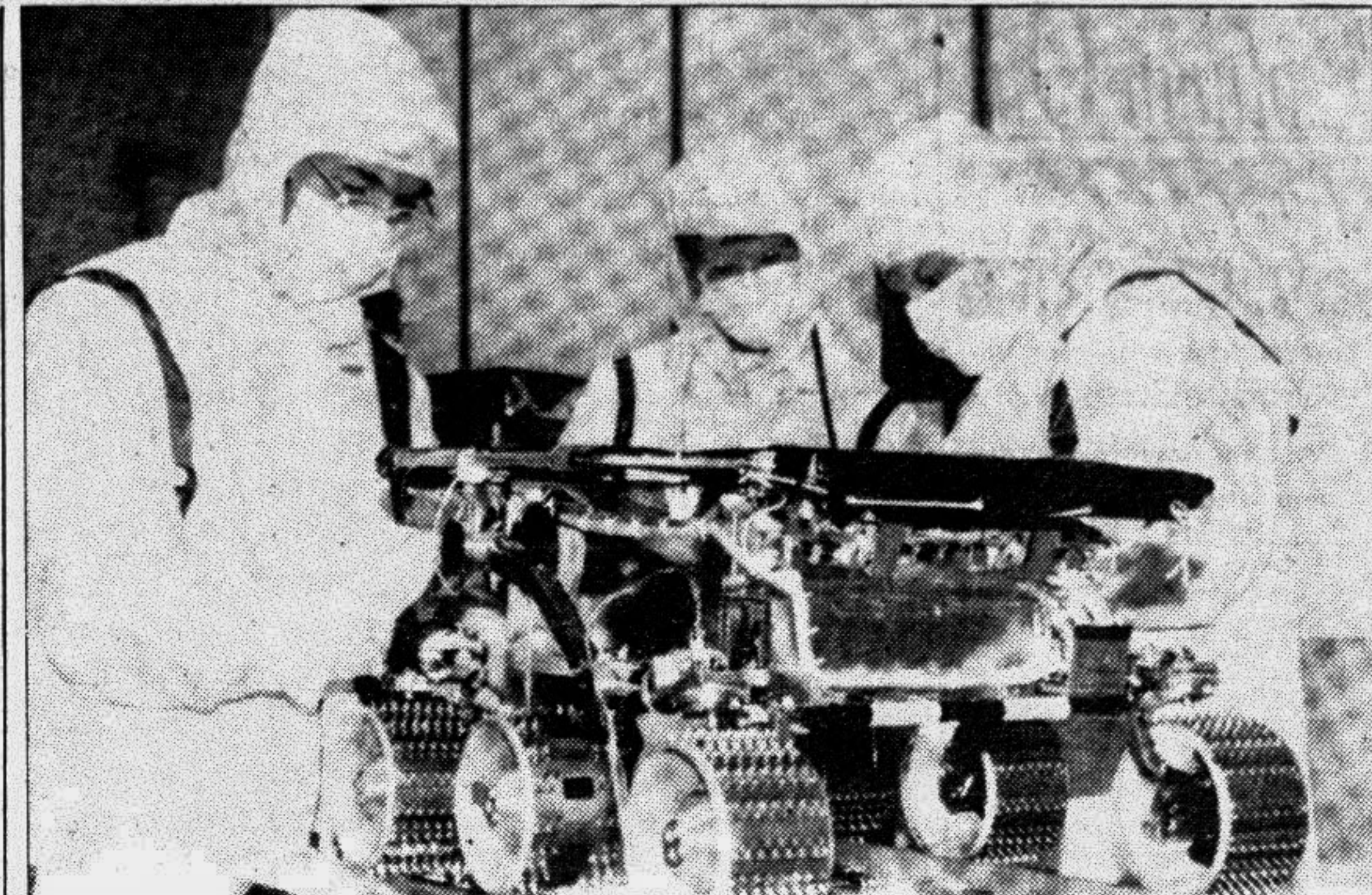
KINSHASA, June 21: President Laurent Kabila stressed Friday that there had "Never been any massacres" of Rwandan Hutu refugees in the Democratic Republic of Congo, reports AFP.

Kabila's reputation as the "liberator" of former Zaire hangs in the balance following the arrival Friday of a UN team to help probe mounting evidence his troops massacred thousands of refugees.

Asked by Kinshasa television about claims by the Washington Post that he had given instructions to impede a United Nations inquiry mission into the massacres Kabila replied: "These are lies."

He went on: Firstly, there aren't any more Rwandan refugees, a lot of them returned home, there have never been any massacres. The international community wants to exonerate itself for having been used by France to bring the Hutu army of former Rwandan President Juvenal by arming into this country."

That army Kabila said "Massacred Tutsi-origin population in (the eastern district of) North Kivu. That's well known. They were not refugees."



In this picture released by NASA Friday scientists at Kennedy Space Centre June 4 check the Mars Sojourner rover that will explore the Martian surface after the Mars Lander mission lands on the planet. The mission will provide elements to understand the structure of the Martian atmosphere, surface weather, and surface geology.

— AFP/UNB photo

Gujral faces leadership challenge

Maresh Uniyal writes from New Delhi

Indian Prime Minister I.K. Gujral faced this week a tough time leading his fractious alliance which was unable to take a long-due, major economic decision and was embarrassed by the imminent criminal prosecution of a top leader.

However, in a rare display of unanimity, the ruling United Front (UF) coalition and the Congress party keeping it in office, have ensured that India's Vice President K.R. Narayanan will be the country's new head of state, succeeding Dr Shanker Dayal Sharma whose five-year term ends on July 24.

Gujral was under pressure from two quarters. Even as his alliance deferred a hike in the price of petroleum products yet again, the President of his Janata Dal (JD) party, Bihar Chief Minister Laloo Yadav became India's first head of a state government to face criminal prosecution while in office.

The prime minister's party, however, won a reprieve from the law courts when it got more time to carry out party organisational polls which threaten to split the JD.

The prime minister has publicly declared time and again that the government would soon hike the prices of oil products to plug a yawning deficit in its finances. However, the UF executive in its meeting this week, again put off a decision on the price rise.

A price hike is fiercely opposed by the UF's left partners who say this will hurt the common people and, instead, advocate alternative measures to narrow the oil pool deficit, which is expected to soar to 245 billion rupees by the end of the current fiscal year. The issue would be taken up again at the next meeting of the UF Steering Committee on June 27.

Gujral's inability to take a decision to which he is committed was compounded when Congress President Sitaram Kesri declared that a decision on the oil price hike should only be taken after a thorough study.

Political observers say Kesri, who was reinstated as

Congress chief by an overwhelming majority in recent party polls, is determined to cash in on one of the toughest decisions to be taken by the UF government.

The UF, with 178-odd lawmakers in the 545-member Lower House of Parliament, depends on the Congress which has 140 members in the House. The Congress president has declared that he will not destabilise the government, but political analysts say that the former ruling party is not used to staying out of office for long and will try to exploit differences in Gujral's alliance to position itself favourably for likely mid-term polls.

The UF was expected to insist that the Bihar Chief Minister step down from office giving in to growing demands for his resignation after his implication in the 9.5 billion rupee livestock feed scam in the state. After sitting on the request for

more than a month, Bihar Governor A.R. Kidwai finally authorised the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) this week to prosecute the Chief Minister and his present and former colleagues who include a member of Gujral's Council of Ministers.

However, Gujral was in for embarrassment with a defiant Mr Yadav declaring that he would not step down and accusing the CBI of hatching a conspiracy against him.

UF convenor and Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu, who heads the Telugu Desam Party (TDP), said at a press conference in the Indian capital that no one, however highly placed, should be spared in the Bihar fodder scam. However, Gujral will find it difficult to offend his party president who has even threatened to split the JD if he is pushed to a corner.

— India Abroad News Service

Off the Record

Disgrace to parenthood

CAMBRIDGE: Calling them a disgrace to parenthood, a judge sentenced a couple to a combined 90 years in prison for sexually abusing and dragging their four young sons, reports AP.

Corby Adkinson, 41, was sentenced to 45 to 50 years in prison. His wife, Nancy, 35, was sentenced to 35 to 40 years. Each will have to serve at least the minimum specified in the sentence before being eligible for parole.

"Each one of them is a disgrace to the beautiful words 'mother' and 'father' and, frankly, it will be a miracle if these children normally survive this parental abuse," Judge Robert A. Barton said Thursday.

The Adkinsons had waived a trial by jury and were convicted by Barton last month.

Adkinson was convicted on 27 counts that included child rape, assault and battery with a dangerous weapon, drug distribution and indecent assault.

Mrs Adkinson was found guilty of 15 counts that included rape of a minor, indecent assault on a child and drug possession. She was acquitted of seven other charges.

The Adkinsons' boys now 12, 10 and 11-year-old twins, testified against their parents.

Prosecutors said the couple routinely gave their four sons cocaine and marijuana and raped them.

"Deviant Sex 101 was the course several times a week for the gratification of these defendants," prosecutor Martha Coakley said.

BRIEFLY

25 Kurdish rebels killed: Twenty five Kurdish rebels have been killed in operations by the Turkish security forces in southeastern Anatolia, the centre of a violent Kurdish separatist campaign, the government said, AFP reports from Ankara.

An official communique cited by the Anatolia news agency said 24 other rebels were taken prisoner during the operations. Twenty-two of the rebels, who belong to the outlawed separatist Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), were killed during an operation in the area of Mount Cudi, in the Sirnak region close to Turkey's border with Iraq.

Quake shakes N Iran: Northeastern Iran was hit by a strong aftershock of the recent quake that left more than 2,400 people dead, the official Islamic Republic News Agency reported Saturday, AP says from Tehran.

There were no reports of injuries or damage from Friday afternoon's quake in Khorasan province. It had a preliminary magnitude of 5.9. May's 7.1-magnitude quake also left 60,000 homeless.

Japanese actor dies of cancer: Shintaro Katsu, the swaggering actor who gained fame playing a blind swordsman on screen and notoriety in real life for smuggling drugs into Hawaii, died Saturday of cancer. He was 65, AP reports from Tokyo.

Katsu died at a hospital in Kashiwa, outside Tokyo, said Kunio Murakami, a spokesman at his Tokyo office. The cause of death was throat cancer, Murakami said. The popular actor starred in both movies and on television as Zatoichi, the wandering masseur who despite his blindness was a masterful swordsman. The series was also shown in foreign countries.

Strong quake jolts N island of NZ: A strong earthquake jolted the lower north island of New Zealand early yesterday, the second in three days, AFP reports from Wellington.

Yesterday's quake, centred near Thursday night's temblor, struck at about 3:40 am (1540 GMT) followed by tremors lasting about 20 seconds. The Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences said the quake measured 5.2 on the Richter scale and was centred 80 kilometres (18 miles) northwest of Wellington. It was felt most strongly in the Kapiti coast and Wanganui, but emergency services received no reports of serious damage.

Belgian crown prince in Japan: Belgian Crown Prince Philippe arrived in Japan yesterday, leading a trade mission including officials and businessmen, government officials said, AFP reports from Tokyo.

The 37-year-old prince will open a five-day seminar on Belgian high-technology in Tokyo on Monday and also meet Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko and other Japanese imperial family members. After a three-day stay in Tokyo, he will travel to Kitakyushu, a city on the southern island of Kyushu, Tuesday to open another high-technology seminar and a Belgian-week fair at a department store.

Woman journalist killed in India: A journalist and story writer, Sushma Goel associated with a local evening "Yugbandhu" and her son-in-law were stabbed to death and her daughter was seriously injured allegedly by dacoits yesterday morning, the police said, PTI reports from Moradabad.

Thai PM visits Cambodia

Ranariddh confirms news of Pol Pot's capture

PHNOM, PENH, June 21: Cambodia's First Prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh said today that Khmer Rouge guerrilla strongman Pol Pot had been captured by a group of his former followers, reports Reuters.

Khmer Rouge Radio, which is now controlled by a guerrilla splinter faction which broke with Pol Pot earlier this month, reported on Friday that it had captured Pol Pot.

"Yes, I confirm it. He has been captured already," Ranariddh told reporters. He did not elaborate.

Khmer Rouge Radio said on Friday that the breakaway guerrilla factions "National Army" had captured Pol Pot the previous day.

Ranariddh said earlier this month that most of Pol Pot's supporters had turned against him and were hunting him down in the jungle of northern Cambodia.

He said Pol Pot had wanted to surrender to his former com-

rades-in-arms but his offer had been rejected. Instead he would be taken alive and brought to justice.

Meanwhile, Thai Prime Minister Chavalit Yongchaiyudh flew in to Phnom Penh on Saturday for a one-day visit that diplomats said he would use to express concern over Cambodia's simmering political crisis.

Chavalit was welcomed at Phnom Penh Airport by Foreign Minister Ung Huot and headed into the city where he was due to meet First Prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh and his uneasy coalition partner, Second Prime Minister Hun Sen.

Diplomats in Phnom Penh said Chavalit was bound to discuss fears about political stability in Cambodia with the feuding premiers and urge them to resolve their differences as the country prepared to join the association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

No miracles likely from Indo-Pak talks in Islamabad

Pakistani officials are not expecting any miracles from the talks with India which are certain to be clouded by the Prithvi missile controversy.

A senior official said Pakistan would raise the missile issue in the June 19-23 talks between the foreign secretaries of the two nations.

The second round of the foreign secretary level talks is being held pursuant to a decision by Indian and Pakistani Prime Ministers I.K. Gujral and Nawaz Sharif at the Male summit of the South Asian Association For Regional Cooperation (SAARC) in May.

The first round, held in New Delhi in the last week of March marking the resumption of the Indo-Pakistani dialogue after more than three years, did not

produce any concrete result.

Islamabad does not expect any breakthrough in the second round either. The session is likely to devote much time to discussing a proposal to set up joint working groups to tackle Indo-Pakistani differences on various subjects.

However, officials here say the Prithvi controversy has cast a shadow over the dialogue. Islamabad reacted strongly to the recent report in the Washington Post that New Delhi had deployed the ballistic missiles near the border of the two countries.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has sent letters to the leaders of the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council drawing their attention to the threat to his nation from

Tariq Butt writes from Islamabad

the Prithvi missiles.

"We want to convey to the international community who is giving a fillip to the ballistic missile race in South Asia," a senior official told IANS.

Jamaat-e-Islami chief Qazi Hussain Ahmed said the Prime Minister was keen to normalise relations with India but New Delhi had responded with the deployment of the Prithvi missiles which were aimed at Pakistan. "We should reconsider our keenness for negotiations," he said.

Pakistani newspapers too have hit out at India. "The reported deployment of Prithvi missiles on Pakistan's border has inflicted great damage on the carefully nurtured ambience

of goodwill which was in the process of creating a fertile and conducive ground for negotiations between the officials of the two countries," The Nation said in an editorial.

"Such an atmosphere does not provide an ideal backdrop for the much-trumpeted talks... If the talks fall apart, both countries will suffer and therefore it is in their mutual interest to try and keep the process going... Perhaps a part of the Indian establishment does not want better relations," it added.

The daily cautioned the two sides against "half-baked attempts (at) placating international opinion." It said "Pakistan should therefore go



A Cambodian girl touches one of the human skulls that make up a map of Cambodia at Phnom Penh's Tuol Sleng genocide museum, a former high school that was turned into the Khmer Rouge's most notorious prison, as her friends look on in this file photo taken June 7, 1996.

— AFP/UNB photo

Army called out for relief work

Flood situation worsens as water surging in Assam

GUWAHATI, June 21: Over 52,000 people in Assam are reeling under the impact of floods in five districts even as the river Brahmaputra and its tributaries rising and army personnel engaging in relief and rescue operations, reports PTI.

Official sources here Friday said that 351 villages in Dhemaji, north Lakhimpur, Nalbari, Barpet and Goalpara were submerged by the surging flood waters, overran vast tracks of human habitation and farmland with standing crops. The first wave of floods this season claimed three lives so far and

thousand rendered homeless as their houses were below waist-deep and even neckhigh water.

Stating roads had been overtopped in several areas, relief camps had been opened by government to provide succour to the affected people.

The Brahmaputra and its tributaries are maintaining a rising trend in Kamrup, Goalpara, Dhubri, Nagaon, Moribari, Barpet and Nalbari, Sibsagar, Dibrugarh districts. The Central Water Commission sources here forecast that the Brahmaputra was threatening to touch the danger level at Dibrugarh and Dhubri within the next 17-20 hours.

Young girls rush into the water to enjoy their first swimming at Toshimaen Amusement Park in Tokyo Saturday. The amusement park invited about 1,000 high school and junior high school girls to open the swimming pool.

— AFP/UNB photo

— India Abroad News Service