

### Bengali made 2nd language in some NY schools

NEW YORK, July 6: As a recognition of the presence of a large Bangladeshi immigrant population, Bengali has been made the second language in several schools in New York, according to India Abroad News Service.

It is taught as a second language in some schools on Long Island, Queens and downtown Manhattan.

The office of bilingual education in New York State's Education Department had to make a list of languages to be used in an experimental school. The newcomers—freshly landed immigrants who had little or no knowledge of English.

The office had a difficult task. At least 80 major languages are in use among New Yorkers, ranging from Amharic to Zulu. But there were funds for the use of only 15 languages. The only South Asian language that could make it to the list was neither Urdu nor Hindi but Bengali.

Among the 40 to graduate from The Newcomers, as many as five were Bangladeshis, who two years ago did not know enough English to be even able to spell the names of their new neighbourhoods in New York. Now they are high school graduates.

According to the Bureau of Statistical Records in Albany, the Bangladeshi community is among the fastest emerging immigrant groups. It is because of the presence of sizable Bengali-speaking immigrants in Queens that the Public Library there decided to recognise Bengali as a language. There are 8,000 Bengali titles in the library now.

### US can help achieve ME peace: Assad

CAIRO, July 6: The leader of Syria says he is confident US President Bill Clinton can help achieve peace in the Middle East, reports AP.

"I am sure he wants peace," President Hafez Assad said of Clinton in an interview published Saturday in Cairo's Al-Ahram newspaper.

While accusing Israel of flouting international agreements—an apparent reference to the 1993 Oslo accord—Assad reserved most of his criticism for other Arab countries.

## Fighting between rival troops intensifies in Phnom Penh

PHNOM PENH, July 6: The Cambodian capital was rocked by shelling and small arms fire today as fighting intensified between troops loyal to two rival prime ministers, reports Reuters.

Explosions were heard in the city centre, near the place and government buildings, a Reuters reporter said.

"It's been going on all morning," he said by telephone to Bangkok, crouched behind his desk in his office near the palace.

Loud booms could be heard over the telephone line.

The fighting, which started on Saturday, resumed at dawn. First Prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh accused his former battlefield enemy, Second Prime Minister Hun Sen of attempting a coup.

Poverty-stricken Cambodia's biggest aid donor, Japan, urged Hun Sen to take the lead in finding a peaceful solution.

Singapore's Foreign Ministry said it was closely monitoring the situation and was in touch with Singapore residents

charging exorbitant prices, she said.

The road to the airport was closed. Major airlines that normally fly into Phnom Penh announced cancellations of flights there on Saturday and said they might do the same today.

Ranariddh, who is in France, released a statement late on Saturday describing the action against his forces as a coup.

"We consider that what is currently happening in is a coup d'etat perpetuated by Hun Sen," said a statement released in Paris in the name of Ranariddh.

In a second statement issued hours later in Paris, where he was said to be visiting family, Ranariddh said he had become head of Cambodia's only legitimate government as a result of the alleged coup attempt.

Hun Sen's troops blocked main thoroughfares in Phnom Penh and armoured personnel carriers were stationed at strategic locations around the city.

"There are many people in the streets with their belongings tied to motorbikes and carts moving through the city. It is a bit chaotic."

Most markets were closed and the few still open were

fighting was also reported between rival factions in some other parts of the country but the accounts could not be independently confirmed.

The two prime ministers head a deadlocked coalition government set up after United Nations-run elections in 1993.

A long row over power-sharing has been inflamed by deep differences over how to deal with the divided Khmer Rouge, blamed for the deaths of one million people when they ruled in the 1970s and still armed and at large.

Ranariddh said the fighting had erupted because Hun Sen "does not want free and democratic elections scheduled for May 1998". He called on the international community not to recognise any regime resulting from the use of force.

Ranariddh also urged Cambodia's armed forces and royal police not to follow Hun Sen and his supporters "in their illegal and criminal adventure, which puts our country in great danger."

Scientists pointed to a pair of dark blue rocks very near the lander, both standing out against the rusty, Martian redness. Those will be among the Sojourner rover's first destinations if it ever gets under way.

Further off, bunches of boulders are layered like books lying slanted on a shelf. Their position indicates that they were all deposited there billions of years ago by a rapidly flowing current coming from highlands to the south.

Since ALH84001, the controversial Antarctic meteorite



Hunting dog Jessy nurses a baby deer on Saturday. Jessy's owner, pensioner Wilfried Siebert of Breitenungen, adopted the fawn from the animal shelter to which children had brought it in a forest. Jessy, apparently, sees no difference with her own newly-born litter of triplets and nurses the deer as her own. — AFP/UNB photo

### Anti-Islam poster Iranians march on UN office in Tehran

TEHRAN, July 6: More than 3,000 Iranians marched on the UN office Sunday in the latest protest against films distributed by an Israeli woman that depicted the Muslim Prophet Mohammed as a pig, reports AP.

The crowd chanted "Death to Israel" and "Death to America" and carried posters saying Israel should be destroyed.

Demonstrators, who walked or were bused from across the capital, also burned several US and Israeli flags.

The protest rally was organised by the Islamic Propagation Coordination Council, a government-run group charged with promoting Islamic values.

The woman who produced the offending poster has been jailed in Israel, and Israeli leaders have publicly apologized for the incident.

But Syed Ahmed Khatami, who led Sunday's demonstration, called for killing everyone involved in producing or distributing the leaflets.

"We tell Muslims around the world that anyone in any position who insults Islam must be put to death," said Khatami.

The call by Khatami, a middle-ranking cleric, does not carry the weight of a religious decree but could inspire action by an extremists. The cleric is not related to Iran's President-elect, Mohammad Khatami.

Iran's chief judge on Friday blamed the Israeli government for the leaflets and said Israel should be destroyed.

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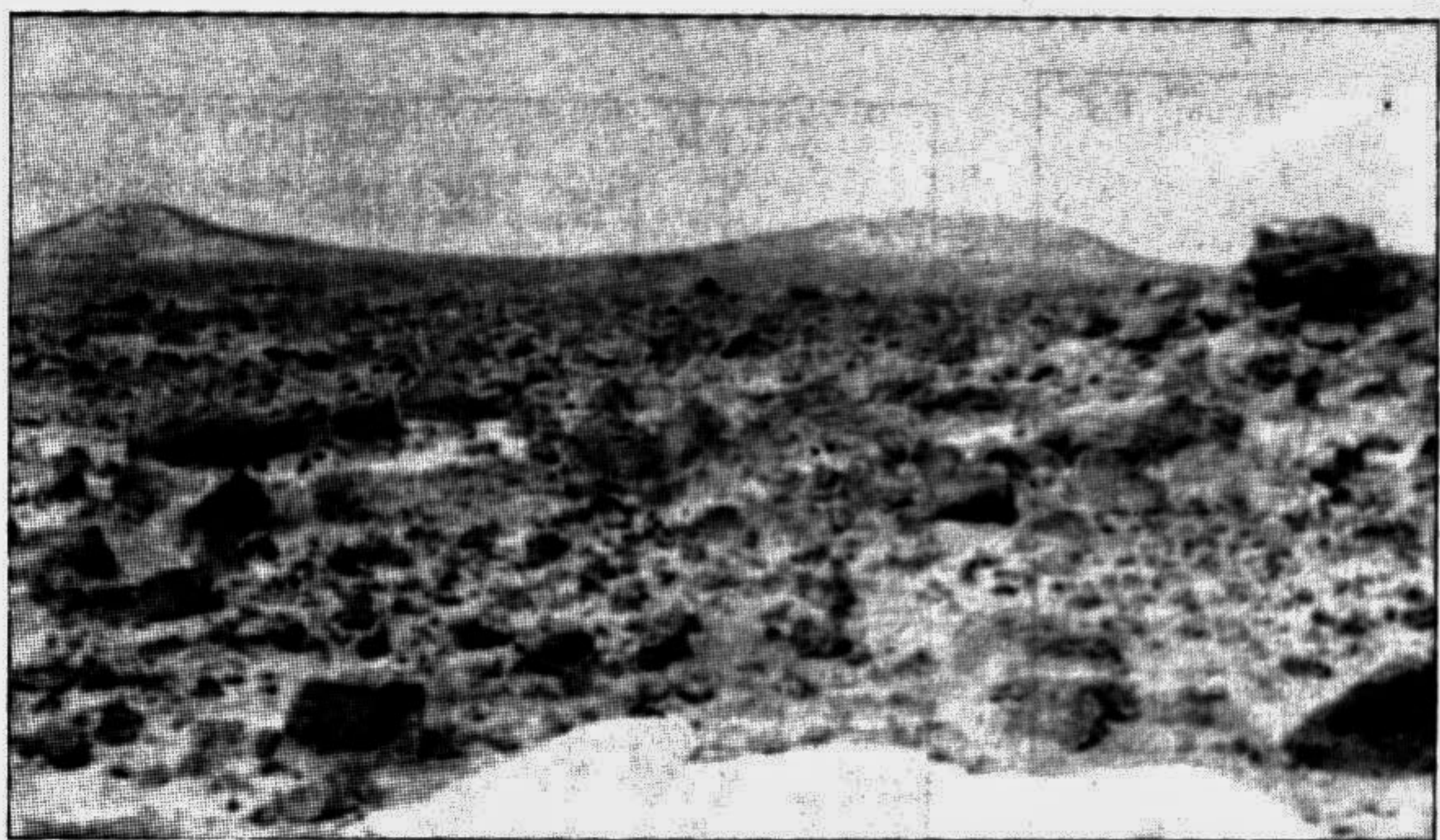
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A photograph taken by the Mars Pathfinder Lander Saturday shows two large hills in the distance and a portion of the Lander's airbags. Later Saturday the rover "Sojourner" is scheduled to deploy onto the surface. — AFP/UNB photo

## Mars Pathfinder rover's camera working fine

PASADENA, California, July 6: Mars Pathfinder's rover may have been out of commission for a while, but the lander's 3-D camera worked just fine, reports AP.

As engineers scrambled Saturday to fix a balky modem and get the Sojourner rover rolling, scientists marveled at frame after frame of rocky Martian plain.

"Open your imagination to the experience and beauty of landing on Mars," camera scientist Peter Smith said as he unveiled the first images Friday evening. "With these images we are started on our mission."

The pictures portray rocky, red plains beneath a salmon-colored sky. Small bumps dot the horizon, and about 45 kms (20 miles) away is a much larger

hill more than 300 metres (1,000 feet) high.

"The site has substantially more relief than any other place we've ever seen on Mars," said project scientist Matthew Golombek.

Scientists pointed to a pair of dark blue rocks very near the lander, both standing out against the rusty, Martian redness. Those will be among the Sojourner rover's first destinations if it ever gets under way.

Further off, bunches of boulders are layered like books lying slanted on a shelf. Their position indicates that they were all deposited there billions of years ago by a rapidly flowing current coming from highlands to the south.

Since ALH84001, the controversial Antarctic meteorite

that may contain signs of life on Mars, is thought to be a high-land rock, geologists are eager to study the layered boulders.

Both the lander and rover cameras, as well as Sojourner's alpha proton X-ray spectrometer, a device designed to identify chemical elements in Martian rocks and soil, could yield clues to the boulders' geologic history.

There are also some oddities in the Pathfinder pictures that scientists would love to get a closer look at: A sofa-like object crouching on the horizon, a barely discernible crater rim about three kilometres (two miles) away and they're all there to look at," Golombek said. "That's just what we wanted."

### Archaeologists call for all-out war to save monuments in Delhi

NEW DELHI, July 6: Indian archaeologists are calling for an all-out war to save a string of historic monuments in the Indian capital from being taken over by squatters and developers, reports AP.

Several monuments across the city have been taken over by the homeless or have been turned into parking lots. From some, stones dating back to early times have been taken away to build new homes.

Delhi is losing a part of its history in the process, complained KN Dixit, of the Indian Archaeological Society.

"We are no doubt losing our past. Unless encroachments are removed, you cannot preserve the grandeur, beauty and age of these monuments," he said. "Unfortunately, we are existing in a corrupt system and the system cannot be broken."

Officials say they are helpless. Experts say around 1,300 monuments—the earliest belonging to the 10th century—are dotted around New Delhi, seat of the once mighty Moghul Empire and which the British made their capital in 1911.

But, apart from around 200 monuments, including well-known and majestic buildings dating back to the Moghul kings, the rest are not protected by archaeological laws.

They include tombs, mosques, graves and even stables. The city authorities were pulled up by a court this year for permitting a toilet to be built at the grave of Moghul poet.

"What we need is an awareness programme," said Dixit. "Most business houses and affluent class and schools and colleges can be requested to

adopt some of these monuments," he said. "This will be of great help."

O P Jain, of the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH), agreed: "Unless there is a consciousness among the government and people, how can any programme succeed?"

"Because of mounting pressure of population and vested interests in land, monuments face danger."

"People of the city should get together and form vigilance groups. Unless there is consciousness, even the police cannot help."

Jain said the INTACH was

trying to restore about 20 derelict monuments which do not receive financial help from the city government at Mehrauli, which was a village in the 11th century.

INTACH is also trying to document all the monuments in the Indian capital by photographing and mapping them.

The last such work was reportedly done early this century.

An official at the government's archaeological survey of India said the New Delhi administration should ban people living around buildings more than 100 years old or altering them.

### Scientists begin exhuming skeletons for Che's remains

VALLEGRANDE, Bolivia, July 6: Argentine and Cuban scientists on Saturday began exhuming skeletons from a mass grave in a remote Bolivian village they believe may contain the remains of legendary guerrilla Ernesto "Che" Guevara, reports Reuters.

Cuban team leader Jorge Gonzalez told reporters at the site that the seven skeletons would probably all be removed from the grave by the end of the day and taken to a laboratory installed in the Vallegrande village hospital.

Ironically, the Senor de Malta Hospital was where Bolivian troops laid out the bearded revolutionary's partly naked body to exhibit it as a trophy to international photographers on October 10, 1967.

Scientists said, on Wednesday that one of the skeletons with apparent reddish traces of

formaldehyde was "very probably" Guevara's they believe the other remains are those of Che's hapless band of Cuban, Bolivian and Peruvian rebels.

Witnesses have described how Che's body was put in formaldehyde after his execution in the village schoolhouse.

But scientists say that any definitive identification of Che's remains could take up to two weeks.

The Argentine-born leftist icon and hero of the Cuban revolution was trying to export Cuban Communism to the South American mainland when he was captured—wounded and starving on October 8, 1967 and later shot by a soldier.

He was buried at a secret site after his executioners chopped off his hands as proof they had captured him.

### Maharashtra govt likely to ban 'devdasi' system

MUMBAI, July 6: The traditional "devdasi" system, which has deteriorated over the centuries, ruining lives of scores of women, would finally come to a close with the Maharashtra government making clear its intentions to ban the practice in the state, reports PTI.

The Chief Minister, Manohar Joshi, while announcing that a legislation would be brought in the state legislature to ban the "devdasi" system, has also announced some relief for the over 4,000 devdasis in the state, by increasing their monthly allowances from Rs 100 to Rs 300.

### Law to strip Serb president of her powers

JAHORINA, Bosnia-Herzegovina, July 6: The hardline Bosnian Serb Parliament passed a law on Saturday enabling it to strip Serb President Biljana Plavsic of her powers and transfer them to the Serbs' Supreme Defence Council, reports AP.

The parliament, meeting here in defiance of Plavsic's decree dismissing it voted an emergency law which hands power to the defence council in case of the absence of impeachment of the president of the republic.

The Supreme Defence Council comprises Plavsic, the Serb member on the three-member Bosnian presidency, Momcilo Krajisnik, the Serb Vice-President, the Parliament Speaker, Prime Minister, defence and interior ministers and the head of the armed forces.

### Kuwaiti minister to be grilled in parliament

KUWAIT CITY, July 6: Kuwait's Finance Minister Nasser al-Rodhan is to be grilled in Parliament over alleged mismanagement of public funds, a move which could spark a no-confidence vote, officials and newspapers said today, reports AP.

The proposal from three MPs has been introduced for Tuesday's weekly debate in Parliament, but officials said that Rodhan, who is also deputy premier, can ask for any formal questioning to be postponed for one or two weeks.

The grilling will include questions on a range of issues, including the minister's alleged failure to implement laws to protect public funds and prevent the misuse of public property, the English-language Arab Times said.

The proposal was submitted to Parliament Speakers Ahmad al-Saadoun on Saturday, backed by two liberal MPs, Mishari al-Osaimi and Sami al-Munayyeh, and independent MP, Ahmad al-Mulafi.

Acting Prime Minister and

Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah gave Rodhan the government's full backing saying the finance minister has worked hard to safeguard public funds.

"These achievements make us proud of Rodhan and keen on supporting him to continue his services to Kuwait," Sheikh Sabah told the official news agency KUNA.

Analysts said a vote of no-confidence, which requires the support of at least 10 MPs, may be tabled after the grilling.

A simple majority of MPs in the 50-seat assembly, excluding the four elected members who are also Cabinet ministers, could then force the minister's resignation.

In 1985, the then justice minister resigned after a grilling by MPs and a confidence vote was tabled.

Rodhan was appointed finance minister and deputy prime minister in 1992. Taking a seat in Parliament as an unelected Cabinet member, he previously held the commerce and industry portfolio.

## Troops in N-Ireland ready to thwart clash over annual march

PORTADOWN, Northern Ireland, July 6: Armoured cars were deployed at every road into this predominantly Protestant town and helicopters kept watch from above as authorities tried to prevent a repeat of the widespread rioting that occurred last year over an annual march, reports AP.

Security was heavily reinforced Saturday in advance of a planned march Sunday by the Orange Order, Northern Ireland's main pro-British Protestant fraternal group. The group planned to march through Portadown, including a Catholic neighbourhood where locals have vowed to block Garvaghy Road.

Mo Mowlam, the British minister responsible for governing Northern Ireland, and Chief Constable Ronnie Flanagan, commander of the 12,000-strong police force, tried to persuade Orange leaders to back away from a confrontation.

Expecting trouble, British troops and police were deployed in a ring of armoured cars at every road into this predomi-

nantly Protestant town southwest of Belfast.

Two Royal Air Force helicopters kept watch from above. Armored cars monitored traffic at the main entrance of Garvaghy Road, and Grenadier Guardsmen with camouflage-painted faces patrolled on foot near the Anglican church at Drumcree, north of Portadown, which is the focal point of the annual Orange march.

Last year, as Catholic residents mounted a protest on the pavement, police blocked the Orangemen outside the Anglican church a half-mile (just under a kilometre) before they reached Garvaghy Road. For four nights, the Protestant mob there swelled behind lines of barbed wire, and Protestants elsewhere rioted and blocked roads, the main airport and port.

Judging that the situation was going out of control, the police reversed their decision and dragged protesters from Garvaghy Road to force the Orange march through. Catholic areas then erupted into three nights

of fiercer rioting.

The weeklong carnage left two dead, hundreds wounded and more than 30 million dirrs in property wrecked.

Since then, the Orange Order which has 80,000 members and played a key role in founding Northern Ireland as a Protestant-majority state in 1920 has come under mounting pressure from Protestant church and business leaders to avoid a repeat.

The County Armagh branch of the order, which includes Portadown, on Friday offered a scaled-back version of their intended parade: Only one British flag and no Protestant politicians would lead the march along Garvaghy Road, and two bands would play no music as they passed through the Catholic neighbourhood.

But the protest leader, former Irish Republican Army prisoner Brendan MacCionnaith, emphasised that "no Orange feet" would be permitted on the road unless Orange leaders agreed to meet him for direct talks.

Mirroring the wider dispute that has prevented peace negotiations between Protestant leaders and IRA supporters, the Orangemen have refused because of MacCionnaith's criminal record.

A hard-line faction within the Orange Order called the Spirit of Drumcree in honor of last year's showdown has gathered growing grassroots support for its message that any compromise is too much. Spirit of Drumcree leader Joel Patton has repeatedly demanded that the order's soft-spoken leader, Grand Master Robert Saulters, resign.

The Orange Order was founded near Portadown in 1875 following skirmishes between Catholics and Protestants over land and jobs. It is institutionally linked with the Ulster Unionist Party, the main Protestant party, which has 10 of Northern Ireland's 18 lawmakers in the British Parliament. Party leader David Trimble has previously championed the right of Orangemen to march down Garvaghy Road.



Would-be king of Albania Leka I (R) stands next to mourning women during the funeral ceremony for Agim Gjonpali in Tirana Saturday. Gjonpali was shot in violent clashes between Albanian monarchy supporters and police during a rally in Tirana on Thursday. Some 300 relatives and monarchy supporters attended the funeral ceremony Saturday afternoon. — AFP/UNB photo