

International

'Reformed' Indonesian Cabinet hailed

US calls on new govt to permit demonstrations

WASHINGTON, May 23: The Clinton administration called for maximum restraint Friday as Indonesian troops rounded up student protesters in the Parliament complex in Jakarta, reports AP.

daughter and a golfing friend of the former president from the Cabinet but kept several key ministers. This angered students whose street protests were instrumental in ending Suharto's 32-year rule.

the reports. Meanwhile, a US congressman on Friday said he would be going on a human rights and democracy fact-finding mission to Indonesia.

BRIEFLY

DPRK FM arrives in Cuba: North Korean Foreign Minister Kim Yong Nam arrived in Cuba's capital on Friday for a five-day official visit, AP says from Havana.

He is scheduled to hold separate meetings with Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina, Economy Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez and Noemi Benitez, the Interim Minister of Foreign Investment.

Chadian rebels surrender: Chadian rebels fighting for a federal state in the southern part of the country have surrendered to government forces after six months of fighting, according to reports from Chad, Xinhua says from Paris.

The Forces Armées Pour La Republique Federale (FARF), a political-military group which has hundreds of desert fighters, signed on May 8 with president Idris Deby a truce in exchange for an amnesty.

Earthquake hits Japan: A moderate earthquake with an estimated magnitude of 5.7 struck southwestern Japan early yesterday morning, but there were no reports of damage or injury, AP says from Tokyo.

The quake hit at 1949 GMT in the Sea of Iyo off the coast of Yamaguchi Prefecture (state), 782 kilometres southwest of Tokyo, the Meteorological Agency reported.

Quake rumbles New South Wales: An earthquake measuring 3.8 on the Richter scale rumbled isolated southwestern New South Wales yesterday, AP reports from Sydney.

The quake, which occurred just after 5 am, was recorded on seismographs operated by the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology throughout New South Wales and Victoria.

2 Israelis die in S Lebanon: A bomb exploded yesterday in southern Lebanon, killing two Israeli-allied militiamen, AP reports from Lebanon.

The bomb, apparently detonated by remote control, went off near the Sojod outpost of the South Lebanon Army militia, a militia official said on customary condition of anonymity. The area is eight kilometres north of Marjayoun, the main town in Israeli-occupied south Lebanon.

Ancient ship to be recovered in Hanoi: Recovery work was to begin yesterday on a 15th century ship that sank while carrying Vietnamese ceramics, AP reports from Hanoi.

The ship was discovered last July eight nautical miles east of Cu Lam Cham island, off the central coast at Quang Nam province. The Thanh Nien newspaper said the work will be carried out by a team of 57 people, including 25 foreign experts. Ten professional divers will work in four-minute shifts at a depth of 72 metres.

Actor-director John Derek dead: John Derek, the actor-director reputed to have been the force behind the meteoric career of his wife, Bo Derek, died Friday. He was 71, AP says from California.

With family members present, Derek died at 12:45 pm, said Marian Medical Center spokeswoman Stephanie Grogan.

Forest fires unabated in Russia: Firefighters in the Russian Far East have run out of money to hire aircraft to battle forest fires that have spread across thousands of hectares a news agency reported yesterday, AP reports from Moscow.

Nearly 34,000 hectares (84,000 acres) of forests are engulfed in flames, and the local forestry air guard service has only enough cash to hire three aircraft to fight the fires, the ITAR-Tass news agency said.

Kissinger made honorary citizen: Former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger has been made an honorary citizen of his German hometown of Fulda, a city official said Wednesday, Xinhua reports from Bonn.

Kissinger was born into a school teacher's family on May 27, 1923 in this southeastern German city. The Jewish family emigrated to the United States in 1938 to escape Nazi persecution. Kissinger became a US citizen in 1943.



Navy Academy midshipmen cheer as the Blue Angels fly over Navy and Marine Corps Memorial Stadium in Annapolis, USA, Friday at the start of the graduation and commissioning ceremonies. — AP/UNB photo

Pakistan asks UK to oppose India's entry into UNSC

LONDON, May 23: Pakistan has asked Britain to negate any move related to India's entry into the UN Security Council (UNSC) and said the country should not be allowed to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) in the wake of it conducting nuclear tests, reports PTI.

This was stated here by Pakistani Premier Nawaz Sharif's special envoy Kurshid Kasuri who handed over a message from Sharif to his British counterpart to Foreign Secretary Robin Cook Friday night.

Benazir, who called on Sharif to resign for failing to answer the Indian tests, said, we have our differences but well unconditionally support the government if Pakistan is attacked by India.

Syria rejects Israel's offer to quit Lebanon

WASHINGTON, May 23: Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk al-Sharaa rejected an Israeli offer to withdraw from Lebanon and took a swipe at Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government, reports AP.

This is not a path to a comprehensive peace, Al-Sharaa told reporters Friday after an hour-long meeting with Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. "We don't accept a unilateral or partial peace."

Albright agreed that an overall agreement should be the goal of peacemaking in the region, a senior US official said.

However, she told Al-Sharaa the United States welcomed Israel's proposal to abandon its buffer zone in southern Lebanon and, as a practical matter, "we are willing to make progress wherever we can," said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Syria, which has a controlling interest in Lebanon's foreign policy, wants to recover the Golan Heights, a strategic border plateau that it lost to Israel in the 1967 Mideast War.

Past Labour governments in Israel were willing to give up the buffer zone and uproot Jewish

India gears up diplomatic efforts to cool tension over N-tests

NEW DELHI, May 23: India has moved its diplomatic efforts into high gear to cool tensions over its nuclear tests and a barrage of feisty exchanges with Pakistan, China and the United States, reports Reuter.

In a move that local media described as damage limitation, the government held a news conference late Thursday to stress its commitment to good relations with neighbours and its readiness for talks with world powers to formalise a new moratorium on tests.

Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee assured Russian President Boris Yeltsin by telephone in the evening that New Delhi had conducted its five nuclear tests for security purposes rather than aggression and that no more were planned.

The Press Trust of India (PTI) news agency reported that India's Ambassador to the United States, Naresh Chandra, was meeting senior US officials to revive dialogue between the two countries.

A senior government official denied that there had been a change of tack.

He said it was Yeltsin who had called Vajpayee and there was nothing unusual about the envoy to Washington meeting top-level officials.

The diplomatic initiative was there from day one of the blasts, he said. "We have been saying that India seeks peace, is not interested in an arms race and wanted to ensure security."

India tested five nuclear devices last week, its first in 24 years, triggering a storm of global outrage. The United States and some other countries imposed sanctions on New Delhi and arch-foe Pakistan said it would conduct tests of its own.

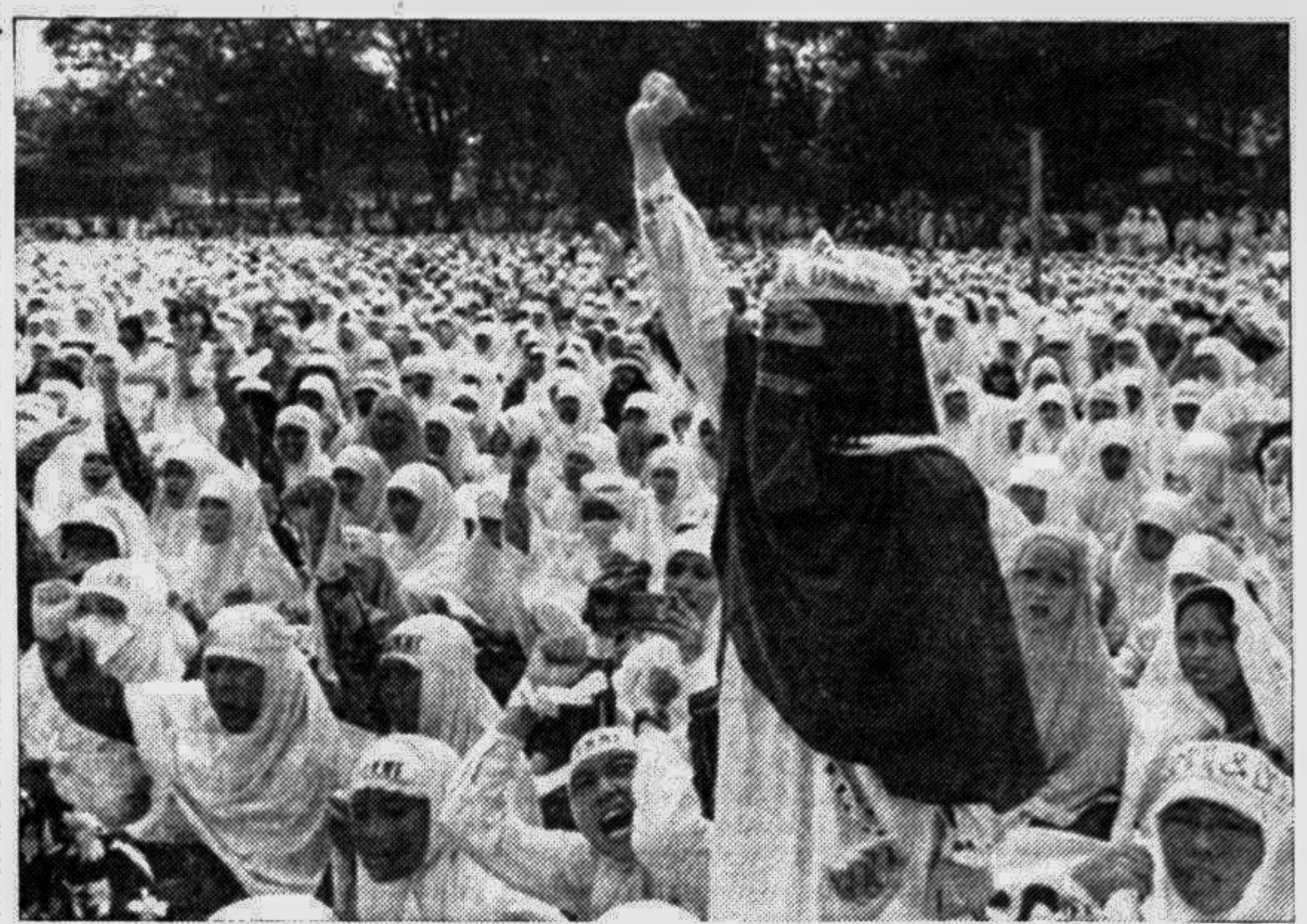
Earlier this week, Interior Minister Lal Krishna Advani had said Pakistan should "realise the new geo-strategic situation" and warned that India would take a new, proactive stand on militancy on its soil.

On Thursday the government issued a sternly worded statement that accused Pakistan of border attacks to mask the movement of militants into the strife-torn Kashmir valley.

A senior minister said that while New Delhi wanted peace, it was capable of fighting Pakistan on any battleground.

But a few hours later, Vajpayee's Principal Secretary, Brajesh Mishra, told reporters emphatically: "There is no question of a war with Pakistan. We are not going for a war with Pakistan."

India accuses Pakistan, with which it has gone to war three



Muslim women take part in a rally in support of KAMMI outside the Al-Azhar mosque in Jakarta Friday. KAMMI is the United Action of Muslim Indonesian Students Group, the second largest Indonesian Muslim organisation. — AP/UNB photo

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Japanese Emperor begins Europe tour

TOKYO, May 23: Japan's Emperor Akihito embarked Saturday on a state visit to continental Europe and England, where he is expected to receive honours from Queen Elizabeth II and face protests by World War II veterans, reports AP.

At a send-off ceremony, Akihito said he hopes the trip, the first to Britain by a Japanese emperor in 27 years, will create greater "mutual understanding and friendly relations."

But Pakistan's Foreign Minister, Gohar Ayub Khan, told an Indian television channel that while Islamabad was interested in resuming dialogue, it would be a futile exercise.

"India has sucked us (Pakistan) into a headlong arms race," he said.

India accuses Pakistan, with which it has gone to war three

times since independence in 1947, of arming and training Islamic guerillas in Kashmir. But Islamabad says it gives separatists only political and diplomatic support.

Mishra said New Delhi was waiting for a response from Islamabad to its proposal for a resumption of their deadlocked talks.

India gears up diplomatic efforts to cool tension over N-tests

Advertisement for RANGS HOME APPLIANCES. Features a refrigerator and a deep freezer. Text includes: 'RANGS HOME APPLIANCES ARE THE BEST MATCH FOR YOUR HOUSEHOLD', 'RANGS REFRIGERATOR & DEEP FREEZER বাংলাদেশের আবহওয়া উপযোগী করে বিশেষভাবে তৈরি', 'পরিবেশ দূষণ মুক্ত', 'লক সিস্টেম', 'ডিওজেরাইজার যুক্ত', 'মরিচা ধরবে না', 'ভিতরে অনেক জায়গা', '৬ টি ড্রিন্ রং', 'বাংলাদেশে এই প্রথম ৪ বছরের কম্প্রেশার সহ গ্যারান্টি আর আকর্ষণীয় মূল্য', 'বিনামূল্যে বৈদ্যুতিক ফ্রীড', '৪ YEARS WARRANTY RANGS', 'রাইস কুকার আপনি বাড়ীতে না থাকলেও স্বয়ংক্রিয়ভাবে ভাত অথবা পোলাও রান্না হয়ে থাকবে', 'ওয়শিং মেশিন ডিটারজেন্ট পানি ও সময় বাঁচায়', 'প্রতিদিন শে-কম খোলা', 'দেশব্যাপী আমাদের যে কোন সেলস্ ও সার্ভিস সেন্টারে আপনারা সাদরে আমন্ত্রিত', 'এ সুযোগ আমাদের ডিলারদের কাছে পাবেন।'

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