

N-tests: Pakistan seeks Japan's mediation to ease tension

TOKYO, Jun 2: Pakistan has formally asked Japan to act as mediator between it and the international community to ease tensions raised by Islamabad's nuclear test explosions. Japanese Foreign Ministry officials said today, reports Reuters.

Pakistani Foreign Ministry official Tariq Altaf conveyed the request to Japan's ambassador to Pakistan Minoru Kubota on Monday, the officials said.

Pakistan provoked worldwide protests by exploding six nuclear devices last week.

The Japanese ministry officials quoted Kubota, who was scheduled to return to Tokyo this week for consultations with Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto, as telling Altaf that Japan would seriously consider the request.

Islamabad's call for Japanese mediation efforts came as Japan floated the idea of

arranging talks between Pakistan and India in Tokyo to discuss a decades-long dispute between the two countries over the Himalayan state of Kashmir.

"It would be good if we could invite the two countries and work for a peaceful solution," Japanese Foreign Minister Keizo Obuchi told a news conference in Tokyo. "We want to make the proposal as soon as possible."

But Obuchi said it was doubtful whether the two countries would accept the proposal, since both of them considered Kashmir a domestic issue.

Japanese media reported that Obuchi planned to make the proposal at an emergency meeting of foreign ministers of the Group of Eight nations in London on June 12.

Japan, Pakistan's biggest aid donor and trading partner, has said it will impose sanctions on Islamabad over the nuclear tests, which it called a substan-

tial threat to regional stability. Japan said it would suspend fresh united loans to Pakistan, except for humanitarian aid and grass-roots projects, and would freeze new yen loans — moves identical to those imposed on India after New Delhi's earlier series of nuclear tests.

Japan extended about 60 billion yen (431 million dollars) in low-interest loans and about six billion yen in aid grants to Pakistan in the year to March 31, 1997.

After Islamabad's tests, Japanese officials voiced fears Pakistan might transfer nuclear technology to North Korea, but officials said on Tuesday they had so far found no evidence of such transfers.

Meanwhile, Britain said on Monday that leading world powers planned to press India and Pakistan into a meaningful dialogue and adopt confidence-building measures after the two tested several nuclear devices.

In a statement to Parliament on Pakistan's nuclear tests last week, Foreign Secretary Robin Cook said both governments in the Subcontinent should "stop testing and start talking."

He said Britain was dismayed by Pakistan's decision to conduct its own tests and said it was likely to face the same kind of measures the European Union are considering whether to impose on India.

Last week EU foreign ministers brandished the threat of hindering international loans and stopping trade privileges to India.

The tests are to be discussed by the foreign ministers of the five permanent UN Security Council members in Geneva this Thursday and by the Group of Eight's foreign ministers in London on June 12.

British officials said it was important to involve as many countries as possible in an attempt to persuade India and

Pakistan to start dialogue.

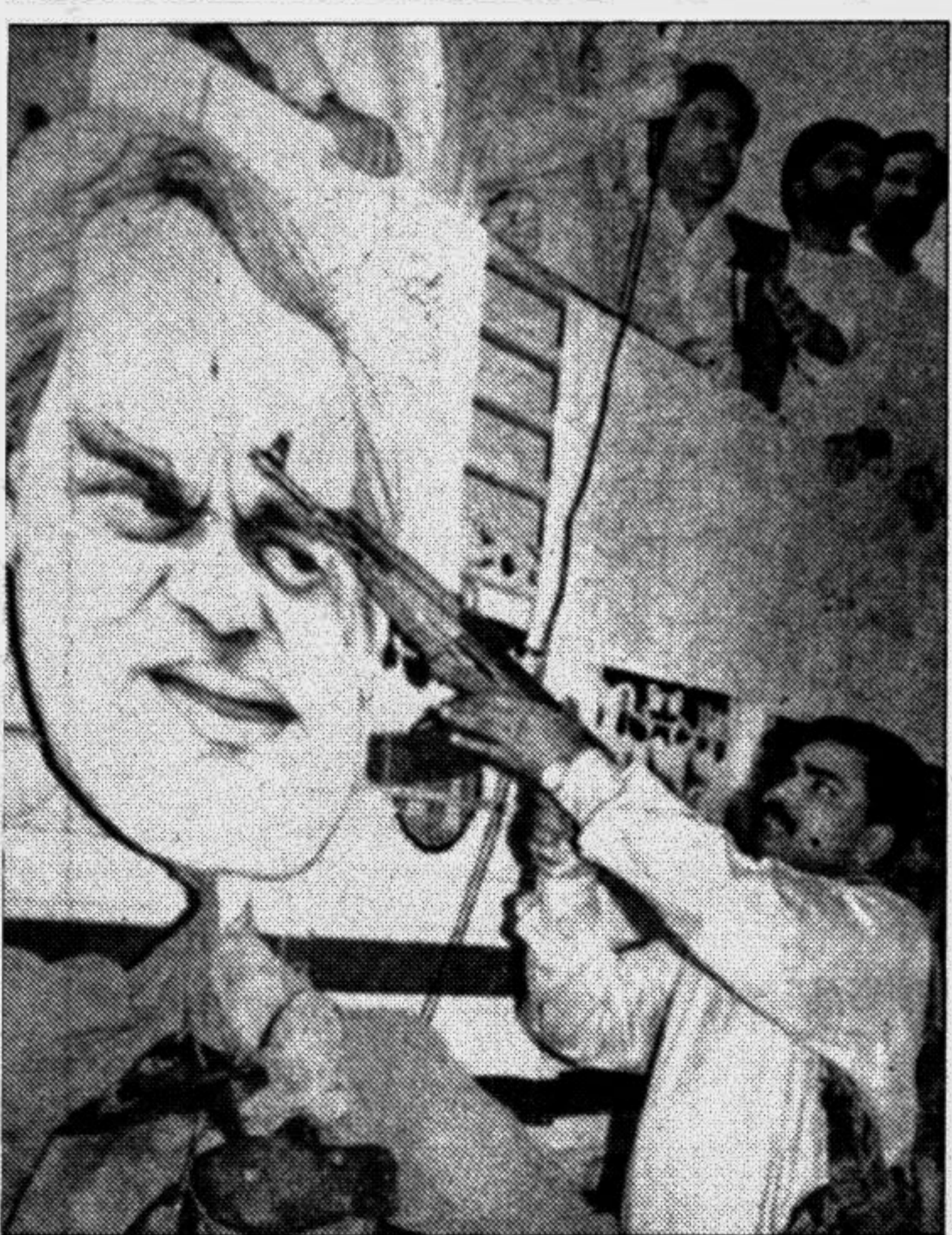
"It is very desirable to involve a wide range of countries directly in this. It is very important to have participation of Japan and also countries with the weight of Germany," the official told reporters.

"We'd like to see whether the international community can help create an atmosphere which would allow a dialogue between India and Pakistan," Cook said the seven top industrial powers and Russia, should press India and Pakistan to sign up to the global regime, against nuclear proliferation and to start a meaningful dialogue.

"The London meeting will coordinate the response of the leading economies to the nuclear test programmes and how we can best promote dialogue with India and Pakistan and between India and Pakistan," Cook said.



Image taken from television in the Faisabad region of Afghanistan Monday showing a group of workers carrying an injured woman to a waiting helicopter following an earthquake which hit this region Saturday May 30, with a preliminary magnitude of 6.9 and which flattened entire villages and triggered landslides. The final death toll estimates vary from three thousand to five thousand. — AP/UNB photo



An anti-India activist points gun at the portrait of Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee on Monday in Lahore. Pakistanis are celebrating nuclear tests by the government to encounter India's nuclear testing. — AP/UNB photo

7 more killed in Karachi, 3 in Baluchistan

KARACHI, Jun 2: Unidentified gunmen shot dead seven people today in the Pakistan port city of Karachi where fresh violence has left 25 people dead in a week, police and residents said. In another incident three people killed in a grenade blast in Baluchistan, reports AFP.

Police found five bullet-riddled bodies stuffed in separate bags in the city's central Gulberg and Nazimabad areas.

Another man was found dead from bullet wounds on a rooftop in the nearby Li-aquatabad and the seventh victim was shot dead by a sniper in the eastern Saudabad neighbourhood, police said.

A police official said the killings appeared to be linked to an on-going feud between rival political groups, with the 25 victims belonging to Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM), an influential ethnic party presenting the city's large Urdu-speaking settler community, and its breakaway MQM-Haqiqi faction.

Karachi has a history of political, religious and ethnic violence that has claimed more than 2,000 lives during recent years.

Meanwhile, three people including two women were killed when a hand grenade exploded in their home in southwestern Baluchistan province, the Associated Press of Pakistan reported today.

A woman, Hassan Taj, was handling the grenade when it went off on Monday, killing herself and her daughter instantly, the official news agency said.

Her son died later in hospital of serious injuries, it said.

People in Baluchistan province, which borders Iran and Afghanistan, are often involved in tribal feuds and usually keep weapon in their homes.

AP adds: Police has stepped up security in the central district of Karachi, the scene of the latest gun battles. Most of the killings have either involved drive-by shootings or gangland style executions.

Factional fighting by movement members in the past one year has resulted in the deaths of hundreds of people in Karachi, Pakistan's largest city of 14 million people and its financial centre.

Many of the people killed, have been caught in the cross-fire. Paramilitary Rangers routinely patrol the city in armoured trucks.

Conference on Disarmament asks India, Pakistan to sign NPT

GENEVA, Jun 2: New Zealand, Canada and other countries at the Conference on Disarmament (CD) today demanded that India and Pakistan immediately sign UN nuclear non-proliferation treaties, reports AFP.

At a specially convened plenary session of the conference in Geneva, New Zealand and Australia issued a joint statement calling for the South Asian neighbours to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).

India exploded nuclear devices and Pakistan followed suit last month, triggering worldwide condemnation and the slapping of sanctions on both countries.

"It is now crucial that India and Pakistan announce immediately a cessation to all further testing of these weapons, renounce their nuclear weapons programmes and sign and ratify unconditionally the CTBT," New Zealand Ambassador Clive Pearson told delegates at the session.

"We also call on India and Pakistan to accede without delay to the non-proliferation treaty," he said.

New Zealand and Australia are seeking to win support for their position.

Aid groups struggling to deliver supplies to quake victims as Taliban refuse to declare truce

FAIZABAD, Afghanistan, Jun 2: The Taliban militia has declared there will be no ceasefire in northern Afghanistan, where fighting continues as aid agencies struggle to get emergency supplies to survivors of the earthquake that killed 4,000, reports AFP.

"We do not intend to send relief goods. We should first defend against opposition attacks," Taliban information Minister Mulla Amir Khan Muttaqi told reporters in Kabul.

The Taliban Monday lost a key district in new fighting in northeast Afghanistan and Muttaqi accused the opposition alliance of using the quake to launch attacks.

A major international relief operation was under way for the victims of the powerful earthquake that rocked the north-eastern provinces of Badakhshan and Takhar at the weekend killing about 4,000 people.

The Taliban, which controls two thirds of the country, briefly halted hostilities in February when a quake killed a similar number in the region.

But Muttaqi said that while there was fighting there could be no earthquake truce this time.

Following a pre-dawn offensive by anti-Taliban forces loyal to Abdul Rashid Dostam, Muttaqi said Taliban Troops "withdrew" from the Gormach district of Badghis province, near the earthquake zone.

He said they had set up new lines to stop the advance of Dostam forces.

The minister accused the opposition of launching surprise attacks while attention was concentrated on helping quake victims.

The French aid agency Acted said 45,000 people in the regions of Rostak and Chah-ab had been made homeless by Saturday's quake, which measured around 7.0, on the Richter scale, and survivors had started fleeing the area in search of water, shelter and food.

As helicopters arrived on the scene to survey the most inaccessible areas, aid workers said the priority was rescuing and treating the thousands of injured.

"For the next two to three days we will focus on the medical issues, and it is crucial that the injured in the disaster area are treated as soon as possible," said Svante Yngroft of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

A hospital here in Faizabad, the capital of Badakhshan province, and in Talogan, capital of Takhar, were also standing by to receive thousands feared injured.

Medecins Sans Frontieres has set up two clinics in the region, but spokesman Jacques Trembley said more medical supplies were needed.

"It is very important to bring in medicines, medical teams and other resources quickly," he said, adding increasing numbers of people were beginning to arrive at the clinics on donkeys or by foot with serious injuries. Acted said 21 villages in Rostak, 26 villages in Chah-ab and an estimated 34 villages in Shahe-e-Bozurg had been completely destroyed.

The earthquake in February hit an area populated by only 30,000 and now we think 60,000 have been affected," UN regional coordinator Mohammad Asadullah said.

Muttaqi said Taliban supreme leader Mulla Mohammad Omar had expressed grief over the tragedy and called for speedy international relief.

BRIEFLY

Kabila reshuffles his cabinet: President Laurent Kabila of the Democratic Republic of the Congo on Monday reshuffled his government sacking five ministers under investigation for alleged corruption and bringing in 13 new members, Reuters reports from Kinshasa.

The new government list was read out on state television by Justice Minister Mwenze Kongolo.

Charges against Kaunda dropped: Zambia's former President Kenneth Kaunda walked free from court on Monday after the state dropped charges that he knew of a coup plot, and strongly hinted he would retire from active politics, Reuters reports Lusaka.

Kaunda, who ruled Zambia for 27 years until he was ousted in pluralist polls in 1991, told Reuters in an interview he would call a special congress of his opposition UNIP Party to decide on its future.

Lebanese Muslim cleric dead: Sheikh Saed Shaaban, the firebrand Sunni Muslim cleric who led an armed militia during the civil war and advocated Islamic rule in Lebanon, has died at 69, AP says from Beirut.

His Islamic Tawheed, or Unification Movement, said in a statement Monday night that Shaaban suffered a heart attack after returning home from evening prayers at a mosque in the northern port city of Tripoli.

Convict shot dead in courtroom in US: Just after he was convicted of kidnapping and sexual battery, a man pulled out a 23 cm plastic knife in the California courtroom and attacked two deputies before a third officer shot him to death, AP says from California.

James Eugene Moore, 51, "went crazy" as deputies moved to take him into custody Monday, juror Kim Ball said. "You've just given me a death sentence for something that I didn't do," Moore shouted, according to Ball.

12 miners feared dead in China: Twelve workers buried in a quarry collapse in southwestern China's Chongqing were feared dead as rescue work continued seven days after the accident, a local official said yesterday, AFP reports from Beijing.

A Bishan county official told the news agency that rescue workers had yet to reach the spot where the workers were trapped in the gypsum quarry last Tuesday. It was hoped there was sufficient oxygen and water in the pit to keep them alive, he said.

Convicted Rwandan attempts suicide: A Rwandan who was convicted and sentenced to death for his role in the country's 1994 genocide has attempted suicide by seizing the steering wheel in a police car, a news agency reported, AP says from Kigali.

In the Monday incident, Geoffrey Gatera, a former surgeon, seriously injured three pedestrians, but escaped injury, the private Rwandan news agency reported.

10 killed in copter crash in Mexico: Ten people were killed Monday when a Mexican military helicopter carrying firefighters crashed in the state of Tamaulipas, officials said, AFP reports from Mexico City.

The chopper went down early Monday as it carried military personnel and civilian volunteer firefighters to battle raging wildfires in the western Sierra Madre mountains Tamaulipas, state police said.

Netanyahu to visit Australia: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is likely to visit Australia later this year, probably in August, Prime Minister John Howard told parliament yesterday, AP reports from Canberra.

Howard confirmed a date around August 14 was under consideration. However, it is believed a possible clash with an Australian federal election is preventing the date being finalized.

AFP starts photo service on Internet: International news agency Agence France-Presse yesterday launched a news photograph service on the Internet for magazines and newspapers, AFP says from Japan.

The service, Imageforum will allow publishers to access the agency's daily news photographs and eventually its archive of more than seven million images.

China seeks an end to arms race keeping N-option open

BEIJING, Jun 2: China is re-examining the option of resuming nuclear testing, given rising tensions in South Asia, but for now is seeking an international solution to halt an arms race, reports AP.

China will urge the world's powers to cool tensions between India and Pakistan when foreign ministers of the UN Security Council's permanent members meet Thursday in Geneva, a senior Foreign Ministry of the UN Security Council's permanent members meet Thursday in Geneva, a senior Foreign Ministry official told reporters late Monday.

China conducted its 45th and last nuclear test in 1996, declared a moratorium and then signed a global treaty banning nuclear testing.

But even the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty allows countries to resume testing if their "supreme national security" is threatened, said the official who spoke on condition of anonymity.

"I'm not saying China will do it. But we have to take into account this development," China is urging the world to do something," he said.

China fears India's and Pakistan's tit-for-tat testing will ignite an arms race that would set back years of progress toward disarmament, said the official.

China has no proposal for responding to the tests, the official said. "That's why we're meeting. We have to work it out."

Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan and US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, speaking by telephone, proposed the Geneva meeting, said Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhu Bangzao.

Tang, Albright and the foreign ministers of Russia, France and Britain will attend the meeting. All five countries, in addition to being permanent Security Council members, were the world's only declared nuclear powers before India's tests last month.

China believes that the advent of new nuclear powers could only destabilise the region, Zhu said.

"We should urge them with one voice and make them realise it's not in their interest," he said.

Although China sees Pakistan as a close ally and is suspected of having aided Islamabad's nuclear programme, Beijing has moved in recent years to improve relations with India.

Zhu said China was "infuriated" when India tried to justify the tests by claiming nuclear power China as its top threat.

"We are not their enemy," he said, adding the accusation was an insult.

The senior official denied that China has helped Pakistan, its close ally, develop nuclear weapons.

He confirmed that President Clinton spoke with President Jiang Zemin by telephone before Pakistan conducted its tests. But he denied reports Jiang called on Pakistan to forego testing at Clinton's urging.

Jiang wrote to Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif "on his own, absolutely 100 per cent," he said.

Probe into sex-scandal Clinton abandons his executive privilege claim

WASHINGTON, Jun 2: President Bill Clinton abruptly abandoned his executive privilege claim in the Monica Lewinsky investigation in a move that could complicate independent counsel Kenneth Starr's efforts to speed up the probe, reports AP.

With the executive privilege claim dropped, the White House said Monday there no longer was any reason for the Supreme Court to act quickly to resolve a dispute about the testimony of presidential aides in the Lewinsky case.

Clinton's lawyers said the remaining issue of attorney-client privilege should be handled by the Court of Appeals instead of being rushed for consideration by the Supreme Court.

"The Supreme Court ought to let the process play itself out," White House counsel Charles Ruff said. "That's what courts generally do. This is not steel seizure, this is not Iranian hostages, this is not US vs. Nixon."

Starr, meanwhile, expressed frustration with delays in the Lewinsky case.

Tribal rebels blow up 3 vital bridges in Assam

GUWAHATI, India, Jun 2: Separatist tribal guerrillas blew up three vital bridges in the north-eastern Indian state of Assam today, disrupting road and rail links with mainland India, police said, reports Reuters.

Militants blew off a rail bridge at Goabari, some six-km from the nearest railway station of Gosaigaon early in the morning, forcing the authorities to stop movement of trains," Dhinakaran, a paramilitary officer, told the news agency.

Police said guerrillas also bombed two road bridges in Bongaigaon and Nalbari districts on the tea and oil-rich state's main national highway.

Butler to hold talks with Iraqi DPM on June 13, 14

UNITED NATIONS, Jun 2: Under pressure to speed up UN weapons inspections in Iraq, the chief UN inspector will travel to Baghdad this month in a renewed effort to account for all the banned weapons Iraq reportedly held before the 1991 Persian Gulf War, reports AP.

UN sources said Richard Butler will hold talks June 13-14 with Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister, Tariq Aziz. Butler hopes to be carrying a strong message from the Security Council that Iraq must disclose more information about its weapons programmes if it expects to have crippling economic sanctions lifted.

Due to fall of Khmers

Upcoming polls will be free of violence: Hun Sen

PHNOM PENH, Jun 2: Cambodian leader Hun Sen says that upcoming elections will be more free of violence than polls in 1993 monitored by 20,000 UN peacekeepers, thanks largely to the collapse of the Khmer Rouge, reports AP.

In an interview seen Tuesday in his monthly Cambodia New Vision bulletin, Hun Sen said that security had greatly improved in the past five years despite political tensions that led to a bloody power struggle against Prince Norodom Ranariddh last year.

Hun Sen and Ranariddh emerged from the 1993 polls as co-prime ministers, but the prince was driven into exile last July and came home only two months ago to contest elections Hun Sen has called in an attempt to restore international aid and legitimacy.

8 Tamil Tigers killed in fighting Lankan troops surround key strategic town in north

COLOMBO, Jun 2: Sri Lankan government troops were finally able to surround the Tamil rebel-strategic Mankulam town Monday after several days of heavy battle in their effort to establish a supply route from north to south, a military official here said today, reports Xinhua.

In May 1997, over 20,000 troops set out to clear 75 km of main road through rebel-held territory to establish the supply route in an operation code-named "Jaya Sikuru" (Certain Victory).

At the end of a year's fighting, they were able to clear only 45 km and were held up at Mankulam for over two months facing heavy resistance.

Last month, having overcome a severe manpower problem with 12,000 out of the 15,000 deserters returning in response to amnesties, the offensive was reactivated, the official said.

The troops who commenced advancing last Wednesday, faced heavy resistance in their progress and Sunday an army captain and 19 soldiers went missing and there had been no information about them by Monday noon, he said.

However, the troops were able to recapture Tunnukal town and surround Mankulam town from the western, eastern and southern flanks, he said, adding that this is considered a major blow to the rebels.

Another report adds: Sri Lanka's Tamil rebels of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) have sent a group of armed women cadres to destabilise Jaffna Peninsula in the north of the island nation, according to military sources today.

Jaffna Peninsula was recaptured from the LTTE by government troops in May 1995 and since then the government has made efforts to establish civilian rule in the peninsula.

The LTTE rebels however are opposed to this and are making every effort to destabilise the peninsula.

The women cadres who were sent there shot dead two soldiers at Kundavil in the Chavakachcheri area Sunday, they had first thrown grenades at them and later shot at them.

AP adds: Sri Lankan troops shot dead eight Tamil rebels in the northern war theatre, the Defence Ministry said Tuesday.

Bangladesh Shilpa Rin Sangstha

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141-143, Motijheel Commercial Area
BIWTA Bhaban (5th & 6th Floor)
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Law Department

Notice for Sale of Mortgaged Assets and Properties of M/s Trishal Automatic Rice Mills Limited, Trishal, Mymensingh

The mortgaged assets and properties of M/s Trishal Automatic Rice Mills Ltd., Trishal, Mymensingh will be sold in terms of Article 34 of Bangladesh Shilpa Rin Sangstha Order, 1972 read with the Bangladesh Shilpa Rin Sangstha (Direct Sale of Mortgaged Property) Rules, 1981 on "as it is where it is" basis and on the basis of "cash payment" to realise the BSRS's outstanding loans and dues of Tk. 17.014 million as on 01.07.1996 together with further interest and charges till realisation from the above named company and its directors listed at Para-4 hereinafter.

- The tenderers may submit their tender for the purchase of the entire properties mortgaged with BSRS as a whole or for land, building and machinery separately.
- Bangladesh Shilpa Rin Sangstha will not assume any legal obligation whatsoever on behalf of the company and/or its directors in respect of any dues/claims of government and/or autonomous bodies such as WASA, local municipality, electric and gas supply authorities, land revenue and other creditors for which the company is liable.
- The following persons are the directors of the company:
 - Mr. Amunul Haque,
 - S/o. Mr. Fazle Haque;
 - Mrs. Lucy Akhtari Mahal,
 - W/o. Mr. Amunul Haque;
 - Mrs. Monowara Khatoun,
 - W/o. Mr. Fazle Haque;
 - Mr. Mominul Islam,
 - S/o. Mohsenuddin Ahmed; and
 - Mrs. Shamsun Nahar,
 - W/o. Mr. Mominul Islam.
- Description of Properties:**
About one acre of land situated at Plot No. 1208, Khatian No. 999, Touzi-7, Mouza-Rampur, Sub-Mouza-Barampur Gram, Sub-Registration Office-Trishal, Dist Mymensingh together with an industrial unit capable of 10,800 million tons of paddy per year. The machinery are of mainly Indian origin.
- The details of the mortgaged assets and properties and tender schedule containing the terms and conditions of sale may be obtained on payment of Tk 250.00 (non-refundable) from the Assistant General Manager, Law Department, BSRS, Head Office, Dhaka. The intending tenderers/buyers who are interested to inspect the project assets may contact the Assistant General Manager, Law Department, Bangladesh Shilpa Rin Sangstha, Head Office, Dhaka.
- The intending tenderers/buyers may submit their tenders/offers in sealed cover in the tender box kept at the BSRS aforesaid Head Office, Dhaka by 2:00 PM on the 30th June, 1998 accompanied with earnest money @5% of the tendered amount (refundable in case the offer is not accepted by the BSRS) in the form of scheduled bank's Draft/Pay Order drawn in favour of the Bangladesh Shilpa Rin Sangstha and payable at Dhaka.
- The tender will be opened on the 30th June, 1998 at 2:30 PM at the BSRS above-mentioned Head Office, Dhaka in presence of the tenderers, if any.
- The successful tenderers shall have to deposit 50% of the tendered amount within 7 (seven) days and the balance within 30 (thirty) days from the date of acceptance of the tender. In case of failure in making the payment of the tendered amount as aforesaid within the stipulated time the earnest money, 50% of the tendered amount (including earnest money) or any amount of the tender money deposited shall be forfeited and the mortgaged assets and properties will be eligible for resale.
- The BSRS reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders/offers without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Assistant General Manager
Law Department
Phone: 9553578

GD-415