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Embarrassment for defence committee
By Nurul Kabir

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Defence was exposed to an embarrassing situation when Science and Technology Minister Lt Gen (retd) Noor Uddin Khan appeared to represent Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the meeting.

General Noor Uddin carried a letter from the Prime Minister informing that the Technology Minister would represent her at the meeting. The PM, who is in charge of the Ministry of Defense, is a member of the parliamentary body on the ministry. However, the committee found the proposition to be inconsistent with the Rules of Procedure of Jatiya Sangsad.

But the members concerned eventually felt relieved as the General decided himself, on reading the rules concerned, not to attend the meeting - sources in the JS body said.

The Rule 247 (6) of the Rules of Procedures of Jatiya Sangsad says: 'If there be no minister in charge, or minister of state or deputy minister of a ministry, the Leader of the House shall nominate a member of the cabinet to the standing committee of such ministry and if he is a member of parliament, he shall be the member of the committee and if he is not a member of parliament, he may remain present in the meeting and take part in the proceedings but shall abstain from voting.'

On the arrival of Noor Uddin at the meeting venue yesterday morning, chairman of the committee and ruling party legislator Major General (retd) K M Shafiqulah just read out the rule to the minister. The minister did not take time to realise that there is a specific minister - the PM herself - who is in charge of the ministry of defense. So there is no scope for her to nominate any other person.

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JP march attacked in Mymensingh

By Reaz Ahmad, back from Mymensingh

The otherwise peaceful 'road march' led by Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad came under an attack by Chhatra League activists at Mymensingh town yesterday.

However, Ershad and his party men were not hurt. Some 10 pedestrians were injured, one in a bomb explosion, during a clash between Chhatra League and Jatiya Party activists that ensued over putting up of a road barricade near the Mymensingh Polytechnic Institute.

The marchers who left

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Shazneen murder

Proceedings of case adjourned till June 3

By Staff Correspondent The First Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court yesterday adjourned the proceedings of Shazneen murder case till June 3.

Shazneen Tasnim Rahman, 15, youngest daughter of industrialist Latifur Rahman, was raped and murdered at their Gulshan residence on April 23 last year. A murder case and another case under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act 1995 were filed with Gulshan thana in connection with the incident.

Police accused seven persons in the charge sheets in the cases. They are domestic help at Latifur Rahman's house

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Prayer Timings

May 17		
Fajr	Azan	Jamaat
4-15	4-20	
Zohr	12-45	1-30
Asr	4-45	4-55
Maghrib	6-40	6-43
Esha	7-55	8-10

Source: Islamic Foundation

The Daily Star

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Quit now, call snap polls: Khaleda

BNP convoy crosses bridge peacefully

By Nazmul Ashraf

A huge convoy of 328 motor vehicles crossed the Bangabandhu Bridge peacefully yesterday under the personal supervision of BNP chief Khaleda Zia as she led the road march to northern Bangladesh, launching a campaign to project 'government's failures'.

The three-day march began from city's Paltan Maidan at 10:40am after the Opposition leader's fiery speech denouncing the Awami League government's 'failures' to run the affairs of the state and demanding immediate general elections.

"The government has miserably failed to protect public interests and run the affairs of the state," she told a Paltan Maidan rally, while giving a summary of 'failures'.

On her way to Panchagarh, nearly 500 kilometres from the capital, she reached Bogra late last night stopping at four points (Tongi, Gazipur, Tangail town and Eengal) before the bridge and another two (Bhuiyangati at Serajganj and Sherpur at Bogra) on the other side of the Jamuna. On the first day, she touched five districts.

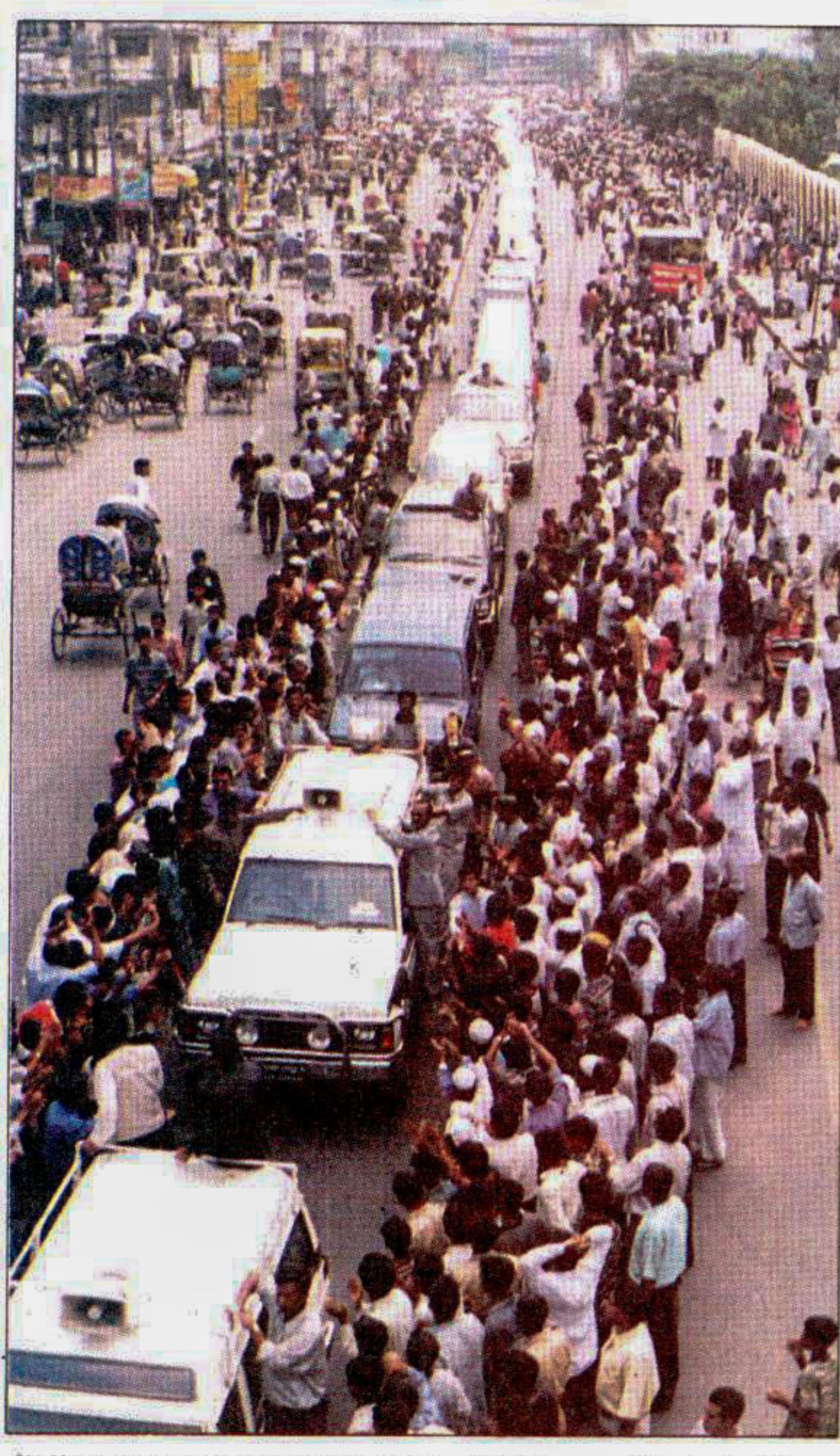
In all six places, she addressed public rallies asking the government to quit immediately and call snap polls.

She told them that the Awami League administration failed to

- solve power, water crises,
- generate jobs,
- protect the interests of farmers, teachers, government employees, workers and all groups of professionals,
- ensure safety and security of people and their property,
- end repression on political opponents, and
- protect the sovereignty of the country.

The government had therefore lost every right to stay in

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BNP 'road march' led by party chief Begum Khaleda Zia leaving the city for Panchagarh yesterday. — Star photo

2 businessmen murdered in Chittagong

From Our Correspondent CHITTAGONG, May 16: Two businessmen were murdered in the port city in the last two days. Khalilur Rahman, a businessman of Firingee Bazar under Kotwali thana was stabbed to death by some unidentified miscreants in the bazaar area this evening.

Police said, Khalil was murdered due to land dispute. A case was filed with Kotwali thana in this connection, but none was arrested till filing of this report.

Another businessman, identified as Gulzar Hossain, was shot dead by some armed miscreants in Fakirhat area under Doodh Mooring thana at midnight last night.

Gulzar, a businessman of Agrabad Singapore Market came under attack while he was returning home from his shop.

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Bangladesh ready for today's World Cup battle

Star Report

Bangladesh, buoyed by pre-World Cup wins against two top County teams, take on New Zealand in their first ever World Cup appearance today, hoping to stage the first real upset in the current cricket carnival.

Some 90 kilometres off London, at Chelmsford, the ground where they beat Essex nine days ago, Bangladeshi boys hope to give the Kiwis a tough time, if not hand them an upset.

The match is scheduled to start at 3:45 pm BST, Bangladesh Television and

ESPN will telecast the match live while Bangladesh Betar is ready for a ball-by-ball commentary in Bangla.

Bangladesh booked their berth in the last World Cup of century as champions of the ICC Trophy in Malaysia in 1997.

For the two teams, this is the second ODI clash. Bangladesh lost heavily, by 161 runs, in their first encounter nine years ago -- in the Australasia Cup in Sharjah in 1990.

But a lot has happened since

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A view from the Gully

By Tawfiq Aziz Khan

A disenchanted Indian supporter sneaked on to the ground at Hove and approached skipper Azharuddin and David threateningly after India's defeat against South Africa. This is highly condemnable and one wonders how could the ruffian get past the policemen on duty.

But much as I protest this incident, I seriously think of the future of this Indian team when they return home at the end of the tournament. The hype and the euphoria that have been created by multi-nationals and big businesses across India, which is being displayed on the television round-the-clock give a definite feeling that the Cup

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TODAY'S MATCH

Bangladesh vs New Zealand
Venue: Chelmsford
Live Coverage: BTV and ESPN (3.45 pm)

TOMORROW'S MATCH

England vs Kenya
Venue: Canterbury
Live Coverage: BTV and Star Sports (3.45 pm)

Scot go down by 6 wkts

WORCESTER, England, May 16: Red-faced Australia launched their cricket World Cup in lacklustre here on Sunday as 1,000-1 shots Scotland cornered the applause despite going down by six wickets, reports AFP.

The Scots, with just two professional players in their ranks and making their debut in the tournament, managed to make the increasingly frustrated Australians look 'sloppy' as they scored 181 for seven off their 50 overs.

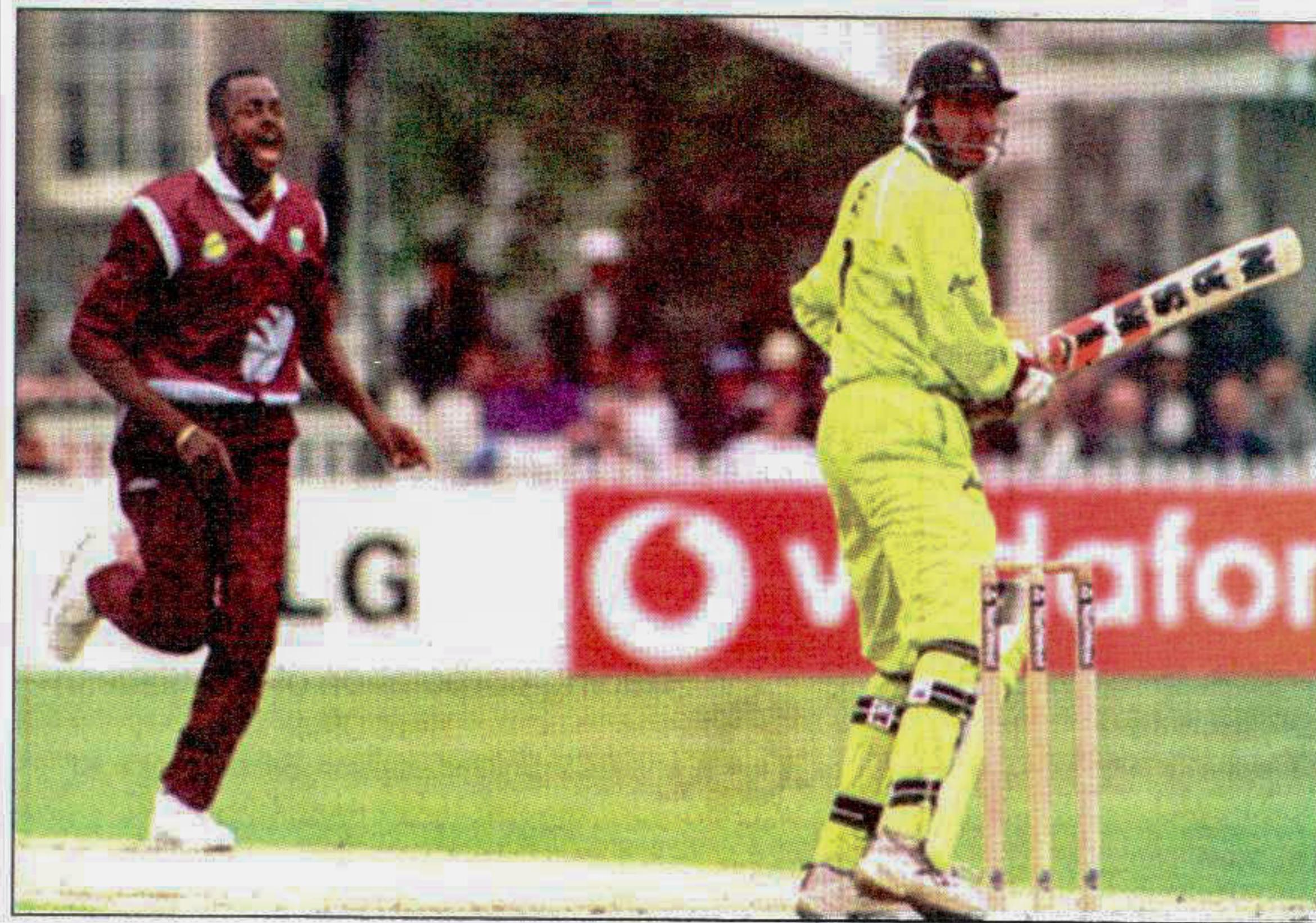
But Australian skipper Steve Waugh shepherded home his side -- 5-1 second favourites to win the World Cup -- with 31 balls to spare after big names Adam Gilchrist, Ricky Ponting and Darren Lehmann all failed to impress with the bat.

Scotland, who conceded defeat before a ball had been bowled but said they hoped to avoid being humiliated, never looked likely to win.

But a 62-run stand between all-rounders Gavin Hamilton and James Brinkley for the sixth wicket succeeded in rattling their much-vaunted opponents.

Pace bowler Glenn McGrath, visibly irritated, let loose a few bouncers as well as a string of

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Courtney Walsh, the West Indian pace ace, getting Shahid Afridi caught behind at Bristol yesterday. — AFP photo

Pakistan's perfect start

BRISTOL, England, May 16: Wasim Akram hit 43 off 28 balls to save Pakistan from disaster and then excelled as a captain as his side won their World Cup opener against the West Indies by 27 runs here on Sunday, reports AFP.

Pakistan overcame their chronic lack of match practice ahead of the tournament to dismiss Brian Lara's West Indies for 202 after they had made 229 for eight in their 50 overs.

It was Pakistan's second win in seven World Cup matches against the West Indies and gave them a perfect start in group B.

Akram's gamble to bat first in overcast conditions almost backfired as West Indian pace duo Mervyn Dillon and Courtney Walsh reduced Pakistan to 42 for four, then 135 for six.

Akram, however, hit two

sixes and four boundaries to lead the revival. Pakistan hammered 85 runs in the last 10 overs.

Pakistan, whose three warm-up matches in England were washed out by rain and whose request for another game was denied by World Cup organisers, were also well-served by the most lethal attack in the business.

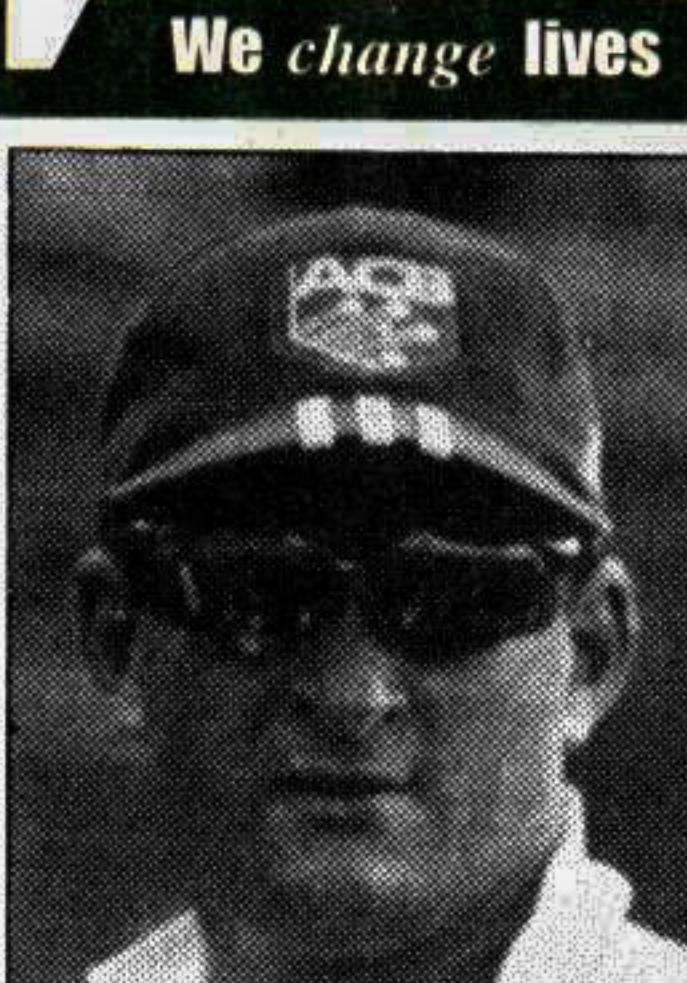
Abdul Razzaq, the fourth seamer, and Azhar Mahmood picked up three wickets each as



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Mark Waugh
Man of the Match
Australia vs Scotland

The Man of the Match in the Pakistan-West Indies game could not be known till late last night.

Power tower collapses

A tower of 132 KV Ashuganj-Kishoreganj transmission line collapsed in the river Brahmaputra early yesterday, reports UNB.

Power Development Board sources said the districts that plunged into darkness following the tower collapse are Mymensingh, Kishoreganj, Netrakona, Jamalpur and Sherpur.

They said tower number 27 of the transmission line was partially damaged on Friday while the second circuit of the line was being repaired. It fell into the Brahmaputra near Bhairab at 2.26 am.

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Fuel tanker burst in Pakistan kills 65

Upazila election may be shifted 'for convenience'