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RANGS GROUP

Pakistan vows to retaliate, puts forces on high alert

India launches air strikes to flush out Kashmir militants

NEW DELHI, May 26: India today launched its first peace-time air strikes in Kashmir and warned Pakistan not to interfere as New Delhi used force to dislodge guerrillas, report agencies.

Pakistan, meanwhile, put its forces on high alert, as the military warned the crisis could snowball into a wider conflict. Indian air force fighter jets and helicopter gunships today fired on the mountains of India-held Kashmir to flush out Pakistani-backed infiltrators entrenched along their disputed

frontier. Pakistani Foreign Minister Sartaj Aziz immediately warned India: "We are retaliating and we will retaliate." He didn't elaborate.

In New Delhi, American ambassador Richard Celeste met with Indian Defence Minister George Fernandes and expressed his country's concern over the developments.

However, Celeste ruled out the possibility of an American intervention. Press Trust of India agency quoted him as saying, "No way, there is no ques-

tion of this," Celeste said.

Earlier, India warned Pakistan today that it would take "appropriate action" if Islamabad intervened in its air

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strikes. "Should there be any direct or indirect interference in our operations by Pakistan army or Pakistan air force, the Indian defence forces have been authorised to take appropriate action," an official statement

said. India also accused Pakistan of firing a missile at an Indian military plane over Kashmir two days ago.

In Islamabad, a military spokesman told reporters that the Pakistan army was on high alert and would act unless the rival forces backed off.

"Pakistan reserves the right to retaliate in whatever manner considered appropriate," he said, adding that continued Indian violations of Pakistan's territory could "snowball into a

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SL sink in run deluge

TAUNTON (England), May 26: Indian batsmen Saurav Ganguly and Rahul Dravid ripped cricket's record books to shreds here today as World Cup holders Sri Lanka, thrashed by 157 runs, prepared for an early plane home, reports AFP.

Ganguly, known as the Prince of Calcutta, and Dravid - until last year regarded as too slow a scorer for one-dayers - both made big centuries out of India's total of 373 for six.

Sri Lanka were then bowled out for 216 as medium-pacer Robin Singh took five wickets for 31 runs.

Playing textbook cricket, they put on a one-day world record 318 as the group A contest turned into a carnival.

Tricolour-draped Indian supporters, drunk on runs, chanted and danced throughout the match.

The win boosted India's

hopes of reaching the second round of the tournament. Victory in their final game against hosts England on Saturday would make sure.

Sri Lanka's hopes of a respectable title defence, however, were dashed as they conceded more runs than ever before in a limited-over encounter.

Only a mathematical miracle can save them after just one win in four games. Their captain Arjuna Ranatunga's future must now hang in the balance.

Ganguly, who made 183, and Dravid, who ended on 145, put on an exhibition as extraordi-

nary as it was historic.

Coming together at six for one wicket after India had been put in, they kept the bat straight and the ball on the ground as they pierced the field at will.

Then, after reaching 142 at the halfway stage, they accelerated sharply. The last 10 overs were pure mayhem, costing 129 runs.

The left-handed Ganguly had started more slowly than his partner but ended furiously.

He was just one hit away from the highest individual score in World Cup history - See Page 12 Col 6

A view from the Gully

By Tawfiq Aziz Khan

The tremendous spurt with which Zimbabwe opened their World Cup campaign against Kenya and India seems to have petered out during their last two matches against Sri Lanka and England. In both these matches they managed scores less than the two hundred mark, put into bat on both the occasions, and then failing to bowl out their stronger opponents. They have the toughest match still left against South Africa. It is an unlikely proposition that they would be able to overcome their mighty neighbours but that is still the only hope they have of reaching the Super Six from

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Klusener cripples Kenyans

AMSTERDAM, May 26: Lance Klusener claimed the first five-wicket haul of the World Cup as favourites South Africa stormed into the second round with a seven-wicket romp over Kenya here today, reports AFP.

Klusener, South Africa's hero with the bat in previous matches, showed his bowling talents by grabbing five for 21 as the Kenyans were shot out for 152 after being sent to bat.

Jacques Kallis then scored an unbeaten 44 and Darryl Cullinan made 35 not out as the South Africans cruised home with nine overs to spare.

It was South Africa's fourth

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Our apologies

How could it be "green-and-white"? As a large number of readers rightly queried, we apologise for the grave oversight by our copy editor who failed to note the blunder in the late night despatch from Edinburgh. It should have been, as we all know and as we had in the heading, "green-and-red".

BNP, allies to observe 'black day' today

By Staff Correspondent

The BNP-led opposition alliance observes 'Black Day' today as Jyotindra Bodhipriyo Larma allies Shantu Larma takes over as chairman of the CHT Regional Council at a ceremony at the Tribal Cultural Institute at Rangamati.

In observance of the day, BNP and its allies - Jatiya Party, Jamaat and IOJ - are scheduled to organise separate public rallies and processions in the city and elsewhere in the country to press their demand for scrapping the "uneven and unconstitutional" CHT accord which is "a threat to the national sovereignty."

In the capital, BNP will hold a rally at Paltan Maidan at 4 pm. The rally will be followed by a procession.

Jatiya Party will hold a rally in front of its Kalabagan central office at 4 pm while Jamaat at Muktangan at 4.30 pm. IOJ will also organise similar programme on the occasion.

Vajpayee to visit Bangladesh on June 19

Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee will visit Bangladesh in the third week of June, official sources said yesterday, reports BSS.

Acting Foreign Secretary Mohiuddin Ahmed said Vajpayee will arrive here on June 19.

"His (Vajpayee's) visit is linked to the inauguration of a regular bus service between Dhaka and Calcutta," Mohiuddin added.

It will be his first visit to Bangladesh as prime minister. He first visited Dhaka as the foreign minister of Morarjee Desai government in late 70s.

The trial run of the Dhaka-Calcutta bus service took place in April.

TODAY IN Rising Stars



MORE CRICKETERS' POSTERS

Inside Today

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The Heart of the Matter

Syed Talat Hussain writes from Islamabad
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The myth of party system; and Growing antibiotic resistance in Bangladesh
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Prayer Timings

May 27		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4:15	4:20
Zohr	12:45	1:30
Asr	4:45	4:55
Maghrib	6:40	6:43
Esha	7:40	8:10

Source: Islamic Foundation

Larma takes over as RC chief amid tight security today

From Shebab Ahmed

RANGAMATI, May 26: Authorities have tightened security in the town ahead of tomorrow's installation of Jyotindra Bodhipriyo Larma as Chairman of the CHT interim Regional Council.

The installation ceremony will be held on the premises of the Tribal Cultural Institute here.

Larma will enjoy the status of a state minister and have wide powers to oversee functioning of local governments, law and order and development activities in the three hill districts.

The former guerrilla leader is set to begin the job of a civilian administrator amid planned demonstrations by the settlers-dominated Parbatya Gano Parishad, backed by the Sarnobodoliy Olkkyo Parishad, which terms the day a 'black day'.

They have called a shutdown in the hill district tomorrow in protest, saying that the RC, led by Larma, would not represent

their interests.

As the authorities gave final touches to the simple but colourful installation ceremony, marking the beginning of a new era in the 14,200 sq km Chittagong Hill Tracts, police beefed up their strength to guard against any untoward incident. Army and BDR have been kept stand-by.

However, the anti-Larma factions in the Pahari Chhatra Parishad (PCP), a front organisation of the Parbatya Chhatra Gano Parishad, have not given any programme. They broke away from the PCP on the question of the peace treaty Larma signed with the government on December 2, 1997.

But the authorities are prepared to face them also, in case they stage any protest. They are demanding autonomy in the hills, home to 13 ethnic races and settlers from the plains. The settlers constitute roughly 48 per cent of the 1.1 million

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No upset on Bangladesh cards today

From Nizamuddin Ahmed

LONDON, May 26: Right-hand batsman and medium-pacer Neeamur Rashid may be playing against Australia at the expense of left-arm spinner and useful bat Enamul Haque in Bangladesh's match tomorrow at Chester-le-Street in Durham.

The playing eleven would however be announced later this evening after the meeting of the team selectors.

The change may have been prompted by the ability of the Australians to play good spinners with the likes of Shane Warne giving them good practice.

The team had a practice in the afternoon on the ground they will be playing its fourth match of the cricket World Cup.

Bangladesh lost to New Zealand by six wickets on May 17 at Chelmsford and to West Indies by seven wickets on May 21 at Dublin. They recorded a famous victory against all odds at Edinburgh on May 24 when they had the better of the hosts by 22 runs.

Bangladesh will play their last group match against Pakistan at Northampton on May

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5.2pc growth despite floods

Reeling out of devastating floods, the country posted a 5.2 per cent growth this fiscal year and the government adopted a Tk 15,500 crore Annual Development Programme for 1999-2000 to further spur the economy, reports UNB.

The National Economic Council (NEC) at a meeting yesterday with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair endorsed the increased ADP allocations. The size of the revised ADP for the outgoing financial year is Tk 14,000 crore.

Officials said the NEC noted with satisfaction the growth rate achieved in the 1998-99 fiscal despite the flood that

slowed down economic activity.

Economists and financial experts of the country had predicted that the growth in 1998-99 would hardly be 4 per cent because of the prolonged floods that hit the country in 1998 playing havoc with agriculture and the economy at large.

The achieved growth in 1998-1999 is something spectacular as the country faced with serious setback during the prolonged flooding last monsoon, the meeting said.

In the ADP outlay for 1999-2000, local currency will amount to Tk 8,830 crore or 57 per cent of the total. Project aid is Tk 6,426 crore and food aid

Tk 244 crore, Press Secretary to the Prime Minister Jawadul Karim told newsmen after the meeting.

The number of total ADP projects in the coming fiscal is 1,293, with the thrust being on poverty alleviation, spread of education and on power sector.

Addressing the meeting at NEC Bhaban Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said the considerable growth rate could be achieved due to all-out efforts of the government and excellent flood management.

The economic council also considered the revised ADP of 1998-99 that stood at Tk 14,000

See Page 12 Col 1

Press enjoying complete freedom now: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the press is enjoying complete freedom in the country now, reports BSS.

"My government believes in complete freedom of the press for the success of democracy," she said in her speech inaugurating the annual conference of Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) at the Jatiya Press Club in the city.

Sheikh Hasina, however, remarked that a number of newspapers often publish reports which are far from the truth. She said although there is a bumper harvest in the country after last year's devastating floods, a section of newspaper reports claimed recently that the farmers are still in misery.

She said such 'misguided reports' tend to confuse the people. This kind of journalism is not welcome in the interest of press freedom.

The Prime Minister said

that freedom of the press also entails responsibilities.

"You have to discharge your duties faithfully to enjoy freedom. You must not push the nation to uncertain situation by your reports," she reminded the journalists.

Sheikh Hasina lauded the role of journalists during various movements of the past, including the movement for ensuring people's franchise.

"Your bold support had encouraged us in our struggle to attain the rights to vote and food," she said.

The Prime Minister once again thanked the Leader of the Opposition for 'her realisation' that election was the only means to go to power. She said that elections would be held on schedule.

"I wanted to discuss with the opposition to advance the election dates when they were agi-

See Page 12 Col 1

Chiefs of Unocal, Occidental arrive in city

By Staff Correspondent

The President of Occidental arrived in the city from the US yesterday.

Sources said his visit to Dhaka is linked to Unocal's take-over of Occidental's operations in blocks 12, 13 and 14 in Bangladesh under a deal agreed between the two companies. Occidental had been operating in the three prime blocks since 1995.

Unocal's President also arrived in the city on Tuesday. It is likely that the deal would be signed very soon, the sources said.

But the chief of Occidental Bangladesh meanwhile briefed Bangladesh employees that the deal was yet to be finalised and assured them that their jobs would be "properly taken care of" if the deal is signed, other

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Package programmes for BTV

Appeal Committee yet to meet two years after formation

By Mustak Hossain

Ittefaq. The director general of BTV will act as ex-officio member secretary.

The committee is to operate in accordance with "Rules for package programmes for Bangladesh Television". As per the rules, the decision of the appeal committee regarding a package programme would be final.

Thousands of programmes worth crores of taka were thrown into waste paper basket

due to lack of activities of the appeal committee, alleged one package programme producer who asked not to be named.

On the other hand, a section of officials of the BTV has so far been judging the eligibility of package programmes in violation of the rules, the producer said.

The committee is supposed to sit for once or twice a month

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Beyond the boundary Jewel In The Crown

By Shakil Kasem

Contrary to public opinion India went to great lengths to prove that there was still some fire left in the old dog, yet. In the home of cricket, in the last World Cup this century, with the prospects of the last cham-

In the otherwise serene surroundings at Taunton, with the cathedral overlooking the goings on in the lush expanse of a typically English setting, events beyond comprehension

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we score... while others watch

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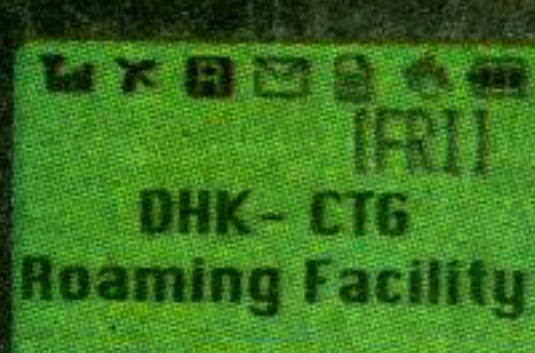
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(India)
Man of the Match
India vs Sri Lanka



LANCE KLUSENER
(South Africa)
Man of the Match
Kenya vs South Africa

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