

## International

# India, Pakistan urged to show restraint

HONG KONG, May 28 : India and Pakistan on Friday faced mounting calls to open dialogue and show restraint as fighting in troubled Kashmir threatened to escalate, reports AFP.

In Washington, State Department spokesman James Rubin said the United States was "strongly concerned" over the fighting in Kashmir and urged Pakistan and India's leaders to speak directly.

Rubin called the fighting "the most serious in some time in Kashmir."

"Senior American diplomats in India and Pakistan are in touch with both governments to express our strong concern, to urge them to show restraint and prevent the fighting from spreading, and to urge both countries to work to reduce tensions," he said.

Noting that Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and Pakistani Prime Minister Sharif have spoken by phone, Rubin said: "We urge them to speak again directly to pull their countries back from the dangers of a heightened conflict."

Rubin's words were echoed by the European Union. In Bonn the German foreign ministry



Air Vice Marshal S.K. Malik (R), the head of the Indian Air Force, talks to reporters during a news conference in New Delhi Wednesday about the latest attacks on Muslim guerrillas in Kashmir. At (L) is Major General J.J. Singh, India's number two war-planner. The two said the third day of air strikes in Kashmir had achieved huge military gains.

—AFP photo

issued a statement on behalf of the EU, urging both sides to open immediate talks.

The EU expressed "concern" at the "escalation of fighting" in Kashmir.

The statement called on "India and Pakistan to exercise the greatest restraint possible" and take "all necessary steps to halt the military confrontation and border infiltrations."

The ministry said the EU hoped the two neighbouring countries would abide by the Lahore Treaty signed in February which obliges them to resolve their differences, including Kashmir, through dialogue.

United Nations chief Kofi Annan had "expressed his concern repeatedly" over the Kashmir crisis, a spokesman at the UN said.

"We have some degree of encouragement by the fact that the two prime ministers were in telephone contact yesterday (Wednesday)," spokesman Mauro de Almeida e Silva added.

De Almeida e Silva noted that Annan, who was in Sweden on Thursday, had "expressed his concern repeatedly" about Kashmir.

Pakistan said Thursday it

had shot down two Indian fighter planes that had "intruded" on its air space. India acknowledged it had lost two planes but said only one was shot down with the other crashing due to mechanical failure.

The Kashmir crisis constitutes the worst escalation in military tensions between the longtime rivals since they became declared nuclear powers a year ago.

New Delhi and Islamabad conducted nuclear tests last May despite threatened US sanctions and worldwide condemnation.

The Indian military says some 400 Moslem militants have sneaked into the Kargil region, located in the southern two-thirds of Kashmir which India controls, since Pakistan and India resumed cross-border artillery duels May 9.

New Delhi says the militants were trained in Pakistan and sent across the border to boost a Moslem insurgency in Indian Kashmir.

India and Pakistan have fought two of their three wars over Kashmir since the subcontinent was freed from British rule and partitioned in 1947.



Activists from the Congress Party shout anti-Pakistan slogans near the Pakistan Embassy in New Delhi Wednesday to protest the loss of two Indian fighter jets in Kashmir. India and Pakistan have been engaged in an artillery duel in the disputed Himalayan province since May 9.

—AFP photo

## Three Indians climb Mt Everest from Chinese side

NEW DELHI, May 28 : Taking advantage of a clear moonlit night, three Indian mountaineers scaled the world's tallest peak Friday from the challenging Kangshung face from China, a spokesman for the climbers said in the Indian capital New Delhi, reports AP.

Jag Mohan, Sange Sherpa, members of the Indian Adventure and Mountaineering Association, reached the 8,848 meters (29,028 feet) high summit at 7:10 local time (0125 GMT), said DK Arya, president of the association quoting a message from the mountain.

Only four other people have climbed Everest from the Kangshung face before. The east ridge was last successfully climbed by a three-member Chilean team in 1992.

The three summiters are part of a 10-member New Delhi-based IAMA team attempting to scale Mt. Everest.

Kusang Sherpa, a mountaineering instructor with the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute in the northeastern city of Darjeeling and Sange Sherpa, who works for the Indo-Tibetan Border Police, are brothers.

## Pakistan marks one year anniversary of N-tests

ISLAMABAD, May 28 : Against the backdrop of blistering artillery duels and downed Indian aircraft on its volatile Nawaz Sharif.

Pakistan detonated several nuclear explosions on May 28, 1998 and again on May 30, 1998 in response to several nuclear tests carried out earlier by neighbouring India.

But not everyone in Pakistan is celebrating.

Demonstrations opposing the celebration have been held by labour groups as well as peace and human rights activists.

In an editorial in the independent daily newspaper, The News, Pervez Hoodbhoy, a physics professor at Pakistan's Quaid-e-Azam University, debunked Pakistan's claims that the nuclear tests symbolised scientific achievement in this poor nation of 140 million people.

The Pakistani state has declared bombs and missiles as the touchstone of scientific progress.... but it has been able to acquire these without having created an educated society or working science institutions or even attempting to move toward a society where science can ultimately develop," Hoodbhoy wrote.

Giants posters proclaiming Pakistani scientists as "nuclear heroes," emblazoned the tree-lined boulevards of the Pakistani capital.

The state-run television aired special programmes and national leaders in speeches proclaimed Pakistan's defences invincible. Songs have been written, films produced and torch-lit parades held.

"One year ago today we broke the shackles of dependence on foreign technology and conducted successful nuclear tests, a distinction enjoyed by only a

## China blasts US Senate resolution on Tiananmen

BEIJING, May 28 : China on Friday blasted a non-binding resolution passed by the US Senate commemorating the Tiananmen Square crackdown in 1989, expressing "strong displeasure," reports AFP.

"China expresses its strong displeasure and resolute opposition to this," the foreign ministry said in a statement.

"This motion wantonly distorts the facts of the human rights situation in China, and has totally exposed the exterior anti-China motives (of a small number of congressmen)," it said.

"China has long seen through their tricks. Their conspiracy to use human rights as an excuse to interfere in China's internal affairs is doomed to failure."

The Senate resolution called on China to free political prisoners and end oppression of peaceful dissidents.

"We must never forget" the hundreds and possibly thousands of pro-democracy demonstrators slain by Chinese troops June 4, 1989, said Republican Tim Hutchinson, the measure's principal backer in the senate.

"The Chinese government knows what it has done, and it is afraid, afraid of its own people."

Janowski said.

The firing is apparently part of an ongoing Albanian military exercise, supposed to end Friday, he said.

"UNHCR is very concerned that this could draw incoming artillery fire from the Serb side with disastrous effects for the refugees," Janowski said.

The UNHCR had voiced its concerns to the Albanian authorities, arguing that Kukes is becoming "more and more hazardous by the day," he said.

The agency was also going from "tent to tent" in the camps trying to persuade the ethnic Albanians forced out of Kosovo to leave Kukes, the spokesman said.

On Friday, a total of 542 refugees had so far left the town, following 2,017 who left Thursday.

Despite the border clashes, an estimated 400 refugees arrived in northern Albania on Thursday. The group included 165 former prisoners from Smrdovica, bringing the total number of former prisoners arriving in Albania to 1,700, Janowski said.

In Macedonia, there have been just over 2,000 new arrivals since Wednesday, following a torrent of 30,000 from last

Janowski said.

Some of the new arrivals reported "horrible" stories in two villages in Kacanik municipality, near the Kosovo-Macedonian border.

An old religious leader told the UNHCR that he personally buried the mutilated corpses of three young men killed on May 25 by Serbian paramilitary in Mika, a village once home to 800 Albanians, now empty.

He said he also buried a father and son killed the following day in Dubrava.

A refugee woman with six young daughters and a six-day-old son born while she was in hiding told the UNHCR that her husband, two brothers and three other men from the village of Bicevac were taken by Serb soldiers.

"She does not know their whereabouts," Janowski said.

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The refugees said that six buses were turned back Thursday at Serbian checkpoints before Blace.

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