

## International

Three killed as Maoist rebels storm Indian police station

NEW DELHI, Aug 8: Three Maoist guerrillas were shot dead when the rebels tried to seize a police station in the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh, the Press Trust of India said Sunday, reports AFP.

The news agency said the police and the guerrillas exchanged fire when some 50 heavily-armed Maoists attacked the station late Saturday in the state's Churla village with plans to rob the armoury.

The raid is the first of its kind in Madhya Pradesh by the left-wing insurgents, who are mainly active in three eastern and one southern Indian state.

The Maoists have been campaigning for decades against the exploitation of poor landless farmers by feudal landlords.

**Pinochet may face prosecution in Britain**

LONDON, Aug 8: Former Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet could face prosecution in Britain if Spain drops its request to extradite him, the British Crown Prosecution Service said today, reports AFP.

Amid speculation that Spain may abandon its bid to extradite him to face allegations of torture and murder, British prosecution officials confirmed Pinochet, 83, could face charges in Britain.

The human rights group Amnesty International has lodged a formal complaint against the retired general with the London Metropolitan Police chief Paul Condon, and there are also outstanding extradition requests from France and Switzerland.

A spokeswoman for the CPS said: "As with any investigation the police would have to look into the complaint and present us with a file."

We would then have to decide whether there was sufficient evidence for a prosecution."

The spokeswoman said the UN Convention against Torture meant Pinochet could face charges in Britain for alleged crimes committed abroad.

Pinochet, 83, was arrested in London last October on a warrant from Spanish investigating magistrate Baltasar Garzon, who wants him extradited to Spain to face charges of human rights abuses during his 1973-1990 dictatorship in the South American country.

Last month Chilean government sought an "amicable arrangement" with the Madrid government to annul the Spanish extradition application request.

**18 die in Cape Verde air crash**

PRAIA, Aug 8: Eighteen people were killed Saturday when their airplane crashed on Sao Vicente island in the Cape Verde archipelago off Senegal, officials sources said, reports AFP.

It was the worse air disaster in the country's history.

Dead were two Austrian tourists and 16 Cape Verde citizens, including two crew members. Three of the dead were children, but identities were not immediately available.

The Dornier aircraft, operated by Cape Verde's coast guard, crashed in mountainous terrain as it tried to land after failing to touch down on neighbouring Santo Antao island.

Airport sources blamed the disaster on bad weather at Santo Antao, forcing the pilots to change course.

Initial reports had given the number of dead as 19, and identified Santo Antao as the crash site.

The coast-guard Dornier was being flown in place of a civilian passenger aircraft that was taken out of service for repairs.

A search party was set out to reach the wreckage, which came down in particularly inaccessible terrain.

**Kabbah appeals for aid to hostage captors**

FREETOWN, Sierra Leone, Aug 8: President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah, explaining that his country has been hobbled by a recently-ended civil war, urged international groups to meet the demands of rebel-allied soldiers now holding about 30 hostages, reports AP.

Kabbah told journalists that foreign relief organisations should review policies of refusing assistance to armed groups "in this exceptional case."

The rebels holding the hostages are not party to a July 7 peace agreement that formally ended eight years of civil war which killed tens of thousands and maimed many more, according to UN officials.

Kabbah on Saturday, said Sierra Leone doesn't have the resources to help the rebels or their allies — the soldiers who remain loyal to Sierra Leone's ousted military junta.

This incident is a clear reflection of the need for international assistance to Sierra Leone ... since the reason stated for the abduction is the inability of the government to provide food and other relief materials," Kabbah said.

But an official with a major aid agency insisted that donors were determined not to aid any combatants.

This comes despite the kidnappers demands for food and other aid as a key condition for the release of the UN employees, aid workers, West African intervention force soldiers and journalists who were kidnapped Wednesday in the Okra Hills, outside Freetown.

# Pakistan proposes meeting with India at UN

Vajpayee rules out dialogue

NEW DELHI, Aug 8: Pakistan on Sunday called for a meeting with Indian leaders during next month's UN General Assembly session to resume peace talks fractured by the conflict in Kashmir, the Press Trust of India said Sunday, reports AFP.

The news agency said the police and the guerrillas exchanged fire when some 50 heavily-armed Maoists attacked the station late Saturday in the state's Churla village with plans to rob the armoury.

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**10 Tamil rebels killed**

have shot dead at least 10 Tamil Tiger guerrillas in fresh fighting in northern Sri Lanka, the defence ministry here said Sunday, AFP reports from Colombo.

Nine members of the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) were killed by troops in four different clashes in the region of Warani on Saturday, the ministry here said in a statement. It said a 10th rebel was killed by the army in the northern peninsula of Jaffna on the same day. The ministry did not say if government soldiers suffered any casualties during the latest clashes.

**Bus crash kills 18 in Zambia**: Eighteen people died on the spot in a weekend road accident in central Zambia when a bus rammed into a parked truck, state radio reported Sunday, reports AFP from Lusaka.

Scores of others were injured, 23 of them seriously, in the accident at Luanshya in Mukushi district, about 300 kilometres north of the capital Lusaka. Provincial police chief Francis Musonda said 17 passengers on the bus were killed along with the driver of the Mercedes Benz truck.

**Journalist found dead in Aceh**: An Indonesian journalist has been found hacked to death in the latest incident of violence in troubled Aceh province, a report said Sunday, AFP reports from Jakarta.

The body of Supriadi, 34, a writer for Medan Pos, a newspaper based in neighboring North Sumatra province, was found Thursday in Buleleng village in North Aceh district. His head was almost severed, the Kompas daily said. The victim's wife, Ponlyem, was quoted by Kompas as saying Supriadi was picked up by two unidentified men on Monday and had not returned since.

**Experts say flooding in Asia**

SEOUL, Aug 8: For centuries, Koreans called it "The Water Demon" — dark brown floodwater that swallowed everything in its way: cows, pigs, homes, rice paddies and often human lives, reports AP.

In the aftermath of floods that swamped villages, highways and huge tracts of farmland last week, Koreans again learned how devilish nature can be.

Low-lying towns north of Seoul, the South Korean capital, looked like huge garbage dumps on Saturday. Streets were clogged with broken furniture that residents had rescued from their sodden homes, and crumpled cars lay overturned.

Military trucks zigzagged through the wreckage, carrying carcasses of dead animals and kicking up dust — a new health hazard. Soldiers near the heavily fortified border with North Korea combed the churned earth in search of mines that had been swept away.

In South Korea, the floodwaters that killed at least 44 and left 20 missing had all but gone on Saturday. As the summer sun shone for a third straight day, long lines of soldiers in green or red shirts marched into stricken villages with shovels in hand.

Children ran after military jeeps that raced through the countryside spewing a white spray designed to kill bacteria.

"We have a thick layer of dust everywhere. There must be a lot of germs in there," army Capt. Choi Chil-hyun said.

Weather forecasters said seasonal monsoon rains are likely to continue for much of

the month in Southeast Asia, raising fears in the region's many countries of further flooding.

Many of the victims were the same poor people who lost their jobs in the financial crisis that hit many Asian economies two years ago.

I virtually lost everything during a flood in 1996. I have since bought new furniture, a new TV set and put a new roof on my house. This week, it's all gone again," said Kim Eul-sop, 54, a bookstore owner in South Korea's Paju town, near the border with North Korea.

Business is not as it used to be. I wonder how I am going to rebuild my home this time," Kim said.

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"I don't have any shoes left. They have gone with the water," Karaket said.

She said the government has offered to give up to drs 945 to

Islamabad under pressure.

"Nobody in the world can force us to go for a dialogue after keeping a gun to our head. This the whole world knows," he said to wild cheers from the almost wholly male supporters.

India waged a fierce two-month military campaign until last month to evict hundreds of heavily-armed Pakistani intruders and alleged Pakistani soldiers in May-July.

Nearly 80 people, including Muslim militants, civilians and Indian security forces, have died this month in a sudden upsurge in militancy in Kashmir. Two Indian army camps have been attacked since Friday and an Indian colonel was shot dead Saturday.

"With violence and deaths there can be no dialogue," Vajpayee said. "We should create an atmosphere from Washington, saying the Indian military exploits played the key role."

The prime minister, in an apparent reference to the United States which is pressuring for early India-Pakistan talks, said New Delhi will not talk to

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# Militants step up attacks on security camps in Kashmir

SRINAGAR, India, Aug 8: Armed Muslim guerrillas renewed their attacks on Indian military and police camps in Kashmir, killing at least two and injuring seven police and soldiers, official said here Sunday.

A constable was injured in a third such attack on a police camp in the southern Kashmir district of Poonch, officials said, adding that another police post was riddled by bullets in the adjacent district of Rajouri.

Home Minister Lal Krishna Advani, meanwhile, blamed the attacks on Pakistan and said Srinagar's Bakshi stadium where Indian independence celebrations are held.

It has been rocketed by militants every August 15 from 1991 until 1996. A bomb blast during a Republic Day parade in January 1996 in Kashir's Jammu city killed three people.

The celebrations, however, passed off peacefully the last two years.

Search operations are also a daily feature at Lal Chowk, the business hub of Srinagar where nearly 80 militants, security personnel and civilians have been killed in a dramatic rise in violence in picturesque Srinagar this month.

The violence comes ahead of India's independence day on August 15 -- an annual event that Moslem separatists are campaigning to end Indian rule in Kashmir have previously tried.

# Yangon quiet on anniversary of bloody uprising

YANGON, Aug 8: The streets of the Myanmar capital were quiet on Sunday, the 11th anniversary of a bloody student uprising, despite calls by exiled dissidents for civil protests, reports AFP.

The rebels disarmed two guards from the local pro-government Kurdish militia during the raid overnight Friday.

They set fire to two diggers on the construction site for the Alparsi dam in Bulein district before fleeing.

It was the second time the dam had been a target for attack by Kurdish rebels. On July 28, they opened fire on a military vehicle patrolling the site, killing one soldier and wounding seven others.

The armed wing of the PKK frequently carries out attacks on state-backed construction sites, particularly in southeastern Anatolia, the main battleground for the Kurdish separatist armed struggle.

The group has been waging an armed campaign for Kurdish self-rule in southeastern Turkey since 1984. More than 31,000 people have died in the conflict.

Myanmar pro-democracy opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi, who heads the National League for Democracy (NLD), called for reconciliation on the eve of the anniversary, saying soldiers need not fear retribution from a civilian government.

Sunday marked the anniversary of an uprising in the militarily-ruled country on August 8, 1988, or 8/8/88, in which hundreds of democracy demonstrators were gunned down and a junta took power from military dictator Ne Win.

The NLD under Aung San Suu Kyi won an easy victory in 1990 elections but the military refuses to recognise the result and keeps the Nobel peace laureate under constant military surveillance at her Yangon home.

Exiled students and monks in the capital of neighbouring Thailand Sunday marked the anniversary with a noisy but peaceful demonstration outside their embassy.

About 150 students and

monks gathered in front of the Myanmar embassy, carrying banners calling for democracy and the release of all political prisoners.

A statement issued by the Burmese Students Association rallied against the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) for its "constructive engagement" policy toward the junta.

The statement said human rights violations were worse than ever despite the policy.

"It proves that the ASEAN policy is wrong and has lost touch with the Burmese people's real needs," it said.

The statement said that ASEAN, which Myanmar joined in 1997, ignored the people's anti-military dictatorship struggle, and continuous calls for democracy and human rights.

The (ASEAN) policy encourages the junta to commit more human rights abuses," it said.

The Thailand-based All Burma Students Democratic Front earlier issued a statement warning conditions in Myanmar were worsening and ripe for another uprising.

to sabotage.

Indian forces have also simultaneously stepped up cordons-and-search operations in Kashmir for militants and arms.

Police and paramilitary forces daily search residential and commercial areas near Srinagar's Bakshi stadium where Indian independence celebrations are held.

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In past days hundreds of residents have been ordered out of