

## Five killed in Kashmir shootout

SRINAGAR, India, Mar 29: Five militants were killed today in a shootout with the Indian army in the troubled Jammu and Kashmir state, close to the scene where 35 Sikhs were massacred last week, an army spokesman said, reports Reuters.

The spokesman said three of the dead were foreign mercenaries.

The confrontation, which is still taking place, is in Halan village, 12 kilometres southeast of Chittisingpora, where gunmen shot 35 Sikhs on March 20.

The army said it killed five foreign militants on Saturday, who it said were involved in the killings of the Sikhs.

## Intruder on White House lawn held

WASHINGTON, Mar 29: Secret Service agents apprehended a man who jumped a gate at the White House just as President Clinton was scheduled to leave the grounds, reports AP.

The intruder was not armed and was caught immediately. Secret Service spokesman Jim Mackin said. The jump apparently was not politically motivated and was unrelated to the visit of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Mackin said. Mubarak is staying at Blair House, across Pennsylvania Avenue from the White House.

Mackin would not release the man's name pending the probable filing of criminal charges.

As a presidential motorcade idled on a driveway at the rear of the house on Tuesday, Secret Service agents clad head-to-toe in combat black suddenly appeared with large guns drawn.

Reporters who were accompanying Clinton to two evening fund-raising appearances saw the activity at about 6:25 pm (2325 GMT) but did not see the intruder. Clinton was scheduled to have left the White House at 6:15 (2315 GMT) but was running late.

Mackin said the arrest did not affect Clinton's schedule. He would not say whether Clinton knew of the incident.

# Pakistan needs political stability

Singapore's PM tells Musharraf

SINGAPORE, Mar 29: Without political stability, Pakistan will have trouble achieving economic growth, Singapore's Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong told the country's military leader Gen. Pervez Musharraf today, reports AP.

Musharraf arrived from Malaysia amid tight security. His 24-hour visit to Singapore, the second leg of a four-nation Asian tour, is part of efforts to secure economic and political support for his military government.

"We wish for peace and stability in your region. Without it, economic growth and prosperity will remain elusive," Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong told Musharraf over lunch. He added "South Asia must

have the courage to look ahead and not allow differences, however basic, to bog down the region."

Goh was referring to a long-running dispute between India and Pakistan over Kashmir, which both countries claim. This dispute has been the cause of two previous wars between the neighbours, who both have nuclear weapons.

Musharraf came to power after a bloodless coup last October, overthrowing Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. The latter is on trial on hijacking charges, and the prosecution is seeking the death penalty.

Since the coup, Musharraf has found himself increasingly isolated, and Pakistan is now in dire need of friends.

Last Saturday, US President Bill Clinton warned Pakistan it could face diplomatic isolation unless democracy was restored. Musharraf, who will travel to Indonesia and Brunei from here, is also seeking investment from Asian countries.

Pakistan is burdened by a \$32 billion debt and a chronic budget deficit. It recorded a budget deficit of 3.4 per cent in the financial year that ended June 1999. Almost 60 per cent of its gross domestic product is used for the repayment of foreign debt, while one-third of its \$14 billion budget is spent on defence.

Singapore's Goh said the country's trade with Pakistan had been increasing steadily since 1997.

# US to focus on Palestinian peace process

NEW ORLEANS, Louisiana, Mar 29: The United States plans to focus on the Israeli-Palestinian peace track after failing to bridge gaps between the Jewish state and Syria that could restart their stalled talks, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said yesterday, reports AP.

"What we're going to do now is really important, to concentrate on the Palestinian track, we're going to focus on that," Albright told AFP in an interview en route to a meeting with Caribbean foreign ministers here.

"We all feel that basically there is value in really focusing now on the Palestinian track until we can figure out what the momentum is on the other one," she said.

Her comments followed a disappointing weekend summit in Geneva between President Bill Clinton and Syrian President Hafez al-Assad in which US officials concluded the Is-

raeli and Syrian positions were too far apart to make a resumption of those negotiations worthwhile.

Those talks broke down in January over demands from both sides that their conditions for peace be met before an agreement could be reached.

Syria is demanding that Israel commit to a complete return of the Golan Heights before the talks resume while Israel wants commitments from Damascus on security and future relations resolved first.

Albright denied that the Clinton-Assad meeting, which she attended, had been a complete failure but reiterated remarks made by Clinton earlier Tuesday in which he said the ball was now in the Syrian's court.

"I went to Switzerland to meet President Assad to clarify to him what I thought the options were and to hear from him what his needs are, and I asked him to come back to me

with what he thought ought to be done," he said.

Albright stressed that the Geneva summit had been designed to clarify the positions of both sides after Syria said it "didn't understand" the Israeli proposal.

She declined to discuss specifics but quoted Clinton as telling the Syrian leader: "These are the ideas that the Israelis have put forward. If you don't like them, what are your ideas?"

"It wasn't a bad meeting, I wouldn't put it that way at all," (Assad) and the president exchanged ideas on this and it was very evident that there were gaps."

Albright maintained that Washington was not giving up on the Syrian track but said for the moment, US officials would be spending more time trying to assist the Israelis and Palestinians reach a framework agreement for a final peace accord.

# Hundreds evacuated as volcano may erupt in Japan

TOKYO, Mar 29: A northern Japanese volcano shaken by 1,600 tremors this week is likely to erupt in several days, authorities said today in an emergency warning to surrounding villages, reports AP.

Hundreds of villagers have already voluntarily abandoned homes near the snow-covered Mount Usu on the northern island of Hokkaido, but national officials stopped short of ordering an evacuation.

The volcano, 770 kilometres north of Tokyo, last erupted in 1978. Local officials reportedly fear heat from an eruption could melt mountainside snow

and cause massive mudslides.

"It is highly likely an eruption could occur within the next several days from now," said Toru Komiya, a volcanologist at the Meteorological Agency. "We must raise our alertness."

The agency issued an initial warning on Tuesday and made a repeat warning early Wednesday. That was followed by a heightened emergency alert later on Wednesday.

Volcanologists said the mountain's seismic tremors had continued to escalate in frequency and strength, a sign that could lead to an imminent eruption.

# Human trading: More than one million caught in modern-day slavery

MANILA, Mar 29: Crime syndicates buy more than a million women and children annually for use as prostitutes or virtual slaves in sweatshops across the globe, the United States said today, reports Reuters.

"Trafficking (in human beings) is one of the fastest growing criminal enterprises in the world," said US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright in a taped message to an Asian regional conference in Manila.

"This cynical and shameless trade distorts our economies (and) degrades our societies," she said.

Ralph Boyce, US deputy assistant secretary of state for East Asia and the Pacific, told the 23-nation meeting that human trafficking had become organised crime's third largest

source of profits, after drugs and guns.

Boyce denounced the trafficking as "a modern-day slavery" and said only global and regional action could end it.

A US paper distributed at the meeting said the trade in human beings "is growing rapidly" in Asia because the region's 1997-98 financial crisis squeezed economic opportunities, as well as because few traffickers were prosecuted.

Conference organizers said the three-day meeting was the first regional initiative to combat the trafficking of women and children which brings crime syndicates billions of dollars in profits annually.

More than 250,000 of those annually driven to work in sub-human conditions or forced into prostitution come from

Southeast Asia, US State Department officials said.

Another 150,000 to 200,000 come from the former Soviet Union and the rest from South Asia and Latin America, they said.

About 50,000 of the total end up in the United States.

In Europe, women "are literally bought and sold anywhere from 15,000 to 30,000 dollars," Anita Botti, deputy director of a US presidential council on women, told a news conference.

"In South Asia, the amount is somewhere between 8,000 to 10,000 (per woman)," Botti said.

Philippine Foreign Secretary Domingo Siazon said over 5.5 million Filipinos now worked overseas, making this country the largest supplier of manpower in the world, and

many of them had fallen prey to abuses.

"Legitimately recruited workers are promised high-paying jobs, but find themselves working as prostitutes, dancers or bar girls," he said.

"Pilgrims leave for religious shrines and later surface as bonded labourers. In many marriages contracted within new religious programmes or through mail-order-bride arrangements, numerous would-be-brides are duped."

In some cases, children are sold and bought for pornography and prostitution, or their internal organs removed for transplantation to other people, he added.

"Now is the time to go on the offensive," Siazon said.



US President Bill Clinton (R) meets with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in the Oval Office at the White House on Tuesday in Washington, DC. The leaders were scheduled to discuss ways of advancing the Middle East peace talks. — AFP photo

## The Quran inspires Blair

LONDON, Mar 29: British Prime Minister Tony Blair was quoted today as saying he owned two copies of the Quran and had drawn inspiration from reading the Muslim faith's holy book, reports Reuters.

Blair, a church-going Christian, praised Islam as a "deeply reflective, peaceful, very beautiful religious faith," the BBC reported.

It said he made the remarks in an interview due to be published in a British Muslim newspaper on March 31.

"If you read the Quran, it is so clear... the concept of love and fellowship as the guiding spirits of humanity," Blair said.

## Another mass grave found in Uganda

RUGAZI, Mar 29: Another scene of slaughter was uncovered at the house of a Christian doomsday sect leader, bringing to at least 591 the number of dead found at three compounds in the lush green hills of southwestern Uganda, reports AP.

Prisoners on a work detail smashed through a concrete floor and discovered a hidden grave Tuesday. By nightfall, when work stopped, the bodies of 28 people — including at least three children — had been unearthed. Many apparently were strangled, some with knotted cloth that still ringed their necks.

More corpses were stuffed, limb across limb, beneath the floor of the 10-by-10-foot room adjoining the foyer of a home owned by Dominic Kataribabo, a defrocked Roman Catholic priest who became a leader in the Movement for the Restoration of the Ten Commandments of God.

There were fears the house concealed more horrors. As workers wrestled the bodies to the surface with ropes, the thump of crow bars smashing through the floors of other rooms in the 10-room, brick-and-tin roof house echoed as investigators searched for other bodies.

# 'Iraq still building weapons of mass destruction'

WASHINGTON, Mar 29: Saddam Hussein almost certainly has used the absence of international scrutiny to rebuild Iraq's arsenal of weapons of mass destruction, two former chief UN weapons inspectors suggested, reports AP.

"He is clearly doing it again," Richard Butler told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Tuesday.

Those views were echoed by his predecessor, Rolf Ekeus. "There is no conclusive evidence that Iraq has decided to terminate any of its weapons programs," Ekeus said.

Ekeus led the UN Special Commission for Iraq between 1991 and 1997; Butler was the executive chairman from 1997 to last June.

The commission had worked

with the International Atomic Energy Agency to oversee the destruction of Iraq's biological, chemical and nuclear weapons and missile programs. Weapons inspectors from both agencies left Iraq in Dec. 1998 ahead of US and British airstrikes, launched to punish Iraq for failing to cooperate with the inspectors.

Butler, known for his outspoken and confrontational attitude toward Baghdad, said he doesn't hold out much hope that a new panel created by the United Nations will have any more success. He predicted Iraq would refuse to cooperate with the new team and "we will again have an Iraq crisis on our hands."

Butler also said President Clinton should appeal im-

mediately to Vladimir Putin, Russia's new president-elect, and propose an aggressive US-Russian campaign against the development of weapons of mass destruction by countries like Iraq.

"No vetoes, but the great powers standing together," Butler said.

The new arms inspections panel, the UN Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission, was created in December to replace the Special Commission.

Hans Blix, the director, said earlier this month that he wants Baghdad to give his arms experts free access to suspected weapons sites — suggesting it would help bolster Iraq's claim that it does not have such weapons.

# Pro-reform magazine falls under Malaysian govt axe

KUALA LUMPUR, Mar 29: Weeks after imposing severe curbs on a widely read opposition newspaper, Malaysian authorities have shut down another anti-government magazine, its editor said today, reports AP.

The Malay-language Detik magazine received a letter from the Home Affairs Ministry last week saying that its printing permit would not be renewed, editor Ahmed Lutfi Othman said in an interview.

Detik's permit expired last Nov 30, Ahmed said. No new issues of the twice-monthly publication have since hit the newsstands, but the government did not officially ban the magazine until last Saturday.

At its peak, the magazine, which wrote mainly about domestic politics, claimed to have

80,000 readers. Ahmed said that authorities have also threatened to axe Detik's sister publication, Al-Wasilah, once its permit expires in August.

"We have criticised the government and now we're paying the price," Ahmed said.

But the Home Affairs Ministry denied any political motives.

"We have the right not to renew their permit because they breached part of their contract," said Saadon Mat Sabari, the ministry's publication division secretary.

Saadon claimed Detik had broken the rules by using a different printer from the one specified in its permit.

The ban has provoked condemnation from local and international press rights groups.

# BRIEFLY

**Avalanche claims 11 in Austria:** An avalanche south of Salzburg buried more than a dozen skiers underneath tons of snow Tuesday, killing at least 11 people, rescue officials said, AP reports from Salzburg, Austria.

Ten people were found dead in the area of the huge snow slide south of Salzburg. Another died later in a hospital. Two others were able to free themselves while rescuers dug out a third survivor, state television said in its evening newscast.

**Tornado kills 4 in US:** A tornado carved a path of destruction through downtown Fort Worth, shattering windows in high-rise buildings, overturning cars and uprooting trees. Four people were killed and at least 36 were injured, AP reports from Fort Worth.

The manager of a popular restaurant on the top floor of the 35-story Bank One building said his business was destroyed. "Imagine a large bomb going off," Sean Finley said. "It got pretty hectic in here. We were doing some major yelling to get people out of there."



Sikh protesters break a police cordon to march on the streets of south Bombay on Tuesday during a protest against the massacre of 36 Sikhs in Kashmir March 20. The Sikh community in Bombay closed down all their establishments as a mark of respect for the massacre victims, who were killed by masked gunmen the day US President Bill Clinton started his recent India visit. — AFP photo



## Trading Corporation of Bangladesh

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## Tender Notice

Tender for Import of 3000 H.T. ±5% (1,50,000 cft ±5%) of Gurjan Timber in Round Logs Under Cash.

Tender No: TCB/IMP-04/2000

Dated-28.3.2000

Trading Corporation of Bangladesh invites sealed tender in the prescribed form obtainable from Sonali Bank, Kawran Bazar Branch, TCB Bhaban, Dhaka on payment of Tk 1000/- (Taka one thousand) only per set (Non-refundable) for import of 3000 H.T. ±5% (1,50,000 cft ±5%) of superior quality Gurjan Timber in round logs. Offers duly sealed & signed are to be made on C&F (C) Chittagong liner basis showing FOB price and freight separately alongwith 1% (one per cent) earnest money. Shipment of entire quality of Gurjan Timber is to be made within 15th May 2000. All other terms and conditions are available in the tender form.

Tenders to be dropped in the tender box kept in the Import Division of the Corporation at TCB Bhaban, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka up to 11:00 AM on 17-4-2000 and opened at 11:15 AM on the same day. Tenderers may remain present at the opening of the tender. The successful bidder is to submit 3% (three per cent) performance guarantee in foreign currency before signing of contract with TCB.

The Corporation reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever and to purchase quantities more or less than those tendered for. No tender document will be sold on the day of opening of the tender.

Fakhruddin Ahmed  
Senior Executive (Import-1)

GD-288



## Dhaka WASA Tender Notice

(পানির অপচয় রোধে কাজ শেষে কলের মুখ বন্ধ করুন)

Tenders are hereby invited from bonafide manufacturers/bonafide importers and their approved representatives under Dhaka WASA Form No-2 for the work of supplying Chang Ann Brand SC 1010-R Model Human Hauler. The amount of estimated money for the work is = 12,51,357/-. Tenders will be received till 12:00 Noon on 12/4/2000 and will be opened the same day at 2:00 PM before the tenderers or their nominated representatives (if anyone remains present).

Schedule of tender will be available in the office of the Chief Accounts Officer of Dhaka WASA, WASA Bhaban, 98, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Divisional Commissioner, Dhaka Division and all MODS Zone offices of Dhaka WASA. Other details will be available in the office of the undersigned.

Address:

Segunbagicha,

Dhaka.

WASA-PI-99/2000

DFP-7011-23/3

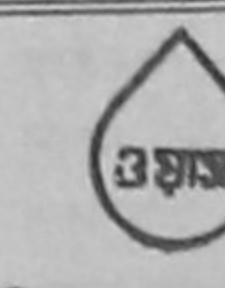
G-572

Md Mosharraf Hossain Farouk

Executive Engineer

Drainage Division-2

Dhaka WASA



## Dhaka WASA Tender Notice

(পানির অপচয় রোধে কাজ শেষে কলের মুখ বন্ধ করুন)

Tenders are invited from class I, II and III civil contractors for the work of earth filling in the site of just installed deep tubewells at Tolarbagh area in Mirpur. The amount of estimated of money for the work is = 4,57,062/-. Tenders will be received till 12:00 Noon on 13-4-2000 and will be opened the same day at 2:30 PM before the tenderers or their representatives (if anyone remains present).

Schedule of tender will be available in the office of the Chief Accounts Officer of Dhaka WASA, WASA Bhaban, 98, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue and all MODS Zone offices of Dhaka WASA. Other details will be available in the office of the undersigned.

Address:

"WASA Bhaban"

98, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka

WASA-PI-97/2000

DFP-6945-23/3

G-573

AKM Zafarullah

Project Director

Interim Project-4

Dhaka WASA