

## Fiji army reopens talks with rebels

SUVA, June 14: Fiji's military said today talks with coup leader George Speight to end the country's political crisis were "back on track" despite his demand for a far-reaching amnesty for him and his supporters, reports AFP.

Military spokesman Colonel Filipo Tarakinikini told the media he could not divulge any details and would not confirm who was involved in discussions. However martial law commander Commodore Voreqe Bainimarama spent part of Wednesday at the home of the former vice president, Ratu Josefa Iloilo, and Speight sent a new list of demands to that meeting.

Speight refused to attend as the talks were held near a barricade where soldiers Monday opened fired on his car, without hitting anyone.

Tarakinikini said the talks were "all encompassing", focusing on all the issues connected to this crisis.

He said the army would still not accept the "George Speight team" on an interim government. Speight and a small group of armed men took over parliament on May 19, seizing Fiji's first ethnic Indian prime minister, Mahendra Chaudhry, his cabinet and government in the name of ethnic Fijians who represent Indian business success and political power.

Tarakinikini confirmed he saw the hostages Sunday. Asked if they were okay he replied: "What is okay, being held under the point of a gun for 27 days? How okay is that?"

Speight and six men were originally offered an amnesty covering the events of May 19 only. But on Wednesday the coup leader demanded an extension in a nine point submission sent to Iloilo's talks.

Point three read: "President by Decree offer Amnesty for ALL from 19/5 to the day of release of hostages." The last three words were underlined.

## Security lapse Los Alamos lab suspends six

WASHINGTON, June 14: The Los Alamos National Laboratory has suspended six employees as the FBI intensified its investigation into the disappearance from the lab of two computer hard drives loaded with nuclear secrets, reports Reuters.

Energy Secretary Bill Richardson said the lab was under fire from Republicans for insufficient security at the laboratory, launched a bipartisan probe on Tuesday into the loss.

He said espionage was not suspected, but vowed to take disciplinary action against those responsible.

Republicans said Richardson was ultimately to blame.

An Energy Department official said six managers at the lab were put on paid leave for failing to immediately report the disappearance of the hard drives when it was discovered May 7.

The managers said they were unable to get back into the vault where the hard drives were kept until May 24, when the facility reopened after wild fires that caused over \$300 million in damage.

Coming up empty-handed after an intensive search, the managers notified the laboratory's security chief on May 31, and a day later word was passed to Washington.

Richardson said he was outraged by the incident.

"I will not tolerate security lapses and I'm outraged at what happened," he said in a written statement, announcing his appointment of former Tennessee Republican Sen. Howard Baker and ex-Indiana Democratic Representative Lee Hamilton to perform a "thorough investigation and assessment" of the loss.

## Russian media magnate arrested

MOSCOW, June 14: Russian media magnate Vladimir Gusinsky, whose outlets have been sharply critical of President Vladimir Putin, has been arrested, the federal prosecutor's office said Tuesday.

Gusinsky, 47, was arrested "in connection with a criminal case which the prosecutor's office has opened," the Interfax news agency quoted the prosecutor's office as saying.

The private NTV television station owned by Gusinsky interrupted its evening newscast to announce the arrest.

Gusinsky had been invited to the prosecutor general's office at 5:00 p.m. (1900 BST) for questioning over a minor weapons charge, the NTV presenter said.

"Two hours later, a judge came to the people who were waiting for Gusinsky to say he had been arrested," the presenter said. It was not immediately clear where he was being detained.

According to the prosecutor's office, Gusinsky was detained on suspicion of "massive theft... abuse of confidence, abuse of office and swindling," notably concerning 10 million dollars' (euros) worth of state property, Interfax quoted prosecutors as saying.

The surprise arrest follows a May 11 raid by hundreds of armed tax police on the headquarters of his media-MOST holding, which includes the national NTV television station, radio Echo Moscow and the Sevodnya daily newspaper.

The raid was denounced at home and abroad as a direct attack on media freedoms.

# Summit raises hopes of peace for Korea

SEOUL, June 14: North and South Korea discussed groundbreaking measures to ease hostility on Wednesday as a historic visit to Pyongyang by the South's president raised international hopes for permanent peace on the Korean peninsula, reports AFP.

The two sides discussed opening representative offices in each other's capital as President Kim Dae-Jung started a second day of talks with top North Korean officials, South Korean officials said.

The president has already proposed setting up a hotline between himself and the North's leader Kim Jong-Il.

But opening representative offices would symbolise the first official recognition of each other.

Kim Jong-Il did not attend the morning meeting. The North's de facto head of state, Kim Yong-Nam, chairman of the Standing Committee of the Supreme People's Assembly, led the North's delegation. The talks went ahead as the

lavish state welcome given to Kim Dae-Jung on Tuesday dominated international headlines and encouraged hopes that the two sides may be on the path to reconciliation.

The summit is the first between Korean leaders since the division of Korea into the communist North and pro-capitalist South in 1945. Their 1950-53 war has never been formally ended.

At their first meeting on Tuesday, the two Kims pledged to make efforts to ensure the historic summit is a success.

Every South Korean newspaper on Wednesday had pictures of a smiling Kim Jong-Il greeting Kim Dae-Jung at Pyongyang airport.

All highlighted the importance of the occasion for hopes of bringing together millions of Koreans who have had no news of relatives since the division.

Many South Koreans cried around special screens set up in shopping malls to show the summit. Students put South

and North Korean flags at universities across the country, ignoring threats of prosecution for spreading North Korean propaganda.

The new warmth between North and South Korea, who have been on a continual conflict footing since the war, also reached the capitals of the major powers.

The United States expressed hope that the Kims could now reduce regional tensions.

"I think the fact that the two leaders are meeting is extraordinarily important as far as direct contact and discussions between North and South Korea," White House spokesman Joe Lockhart said in Washington. "We were heartened to see the warm welcome that President Kim received."

State Department spokesman Philip Reeker said: "We are hopeful that this summit will represent the beginning of a process which will lead to a fundamental reduction of tensions."

Washington has a keen interest in the talks as it has 37,000 troops bolstering South Korea's security and is concerned over the threat from Pyongyang's missile program.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan saluted the "vision and wisdom" of the North and South Korean leaders and also hoped their summit would be a turning point towards peace.

"The secretary general wholeheartedly welcomes the historic inter-Korean summit which began today in Pyongyang," Annan's spokesman said Tuesday.

China, North Korea's last major communist ally, hailed the summit as a "major event" on Tuesday.

"We hope this meeting will have positive results and lead to the improvement of relations between the two sides of the Korean Peninsula and safeguard peace and stability there," said a foreign ministry spokesman in Beijing.



A North Korean boy (L) shows South Korean President Kim Dae-Jung (2nd R), Kim Dae-Jung's wife Lee Hee-Ho (3rd from R) and North Korean Kim Yong-Nam (R), Chairman of the Standing Committee of the Supreme People's Assembly, his calligraphy reading "Reunited Motherland" yesterday. Kim Dae-Jung is now in North Korea's capital city of Pyongyang for a 3-day visit for an historic summit meeting between the divided nations. — AFP photo

## US pins hopes on Bashar

DAMASCUS, June 14: With the burial of the obdurate Hafez al-Assad, the United States sees in his son Bashar someone able to revive the peace process with Israel and assure Syria's stability, despite uncertainty over his plans and the threat of internal power struggles, reports AFP.

Without waiting for the end of the ongoing process to hoist Bashar on to his father's recently-vacated throne, Washington is seeking to establish the best possible contacts with him, even though they may backfire.

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, who represented the United States at Tuesday's state funeral, said afterwards she was encouraged by her first meeting with Bashar.

"I am very encouraged by his desire to follow in his father's footsteps," she said. "His father had taken a strategic decision for peace and doctor Bashar said he would continue on the same road."

"Bashar, it seems, is very poised and somebody who is ready to pursue his duties," she

said, adding that she agreed with the 34-year-old ophthalmologist that "at an appropriate time we would have the opportunity to continue discussions about the peace process."

Reverend Jesse Jackson, President Bill Clinton's personal representative, said he found Bashar "warm and affable", despite the solemnity of the occasion, and declared himself "cautiously optimistic" on the chances of resuming peace talks with Israel.

Those talks were broken off in January when Damascus insisted that Israel withdraw entirely from the occupied Golan Heights, restoring the status quo before it seized them in June 1967.

This would put Syria on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, Israel's largest source of fresh water.

Republican Senator Arlen Specter, who also assisted at the funeral, commented, "Bashar has a different background. He was educated in England, his father came up

the hard way (and) had to fight for everything."

"He was very anxious to have the peace process move forward; I think he is the kind of person who would meet with (Israeli Prime Minister Ehud) Barak," Specter added.

Although Washington has designated Syria a supporter of terrorism and criticised Hafez al-Assad's 30-year rule for its dictatorial methods and human rights abuses, it seems prepared to sweep this under the carpet for the time being.

The accent instead is on the transition of power from Hafez to his designated heir, who since his father's death Saturday has already been proposed as the ruling Baath party's presidential candidate and made head of the armed forces.

His candidacy is expected to be endorsed at a party congress this weekend and rubber-stamped next week by the parliament, which has changed the constitution to lower the age limit for a presidential candi-

date to 34.

Asked about the rapid elevation of a man who held no official position a week ago, Albright merely said, "They have a process here that seems to be operating in a peaceful and orderly way."

All the compliments seem aimed also at improving Washington's position with regard to Syria's future ruler, who made a high-profile visit to Paris last year but whose only US contacts were with the embassy in Damascus.

But the Clinton administration, which only has a few months left, is forced to admit that it will have to wait for advances in Syria's foreign policy until Bashar really establishes himself in the extremely rough world of the country's domestic politics.

"Bashar is doing a pretty good job in calling the shots. How quickly he seems to have put himself in a position where the institutions are for him," a senior State Department official said.



Palestinian Leader Yasser Arafat (L) speaks to Bashar Assad, son of late Syrian President Hafez al-Assad, at the presidential palace in Damascus on Tuesday. Arafat was in Damascus for the funeral of the late president. — AFP photo

## Suharto's family willing to give back money: Wahid

JAKARTA, June 14: Talks were under way between the Indonesian government and the family of former president Suharto over a possible handover of any ill-gotten wealth, a top prosecutor said today, reports AFP.

But Attorney General Marzuki Darusman insisted that legal proceedings against Suharto would continue despite the talks.

"It has nothing to do with the legal process," said Darusman who has pledged to bring Suharto to trial on corruption and abuse of power charges before August 10.

He said several meetings on the handover had been held in the past weeks between Mines

and Energy Minister Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and Suharto's businesswoman daughter Siti Hardiyanti Rukmana.

The aim of the talks is to look into the possibility (of Suharto) returning what the government and others have suspected of having been channelled overseas... or those that can be found in Indonesia," the attorney general said.

President Abdurrahman Wahid has said that Suharto should face trial, but if he were found guilty, he would be pardoned considering his past service to the state.

Wahid said in the United States on Tuesday that Suharto's family was willing to sur-

render their wealth to the state -- but in return they demanded that the former leader be spared from prosecution.

The president, quoted by the state Antara news agency, said they had made the demand because both the Suharto family and his lawyers feared that Suharto might end up behind bars.

"If it was up to me, I would issue such a guarantee as soon as I have come home from my overseas trip," Wahid said, repeating his pledge to pardon Suharto.

Suharto, 79, stepped down as president amid massive student protests and a crippling economic crisis in May 1998.

## Ethiopia claims recapture of Eritrean town

ADDIS ABABA, June 14: Ethiopia announced today that its forces had recaptured the western Eritrean town of Tesseney, which lies close to the Sudanese border, as the result of a counter-offensive launched in response to Eritrean attacks, reports AFP.

"As a result of its highly successful counter-offensive on the western front, the heroic Ethiopian defence forces have recaptured Tesseney for the second time," said a statement issued by the office of the Ethiopian government spokesperson.

Tesseney had already been in Ethiopian hands during the latest round of the two-year-old war before reverting to Eritrean control late last month.

## Solomon Islands PM resigns

HONIARA, June 14: The prime minister of the Solomon Islands has resigned ahead of a no-confidence vote forced by rebel forces who seized the capital last week, local media reported a government minister as saying today, reports AP.

Minister of State Alfred Sasako said Prime Minister Bartholomew Ulufa'alu resigned late Tuesday, but would remain in charge of the country in a caretaker capacity until parliament meets Thursday to elect a new leader, according to local radio and Australian news reports.

On Tuesday, Ulufa'alu told The Associated Press that the only safe option was for him to resign despite fears that quit-

ting would ignite a new round of rebel fighting that could splinter this South Pacific nation.

Tensions in the Solomons have been growing for 18 months since indigenous Guadalcanal residents, called Isatabu, began forcing out migrants from the nearby island of Malaita. About 20,000 Malaitians have been expelled.

Fighting escalated last week when a group of Malaitians raided an army, detained Ulufa'alu at gunpoint, and seized control of the capital Honiara.

The Malaitians drove the outgunned Isatabu out of the capital and into the surrounding hills. Both sides have honoured an unwritten truce since late last week.

## Exercise reduces risk of stroke in women

CHICAGO, June 14: Women who get 30 minutes of vigorous exercise every day, even just a brisk walk, can reduce their chances of having a stroke by as much as 30 per cent, a study says, reports AP.

The findings, published in Wednesday's Journal of the American Medical Association, were based on six years of data from 72,488 women, ages 40 to 65, who participated in the Harvard-based Nurses Health Study.

The researchers said it is the first large-scale study to link exercise to reducing the risk of stroke, which is the third-leading cause of death in men and women.

Previous studies, such as the surgeon general's 1996 report on exercise, concluded it was unclear whether physical activity protects against stroke.

The new study found that doing 30 minutes of moderate

to vigorous exercise almost every day cut the risk of having an ischemic stroke, the most common type, by 30 per cent. The risk of other types of stroke was cut by 20 per cent.

The benefits were the same whether the women took a brisk walk or did more intense exercise such as jogging or aerobics. "The major public health problem in this nation is sedentary lifestyle," said Dr JoAnn Manson, one of the study's authors and chief of preventive medicine at Brigham and Women's Hospital. "Walking is the most popular and common form of exercise in middle-age and older women, so it's great news from a public health perspective."

The benefits from exercise are seen rather quickly, so a woman who doesn't start exercising until later in life still has a chance to cut her risk of stroke, Manson said.

## World military spending on the rise

STOCKHOLM, June 14: World military expenditure increased 2.1 per cent in 1999 after a long period of decline that largely coincided with the post-Cold War period, SIPRI said in its annual report published today, reports AFP.

Spending totalled some 780 billion dollars, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute said.

The 1999 rise is largely the result of increases in major spender countries, including the US, which accounted for 36 per cent of the rise, followed by Japan and France which represented seven per cent each.

Here is a table of the top 15 spenders in 1999, in billions of dollars:

Country	1999	1998	Share of world military spending
1. US	259.9	256.1	36 per cent
2. Japan	51.2	51.3	7
3. France	46.8	45.5	7
4. Germany	39.5	39.0	5
5. Britain	31.8	32.6	4
6. Italy	23.5	23.1	3
7. Russia	22.4	18.1	3
8. China	18.4	16.9	2
9. South Korea	15.0	15.2	2
10. Saudi Arabia	14.5	16.4	2
11. Brazil	14.3	10.9	2
12. India	10.2	9.3	1
13. Turkey	9.6	8.1	1
14. Taiwan	9.3	10.6	1
15. Spain	8.7	8.4	1

## Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Executive Engineer (R&H)  
Workshop Division, Santahar, Bogra

### R&H Tender Invitation Notice

- Tender notice no. : 44 (forty-four) 1999-2000.
- Name of work : Supply of spare parts for China Road Roller (4-Cylinder) (Model-3 Y8/12) of different Road Divisions under (R&H) Workshop Division, Santahar, Bogra during 1999-2000 financial year.
- Estimated cost : As per schedule.
- Earnest money : 2% (two per cent) of the estimated cost to be deposited through any one of Bank Draft/Pay Order/CD etc. encashable at Sonali Bank, Adamdighi Branch in favour of "Executive Engineer (R&H), Workshop Division, Santahar, Bogra."
- Time limit for completion of work : 25 (twenty-five) days from the date of issuing work order.
- Eligibility of tenderer : (R&H) Directorate's 'A' to 'C' general class & Workshop Circle, Bogra's 'D' general class & Workshop Division, Santahar, Bogra's 'E' general class contractors.
- Offices where tender to be sold from : Executive Engineer (R&H), Workshop Division, Santahar/Rajshahi/Ferry Division, Bogra/Sub-Divisional Engineer (R&H), Workshop Sub-Division, Santahar, Bogra.
- Offices where tender to be received at : Superintending Engineer (R&H), Workshop Circle, Bogra/Executive Engineer (R&H), Workshop Division, Santahar, Bogra/Rajshahi/Ferry Division, Bogra.
- Last date of selling tender : 25-06-2000 (during office hours).
- Date & time of receiving tender : 26-06-2000 up to 12-00 Noon.
- Date & time of opening tender box : 26-06-2000 at 12-30 PM.
- Date & time of opening all tenders after collecting in sealed condition by the undersigned : 28-06-2000 at 11-00 AM.
- Date & time of holding lottery (if required) : 28-06-2000 at 1-00 PM.

Mir Aminul Islam  
Executive Engineer (R&H)  
Workshop Division, Santahar, Bogra.

DDP-14624/8/6  
G-1167