

International

Fiji military seals off parliament, issues deadline to coup leaders

SUVA, July 5: Fiji's martial law authorities declared a military exclusion zone around parliament today, isolating rebel leader George Speight as they prepared for a showdown to end the political crisis.

Coup supporters were barred, Tarakinikini said. The coup plotters have warned they are prepared to kill their hostages if the military resorts to force to end the crisis.

There had been no further reports of insubordination in army ranks, he added, despite Speight's prediction of massive defections by troops loyal to him.

Although security with additional road blocks and military personnel had been stepped up closer to the entry into the city from parliament, there was no evidence of soldiers within a kilometre of parliament.

Bombs found at attorney general's office in Jakarta

JAKARTA, July 5: Police today found two bombs in a cardboard box in a building of the Indonesian attorney general's office complex, a day after a homemade bomb exploded there, police said, reports AFP.

Lanka court blast leaves 8 injured

COLOMBO, July 5: At least eight people were injured in Sri Lanka, three of them seriously, when a bomb exploded in a magistrate's court in a small town just outside the capital Colombo today, police said, reports Reuters.

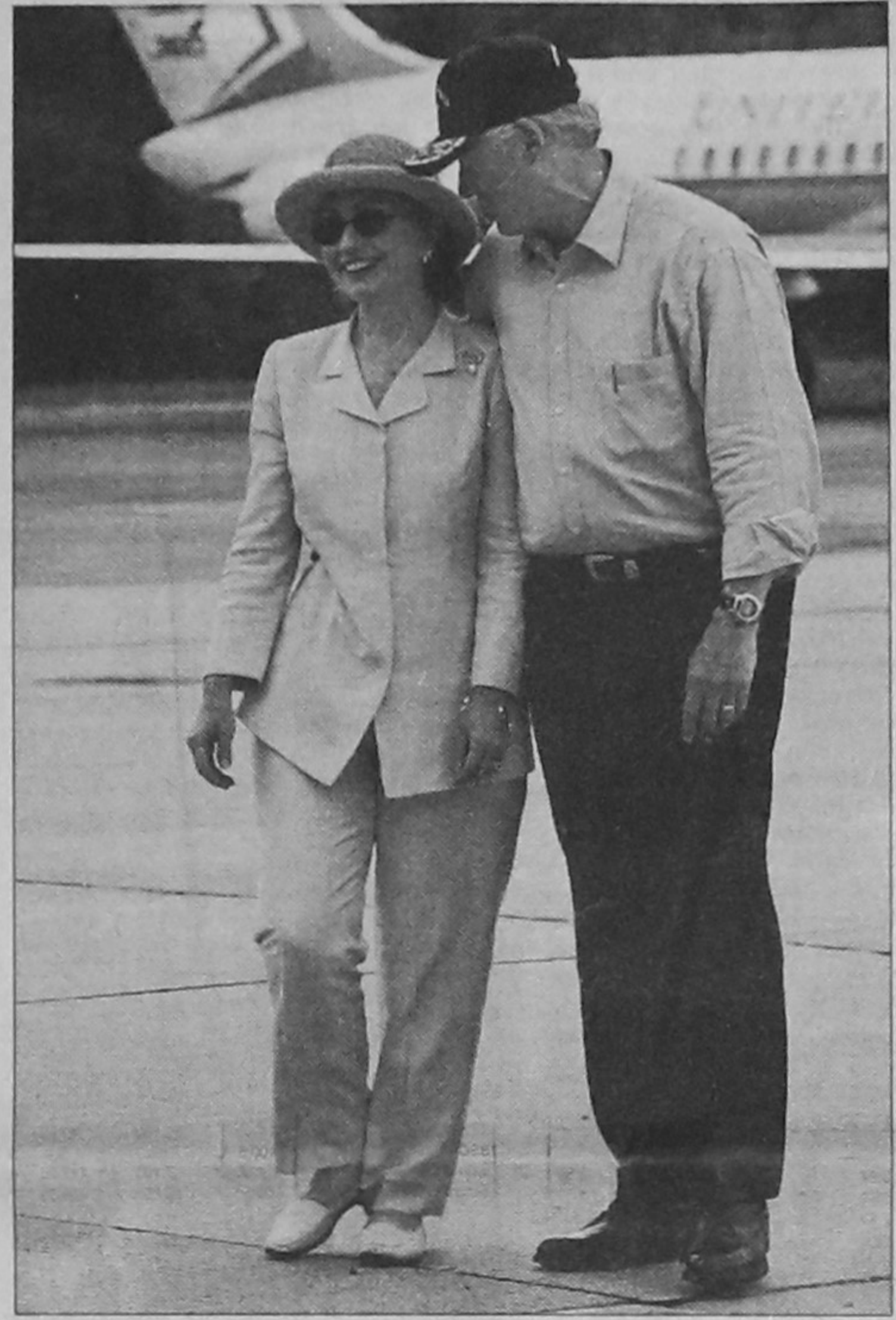
39 killed as army launches fresh offensive against LTTE rebels

COLOMBO, July 5: Thirty five LTTE rebels and four security forces personnel were killed in the biggest offensive operation launched by the Sri Lankan Army in Jaffna Peninsula after the LTTE had captured some strategic areas this May, reports PTI.

US marks Independence Day

NEW YORK, July 5: The United States marked its 224th birthday Tuesday with picnics and parades in towns and cities large and small around the country, with its biggest city hosting the largest peacetime maritime gathering in US history, reports AFP.

Back in New York, some 150 ships, boats and frigates from 50 countries participated in the ground, modern warships from all over the world -- and the Statue of Liberty.



US President Bill Clinton and First Lady Hillary Clinton walk towards greeters at the Westchester County airport before returning to Washington, DC, after participating in ceremonies of the International Naval Review 2000 and OpSail 2000 Parade of Tall Ships in the New York Harbour on Tuesday.

No return to wide autonomy for Kashmir: Vajpayee

MADRAS, India, July 5: Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee today defended his government's refusal to consider far-reaching autonomy for the troubled northern state of Kashmir, reports AFP.

When Farooq Abdullah called on me, I explained to him the situation, he told reporters in the southern city of Madras.

However, Vajpayee did not rule out an eventual discussion of the Kashmir resolution in parliament.

US asks Pakistan to create condition for talks

ISLAMABAD, July 5: The United States yesterday asked Pakistan to create peaceful conditions for resumption of Indo-Pak dialogue and asserted that there could be no military solution to the Kashmir issue, reports PTI.

He said the Kargil conflict had done enormous damage to the Lahore peace process and imposed new demands on the process of dialogue.

Nepalese organisation blasts India

KATHMANDU, July 5: The biggest Muslim organisation in Nepal on Tuesday denounced India as a bullying 'big brother' which wrongly portrayed its Himalayan neighbour as a hotbed of anti-Indian activity, reports AFP.

Russia, China urge US not to breach ABM treaty

DUSHANBE, July 5: Russia and China urged the United States today not to breach the landmark ABM arms control accord as they met on the sidelines of a regional summit here, a senior Kremlin official said, reports AFP.

Putin is expected to push for a declaration in support of the need to retain the treaty in its present form when he and Jiang meet leaders of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

North Korea, the first by a Russian president to the isolated Stalinist state.

Barak meets Blair: Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak held talks on the Middle East peace process Wednesday with his British counterpart Tony Blair.

They met for a one-hour working breakfast in Downing Street which was also attended by Foreign Secretary Robin Cook.

Russia launches proton rocket

Russia successfully launched a Proton-K booster rocket carrying a Kosmos military satellite for the Russian ministry of defence, the ITAR-TASS news agency reported Wednesday, AFP reports from Moscow.

Sierra Leone army loses control of key town

FREETOWN, July 5: Sierra Leone's British-trained army has lost control of a key town on the road linking the capital Freetown to the interior, army sources said on Tuesday, reports Reuters.

It was not immediately clear whether Masiaka had fallen to a breakaway group in the shaky pro-government alliance or to the rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF), which took up arms again in May in violation of a 1999 peace deal.

Army mutiny in Ivory Coast

ABIDJAN, July 5: Ivory Coast was shaken by a military mutiny and spent its first night under curfew since the army seized power last December, shattering the country's reputation as one Africa's most stable nations, reports Reuters.

Ban on Orange Order march Police, Protestants clash in N Ireland



BELFAST, July 5: Gunfire erupted between Northern Ireland police and Protestant hardliners overnight in the latest outbreak of violence triggered by a ban on Protestants marching through a Roman Catholic enclave, reports Reuters.

At Drumcree, security forces used a water cannon when Protestant hardliners attacked them with petrol bombs and stones, witnesses said.

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7 dead, 120,000 flee homes as typhoon hits Philippines

MANILA, July 5: Seven people have died and more than 120,000 others have fled their homes after typhoon Kirogi and a lesser storm triggered floods in Manila and the northern Philippines, officials and reports said today, reports AFP.

That fighting highlighted the divided nature of the unlikely government alliance.

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Riot Police hide behind a Land Rover as masked loyalists throw missiles and set a road block on fire in support of the Drumcree Orangemen on Tuesday on North Queen Street in Belfast.

Police returned fire. There were no reports of any injuries, said a police spokesman.

President Joseph Estrada sent home all government workers except for emergency staff, and banks suspended foreign exchange trading on their electronic exchange in the afternoon. Schools have been

closed since the storms approached on Tuesday.