

Divers open hatch into sub, water found

No nuclear leaks found

MOSCOW, Aug 21 : Norwegian divers today prised open the inner door of an escape hatch into the stricken Kursk submarine and found the inside flooded, a top Russian navy spokesman said cited by Interfax news agency, reports AFP.

Vladimir Navrotsky, spokesman for the Northern Fleet, said that the divers had managed to open partly the inner door of the rear escape-hatch at around 1:00 p.m. (15:00 BST).

The ninth compartment of the submarine -- behind the escape hatch -- was flooded with water, he added.

The divers were trying to open the inner door completely and if they were successful, would deploy a remote-controlled camera to film the submarine, Navrotsky said.

In Oslo, however, the Norwegian news agency NTB reported quoting a naval spokesman that the rescue operation had been called off Monday after divers opened the inner hatch and found the inside of the vessel flooded.

Earlier Monday they had succeeded in opening the outer door of the rear escape hatch for the first time, but found no sign of the 118 crew.

"Once the operation has been carried out, we will proceed to deploy a remote-controlled camera to film the ninth compartment. After that we will decide

whether to enter the compartment or not," the deputy prime minister said.

The Russian navy warned that the vessel was probably flooded, further extinguishing any faint hopes that any of the crew were alive.

Water poured into the chamber as the divers opened the outer door of the hatch, the Northern Fleet's deputy spokesman Igor Babenko told AFP. However, the escape hatch itself appeared to have remained airtight.

"When they opened the hatch, water surged into it, which leaves us to suppose that the hatch had not been flooded until then," he said.

But the fleet's commander Admiral Vyacheslav Popov said that he believed the ninth compartment -- behind the escape hatch -- was flooded.

"My personal view is that the compartment is flooded with water," the admiral told RTR public television.

The Kursk was sent plunging to a depth of 108 metres (355 feet) on August 12 by two unexplained explosions.

Popov said that some of the 12-man diving team -- made up of four Norwegians and eight Britons -- had accepted to go inside the Kursk to search for any survivors.

Klebanov said that it had been decided not to use the British

mini-submarine LR5 in the operation because like Russian underwater rescue craft it could not dock properly with the escape hatch.

Earlier, Vladimir Navrotsky, spokesman for the Northern Fleet, said divers had found that the submarine's ninth compartment -- exactly where the rear escape hatch was located -- was among those flooded.

The team of Norwegian divers had spent a day on Sunday carrying out video reconnaissance of the damage to the Kursk caused by a still-unexplained accident on August 12.

Separately, ITAR-TASS cited undisclosed but "well-informed" British sources as saying the investigation had shown the huge Russian submarine was almost completely flooded.

But British Commodore Tim Chittenden said it was still possible that some Russian sailors could be rescued alive.

"I don't want to build up expectations -- it's a long chance but it's not impossible," said Chittenden, co-ordinating technical support to the British rescue bid from the control centre in Bath, western England.

"We would not be there if there was no chance. If there is a complete chance of the submarine which is not flooded it is not impossible that people have survived in it," he added.

The Kursk was crippled by two mysterious explosions, and a possible collision with an unidentified object, sent the submarine plunging to the sea bed.

The Kursk accident sparked an explosion that registered 3.5 on the Richter scale in Oslo, which investigators believe killed dozens of the crew on the spot and casualties quickly mounted.

Russian President Vladimir Putin, under intense criticism for remaining at his holiday home until Saturday as the drama unfolded, said in his most emotional address about the disaster to date that the whole nation was grieving for the Kursk crew.

"All of us, with pain in our hearts and, I am not exaggerating, tears in our eyes, are watching the events in the Barents Sea," Putin told a Kremlin assembly of Orthodox Church clergy.

Meanwhile, Norwegian divers working on the escape hatch of the stricken Russian Kursk submarine on Monday detected no evidence of any radioactive leaks, a reporter for Russian RTR television on the scene said.

Russian military officials have stressed since the submarine sank nine days ago that there was no risk of leaks from the nuclear reactor which powers the craft.

The divers were trying to open a hatch to allow access to the crippled submarine, which sank on August 12 with 118 sailors on board.

Rogue spy Shaylor arrested in Britain

DOVER, England, Aug 21 : Renegade former spy David Shaylor, who fled to France three years ago, returned to Britain today and was immediately arrested by police, his girlfriend Annie Machon told Sky News, reports AFP.

He was met by a police officer on his arrival from France at the Channel port of Dover and was to be taken to London where he is expected to be charged with releasing official secrets.

Shaylor, a former officer with M15, the domestic intelligence service, decided to return to Britain and attempt to clear his name by challenging the government in court.

Rocket attack on army camp in Kashmir: 3 dead

SRINAGAR, India, Aug 21 : Suspected Muslim militants mounted a rocket attack on a military camp in Indian-administered Kashmir today, killing three soldiers and injuring 15 others, police officials said, reports AFP.

The attack occurred just after midnight (12:30 BST) at an army transit camp near the town of Banihal on the main national highway 100 km south of Srinagar.

"The militants fired a series of rockets at the camp, killing three people," a police spokesman said.

"Troops have now cordoned off the area and begun a comprehensive search," he added.

Kashmiri Hindu, Muslims oppose resettlement plans

SRINAGAR, India, Aug 21 : Kashmiri Hindus and Muslim separatists were in rare agreement today, as both opposed plans to set up safety zones to resettle 58,000 Hindus displaced by Kashmir's long-running armed insurgency, reports AFP.

The 26-billion-rupee (\$90-million-dollar) plan, approved on Friday by the state government of Indian Kashmir, envisages the creation of three security zones in the Kashmir Valley where families -- most of them high-caste Hindus, or "pundits" -- could be resettled.

The pundits who fled the valley in the early 1990s dismissed the plan as impractical, while Muslim militant groups warned that they would use violence to scupper the idea.

"The proposal is completely impractical and ill-designed," said Ramesh Marwati, spokesman for the Delhi-based Panun Kashmiri pundit group.

The plan "does not address the political aspirations of the Kashmiri pundits," Marwati said.

Nearly 200,000 pundits fled the valley following the outbreak of the armed Muslim insurgency against Indian rule in Kashmir in 1989.

"There is no question of our return," said Kashmir State government employee Ashok Kumar, whose pundit family now lives in the southern, Hindu-dominated Kashmiri region of Jammu.

"We have already sold our property in the valley, and I am only in (state capital) Srinagar because of my job in the govern-

ment secretariat," Kumar said.

One of Kashmir's largest militant groups, the Hizbul Mujahideen, said it recognised the right of Kashmiri Hindus to return to the valley, but rejected the government proposal on the grounds that it would create communal zones.

"We will not allow the division of Kashmir into Muslim Kashmir and Hindu Kashmir," the group said in a statement, which also threatened force to disrupt any attempt to implement the plan.

The Hizbul leadership, which recently called off a unilateral ceasefire in the region, called on the Kashmiri people "not to support the conspiracy hatched by the puppet government as communal harmony cannot be produced by creating transit camps or zones."

Philippines, Libya in contact to salvage hostage talks

MANILA, Aug 21 : The Philippines and Libya today opened confidential lines of communication as they strove to appease Muslim extremists refusing to hand over 28 hostages in a row over ransom payments and fears of a military attack, officials said, reports AFP.

The results of a meeting between chief negotiator Roberto Avenajado and President Joseph Estrada were relayed to Tripoli and a reply was expected late Monday, an Avenajado aide said.

Libya has been a prime mediator in the latest burst of negotiations. The talks on Saturday brought the Muslim extremist Abu Sayyaf to the brink of releasing their hostages from their southern Philippine jungle hide-out before they reneged at the last minute.

Avenajado and Estrada kept away from the media glare and met privately in Manila Sunday night after publicly saying they would hold talks on Monday, the aide said.

Libya's pointman in the negotiations with the Abu Sayyaf, Rajab Azzarouq, was briefed by Avenajado on Monday morning. He passed details to Libya and would inform Avenajado late Monday on the reply, he said.

Efforts to end the four-month long crisis were rocked Saturday when the Abu Sayyaf pulled out of a deal brokered by Libya to free the 12 Westerners among the hostages.

The remaining 16 hostages are Filipinos.

Khatami slams closure of newspapers

TEHRAN, Aug 21 : Iranian President Mohammad Khatami today condemned the mass closure of newspapers by the conservative courts, most of them backing his reforms, in an interview on state television, reports AFP.

"I don't agree with the methods used ... or the wholesale closure of the papers," Khatami said in his strongest statement to date on the press crackdown, which since April has muzzled every major pro-reform paper.

He said court methods had been "inadequate and unacceptable" and expressed hope that the papers would be allowed to reopen in the future.

"Their methods must be adequate and acceptable to the people and especially those in the journalistic profession," the reformist president said.

Every major pro-Khatami newspaper has been shuttered since reformists won control of parliament in February's elections, and several Khatami allies and high-profile journalists have been jailed.

The interview was broadcast as two women magazine editors appeared before the press court on charges including propaganda against the regime, inciting unrest, insulting state officials and publishing indecent material.

It was screened as part of next week's annual "Government Week" in which the various ministries present a public report on the state of the nation's affairs.



Chief Ministers of seven Indian states pose for photographers prior to their meeting in New Delhi yesterday. The Ministers met to highlight the injustice meted out to the progressive and performing states by the eleventh Finance Commission report. The Chief Ministers (L to R) : Chief Minister of Assam P.K. Mohanta, Deputy Chief Minister of Maharashtra Bhubhal, Chief Minister of Harayana Om Prakash Chautala, Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh Chandrababu Naidu, Chief Minister of Kerala E.K. Nayanar and Chief Minister of Punjab Prakash Singh Badal.

Japanese PM 'positive' on Pakistani test moratorium

ISLAMABAD, Aug 21 : Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori gave a "positive response" to Pakistan's moratorium on nuclear tests but stopped short of relaxing economic sanctions during a meeting today with military ruler General Pervez Musharraf, a Japanese official said, reports AFP.

Mori personally delivered last month's resolution from the Group of Eight countries urging India and Pakistan to resume dialogue over disputed Kashmir and sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), the official said.

Japan suspended new non-humanitarian aid and grants to both countries following their tit-for-tat nuclear tests in 1998, which sharply raised the stakes in their 53-year-old dispute over Kashmir.

Islamabad was hoping it could win a resumption of at least some of the aid by convincing the Japanese leader that Pakistan was forced to reply to India's tests to maintain the regional balance of

power.

But the Japanese foreign ministry official, speaking after the meeting, said Mori had only offered to consider providing extra funds for a road tunnel project which was already underway before the 1998 tests.

"The basic economic measures still hold because they are a reaction to the tests and to the fact that the CTBT has not been signed," said the official, who did not want to be named.

"But as the chief executive (Musharraf) said Pakistan would not be the first to break the moratorium (on new tests), we appreciate that and have decided to see what we can do for this tunnel project."

"From our point of view it is a sort of positive response to the moratorium."

Musharraf told Mori that Pakistan would not sign the CTBT until there was a "national consensus" in its favour but repeated his pledge not to resume testing unless India did so first, the official said.

Chances of a resumption of dialogue between India and Pakistan in the short term are slim, with New Delhi blaming Islamabad for providing military support to a bloody Muslim separatist campaign in Kashmir.

The tentative dialogue between the Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and then-Pakistani prime minister Nawaz Sharif which started in Lahore early last year broke down amid a 10-week conflict in the Kargil area of Kashmir.

The G8 summit in Japan in July called for a return to dialogue in the spirit of Lahore.

But a spate of violence in Indian-controlled Kashmir since the collapse of a rebel ceasefire on August 8 has brought relations between the South Asian rivals to their lowest point since Kargil.

Musharraf, who toppled Sharif in a coup in October, has made repeated calls for talks and denies providing any more than moral and diplomatic backing to the militants in the Indian zone of the divided Himalayan territory.

He told Mori that Indian allegations of Pakistan's involvement in the recent killings of Hindu villagers in Kashmir were baseless, the Japanese official said.

Other issues raised in the talks were technology development, international terrorism, the situation in war-torn Afghanistan, and the possibility of starting more regular low-level contacts.

Mori met President Mohammad Rafiq Tarar earlier Monday and is scheduled to see some of the sights of Islamabad before leaving for India in the afternoon. He is due to meet Vajpayee on Wednesday.

Japan was the biggest aid donor to both India and Pakistan in 1997, providing 491.8 million dollars and 92.2 million dollars respectively.

Mori's tour of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, which he visited Saturday, is the first by a Japanese prime minister since 1990.

He will be the first Japanese prime minister to visit Nepal when he arrives there on August 25.

Rivers in Bihar rising

PATNA, India, Aug 21: Rivers in the flood-hit eastern Indian state of Bihar are rising again, a government statement said, triggering fears more misery in the nation's second most populous state, reports Reuters.

About 3.5 million people are already marooned or homeless after floods earlier this month in Bihar, which has several major rivers flowing through it.

Heavy rains in the state and the rivers' Himalayan catchments are pushing up water levels again and are likely to put at risk relief efforts already underway for the earlier victims, many of whom are living by the roadside.

A Central Water Commission statement said the embankments of Kosi, Bagmati, Burhi Gandak and Kereh rivers were under pressure from the surging water, while the levels of the Ganges, Son, Kosi and Bagmati rivers were rising at several points.

New method unveiled to fight AIDS virus

WASHINGTON, Aug 21 : US scientists unveiled Sunday a new method of fighting viral replication in AIDS, which they believe could help combat the deadly disease, reports AFP.

The new approach involves inserting small molecules between protein segments, preventing them from forming an enzyme used by the AIDS virus to reproduce and spread, chemist Jean Chmielewski of Purdue University told the American Chemical Society here. The method blocks the interaction of two identical proteins that make up the HIV protease, one of three essential enzymes used by the AIDS virus to replicate.

"At this stage, we've been able to synthesise some fairly potent small-molecule inhibitors of HIV protease, which, in fact, block the ability of this enzyme to come together," said Chmielewski.

"That, in turn, blocks its biological activity."

The method is being tested at the National Institutes of Health on HIV-infected cells.

Other treatments using a similar approach -- inhibiting HIV protease -- have been approved, but the virus can mutate easily and become resistant to those drugs, according to Chmielewski.

She said her new approach targets a part of the virus where mutation is less likely to occur.

"This might be a way to get in the back door and eliminate or reduce the problem of mutations and the possibility of drug resistance."

In 1999, an estimated 34.3 million people -- the vast majority of them in developing countries -- were infected with HIV, which causes AIDS. Some 24.5 million of those infected live in sub-Saharan Africa.

Kumaratunga to quit politics after resolving ethnic strife

COLOMBO, Aug 21: Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga has said she would quit electoral politics after resolving the ethnic conflict with the LTTE by ensuring the implementation of the new draft constitution and asked people to vote against the opposition for stalling her constitutional reforms package, reports PTI.

Launching her election campaign at public rally at Kegalle, south of Colombo yesterday, she lashed out at the main opposition party, the United National Party (UNP), saying the country was still burning under impact of the ethnic war because the UNP was opposed to the constitution which was accepted by 12 of the

14 political parties in the country.

"We won all elections. We need only six more years to build the country. Once this is done we will not contest the elections. Then anybody can come forward to govern the country, she was quoted as saying in the state run newspaper, Daily News today.

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Khmer Rouge 'butcher' suffers heart attacks

PHNOM PENH, Aug 21 : Former Khmer Rouge military chief Ta Mok has suffered a series of heart attacks in jail, according to his lawyer, renewing concern over the pace of Cambodia's efforts to try surviving leaders of the murderous regime, reports AFP.

Defence lawyer Benson Samay said in a statement Monday his 75-year-old client -- a leading candidate for trial before a proposed Cambodian-UN genocide tribunal -- suffered two heart attacks and was in a serious condition.

Ta Mok has survived two consecutive heart attacks during the night of 17 August 2000, but a severe health condition still persists," Benson Samay said, adding that a slight improvement had been noticed.

Speaker elected in Somalia

SOMALIA'S newly-created transitional parliament -- the country's first assembly in more than a decade -- on Sunday elected its first speaker, Abdallah Deeroow Issaq, AFP reports from Arta, Djibouti.

His election is to precede a poll to select a Somali president, then ultimately the formation of a government for the east African country riven by clan warfare. The UN Security Council on Tuesday gave its blessing to the parliament, created a week ago, and warned the country's warlords not to obstruct its work. Somalia has been under a UN arms embargo since 1992.

Truck accident kills 9

NINE people were killed and four others injured when a truck fell into a ravine near the southern Philippine city of Davao, police said Monday, AFP reports from Davao.

The truck driver and eight hitchhikers were killed in the accident on Sunday, police said. One of the survivors said from her hospital bed that more than 20 people were on board the vehicle, which was carrying hardware supplies. A group of farmers had hitched a ride shortly beforehand when it passed through their village.

Coach crash in Austria claims 8

AT least eight German youths were killed and 23 others injured when a tourist coach collided with a truck on a highway west of Vienna yesterday, an Austrian rescue official said, AFP report from Vienna.

Four girls and four boys were killed in the crash, Joerg wherzelberger, a local fire department spokesman said. The majority of the victims were young Germans on their way from Germany to Hungary in a double-decker bus.

Head of Barak's office resigns

JERUSALEM, Aug 21 : The head of Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak's office, Haim Mendel-Shaked, resigned today after issuing a stinging criticism of the beleaguered leader's ability to govern.

The prime minister accepted Mendel-Shaked's request to end his term in office immediately," a spokeswoman for Barak told AFP.

It is the latest internal crisis to hit Barak's administration, which came under fire earlier this month when the prime minister sacked a number of top diplomats following the resignation of foreign minister David Levy.

Barak's government has been hobbling along without a parliamentary majority since early July because of dissent over his peace policies with the Palestinians.

The right-wing Likud party, the largest opposition bloc, said Barak himself should now resign.

Quakes rock Taiwan

THREE moderate earthquakes shook central Taiwan Monday, a day after a series of tremors rattled the area. No injuries or damages were immediately reported, AP says from Taipei.

The three earthquakes -- from 4.0 to 4.6 in magnitude -- struck in succession at about 3 am (1900 GMT Sunday) around Taoyuan city, about 200 kilometers (124 miles) south of the capital, Taipei, the central Weather Bureau said.

Gore plans media blitz

DEMOCRATIC White House hopeful Al Gore planned a national media blitz today to present tax cut and other policy proposals as he continued to ride an upsurge in opinion polls, reports AFP.

The US vice president has continued to provide the programmatic policy details that voters appear to interest voters.

The plan to be unveiled Monday calls for 500 billion dollars in tax cuts over 10 years, while Gore plans on Wednesday to detail care proposals.

Such programmes are typical of his focus on protecting the interests of the common folk, Gore said.

"The people deserve to have somebody in the Oval Office that is fighting for them," Gore said during a campaign stop in Burlington.

Gore and his running mate Joseph Lieberman barnstormed key heartland states Sunday, spreading a populist message to thousands of cheering supporters.

At each campaign stop, thousands of supporters -- many of whom waited hours in the late-summer sun for their arrival -- cheered the candidates' vows to safeguard the environment, expand health care, shore up education and bolster the federal retirement plan while keeping the racing US economy on track.

"I'm not asking you to make this election an award for past performance (but on the basis of) the stronger, better, fairer economy that together we can create," Gore told a rapt crowd.

The vice president has portrayed the November 7 election as a fight pitting average Americans against large businesses and special interests.

After stoking energetic crowds of well-wishers in Moline, Illinois, and the Iowa towns of Keokuk, Muscatine and Burlington, during a day of bus travel, the two candidates were to return Monday to their colourful riverboat cruise down the Mississippi.

**Bangladesh Bureau of Education
Information & Statistics (BANBEIS)**

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Education
1, Sonargaon Road (Plassey-Nilkhet), Dhaka-1205

Memo No-BANBEIS/Establishment/4/99/963 Dated: 10-8-2000

Tender Notice

Tenders are invited from the establishments efficient in developing the undermentioned GIS Software and with practical experience for preparing GIS database on the basis of information received under the UNDP PRODOC BGD/92/009 Education Survey-99. Technical offer and financial offer in the tender will have to be given separately. The financial offer of the bonafide eligible establishment as per terms and conditions mentioned in the schedule will be evaluated after the spot inspection of the concerned tenderer establishment and after the evaluation of the technical offer.

Subject for developing GIS Software

Sl No	Description
1	The digital coverage which will have to be given in all thanas, pourashavas including metropolitan areas for preparing GIS-based map with the layers of the following characteristics of post-primary educational institutions of Bangladesh are as follows: (1) Thana, union, mauza area (2) District, thana and union headquarters (3) River and reservoir of water (4) Infrastructure of road (kutchha, metalled) highway, dam etc (5) Bazaar, growth centre, weekly hat centre etc (6) Educational institutions (post primaries) (7) Main forest area (8) Type of land, agriculture and non-agriculture land.
2	2% of the total cost as earnest money in the form of Pay-Order/Bank Draft from approved commercial bank will have to be submitted to the undersigned with the financial tender and tender schedule can be received by depositing specific fee for Taka 750/- (non refundable) for tender from 24-8-2000 to 28-8-2000 during office hours from the office of the undersigned or the Senior Assistant Secretary of the Ministry of Education (Section 12), Room No 1719 (17th Floor), Bangladesh Secretariat.
3	Tenders can be deposited on 29-8-2000 till 12:30 PM in both the addresses and the technical tenders will be opened the same day at 1:30 PM before the tenderers present in BANBEIS office (if anyone remains present). Mentionable that no schedule will be sold on the day of opening tender.
4	The authority reserves the power to accept or reject any tender without any reason.

Professor Abdus Salam
Director, BANBEIS &
Project Director, EMIS
Phone: 9665457

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