

# Floodwaters receding

Death toll rises to 819 in West Bengal

CALCUTTA, Sept 28 : The estimated death toll in devastating monsoon floods in the eastern Indian state of West Bengal climbed to 819 today as waters receded in several badly hit areas, facilitating relief work.

Haricharan Bhattacharjee from the flood relief control room in the state capital Calcutta told AFP that a total of 596 bodies had been recovered across the state, where at least 10 million people have been affected by the inundation.

"There are reports that 223 people are missing and it is highly likely that they are dead," he said.

Bhattacharjee said 228 deaths had been reported from West Bengal's Birbhum district, adding that 10 others were missing.

In Murshidabad, another badly hit district, 200 people were feared dead and 256 bodies recovered, he said.

"But waters have been going down and have opened up new areas which were previously inaccessible," he said.

Large parts of Calcutta were inundated, with serious

waterlogging at landmark sites such as the famed Dakshineswar and Kalighat temples as well as several upmarket residential quarters.

Indian Railways Minister Mamata Banerjee, whose Calcutta home is near the flood-affected Kalighat temple, addressed reporters from her partially submerged home where she had stacked beds on top of each other to avoid getting wet.

Banerjee, whose party is in the opposition in the Marxist-led state, said in comments published Thursday that the state's ruling communists were to blame for the deluge.

She claimed the government had indiscriminately released water from swollen dams and reservoirs. The provincial government has defended the decision arguing the dams would have overflowed if this was not done.

"There is a water management policy for releasing water from reservoirs and dams," the railways minister said.

"Violating all norms, and in the dead of night, huge volumes were

released simultaneously without alerting people sleeping in their homes. They were not even given an opportunity to shift to safer places," she said.

Fernando Soares, a member of a Red Cross flood response team sent to West Bengal, said the relief effort was improving.

"Relief supplies are moving through to some isolated areas where the flood waters are receding. Some of these people have been without proper food and water supplies for five days," Soares told AFP.

Soares, however, said most areas of Nadia district, which houses the headquarters of the Hare Krishna sect, were still inaccessible.

West Bengal Chief Minister Jyoti Basu late Wednesday termed the floods a "national disaster" and appealed for federal help and aid.

"Our only demand is that the centre should send a team before the waters recede in the devastated areas," Basu told reporters.

Relief workers were especially concerned that marooned villag-

ers were being forced to drink contaminated floodwater, thus exacerbating the risk of water-borne disease, especially among children and the elderly.

Military helicopters and rescue boats continued to drop relief supplies where they could, but the sheer size of the affected area means available manpower has been stretched to the limit.

West Bengal Agriculture Minister Naren Das said at least 1.05 million hectares (2.6 million acres) of farmland had been damaged by the floods.

Reports of looting had earlier come in from all of the state's affected districts, as hungry villagers ransacked relief trucks.

In eastern Indian state of Bihar, which adjoins West Bengal, at least 116 people have died in the ongoing floods.

In Bangladesh, which began to receive overspill from the Indian floods at the weekend, the official toll stood at 10 dead, with nearly two million people in eight border districts next to West Bengal affected.

In Bangladesh, which began to receive overspill from the Indian floods at the weekend, the official toll stood at 10 dead, with nearly two million people in eight border districts next to West Bengal affected.

## Suharto's son to be arrested

JAKARTA, Sept 28 : Officials have ordered the arrest of the youngest son of former Indonesian president Suharto sentenced to an 18-month jail term for corruption, the justice minister said today, reports AFP.

Almost a week after the Supreme Court made its ruling behind closed doors last Friday, Hutomo "Tommy" Mandala Putra was still at liberty on Thursday.

"He has to immediately serve his sentence ... It (his arrest) should be executed within the next one or two days," Justice Minister Yusril Ihza Mahendra said, before attending a cabinet meeting.

## Volcano erupts anew in Japan

TOKYO, Sept 28 : A volcano on Japan's northern island of Hokkaido spewed ash today in its second eruption this month, but the danger to residents was slight, officials said, reports AFP.

The 1,133-meter (3,740-foot) Mount Komagatake blew its top again, following a minor eruption on September 5.

# Judges dismiss Suharto case

Doctors pronounce him unfit for trial



tors' team, Muchtar Arifin, immediately appealed the verdict, which was greeted by shouts of "God is Great" and "Long Live Suharto," from a Suharto supporter inside the court.

Defence lawyer Muhammad Assegaf said Suharto's team had argued from the start that the former dictator had been too sick to stand trial.

"We are not saying that we are happy or unhappy," he said.

"From the start we have been convinced that our client is sick and we have repeatedly expressed this, and now it is proven that the judges, after hearing the explanation of the medical team, is of the same opinion as us."

Outside the trial held in a sprawling complex of the agriculture ministry in South Jakarta, pro- and anti-Suharto groups clashed with security personnel leaving at least five seriously injured and 20 arrested. Two pro-Suharto supporters were beaten up by a mob of hundreds which attacked their convoy of buses as they attempted to near the complex. One bus was set on fire.

## Jerusalem, Al-Quds to be twin capitals: Barak

JERUSALEM, Sept 28 : Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak has acknowledged publicly for the first time that Jerusalem and Al-Quds, the Arabic name for the Holy City, will be twin capitals of Israel and a future Palestinian state, the Jerusalem Post said today, reports AFP.

But at the same time Barak again rejected a transfer of sovereignty over the disputed Temple Mount religious site to the Palestinians or to an Islamic body.

"It will be Jerusalem and Al-Quds, one next to the other, as two capitals," he was quoted as

saying in an interview with the paper to be published in full Friday.

"I do not know if there will be an agreement," Barak said.

"But if there is an agreement it will include an end to the conflict, permanent borders for Israel recognised by the world, 80 percent of the settlers (in the West Bank and Gaza Strip) under Israeli sovereignty in permanent blocks, security arrangements, principally along the eastern border, and Jerusalem bigger than ever since King David."

And Barak added: "It was no

coincidence that I said that no Jewish prime minister will sign on a paper, document or agreement that transfers the sovereignty of the Temple Mount to the Palestinians or to an Islamic body."

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.

Asked whether he would agree to transfer the mount, sacred to Jews as the site of their destroyed temples and to Muslims, who built the Al-Aqsa mosque there, to an international body like the UN, Barak said he did not want to discuss the issue at this point, the Post said.