

Iran lauds 'ties' with India

Iran's Foreign Minister Kamal Kharazi hailed Tehran's "excellent ties" with New Delhi in a meeting with Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee as both sides examined ways to expand bilateral cooperation, state radio reported yesterday.

The radio quoted Kharazi as saying in the meeting Wednesday that Vajpayee's "historic" trip "has a special place in the two countries' excellent ties," adding that both nations could "play an important role in various regional and international fields."

The Iranian minister said the "common desires and views for a development and strengthening of security and stability on a regional and international level" were the "basis for a long-term cooperation" between both nations.

8 killed in polls violence in Bihar

Eight persons were killed and over 25 others injured as widespread violence yesterday marred the first phase of Panchayat poll, being held in Bihar after 22 years.

An estimated 55 to 60 per cent voters turn out was recorded in 1731 Panchayats spread over 113 blocks which went to the poll yesterday, according to state election office sources here.

While two deaths were reported in Patna district, violence in Samastipur, Siwan, Nalanda, Madhubani, Shekhpura and Darbhanga districts claimed six more lives.

Police-rebel gunbattle claims 4 in Assam

Four people were killed in two separate gunbattles in India's insurgency-hit northeastern state of Assam, police said.

A police spokesman told Reuters on Wednesday that a civilian was killed after being caught in a gunbattle between militants and police personnel.

"One civilian was killed in crossfire when two militants shot and seriously injured a police officer at Dhumbhoma in Nalbari district this (Tuesday) afternoon," the spokesman said.

Dhumbhoma is around 75 km west of Guwahati, Assam's main city.

In another incident, soldiers killed three guerrillas of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) near Halong in Assam's North Cachar Hills district yesterday, the spokesman said.

US spy plane row far from over, say Chinese leaders

China declines to guarantee return of plane, crew members reach US soil

Chinese leaders said yesterday the row with the United States over a mid-air collision between a Chinese fighter and a US spy plane was far from over, despite the release of the 24 US crew.

Premier Zhu Rongji said the release of the crew members "does not mean the end of the case and China reserves the right to affirm the responsibility with the US side for the plane collision incident," the state Xinhua news agency reported.

Zhu said the 21 men and three women crew of the US plane which made an emergency landing on the southern Chinese island of Hainan after 12 days in captivity "out of humanitarian considerations."

But he insisted the US plane had strayed into Chinese airspace, laying the blame for the crash squarely on the US side saying it had to shoulder "all responsibilities for the incident."

The Chinese fighter crashed and the pilot is missing presumed dead.

The 24 US crew were finally freed Thursday after the US issued a letter saying Washington was "very sorry" for the loss of Chinese pilot Wang Wei.

It added that the US side was very sorry the EP-3 landed at Lingshui military base on the southern tip of Hainan without permission.

But it refrained from meeting China's original demands to apologize and accept responsibility for the collision, and to stop surveillance flights off the Chinese coast.

Chinese President Jiang Zemin, speaking during a visit to Uruguay, also said the crew had been released purely for humanitarian reasons.

"Yet the incident has not been fully settled," he stressed. "We hope that the US side will adopt a serious attitude toward China's standpoint on the incident and handle it properly."

Military officials from both sides are set to meet on April 18 to work out how the collision occurred and how to return the damaged US plane, packed with valuable high-tech spying equip-

ment. Meanwhile, China said Thursday it had the right to perform "comprehensive" investigations on a US spy plane stranded on southern Hainan island and gave no guarantees it would be returned.

"China is fully entitled to conduct comprehensive investigations concerning the plane," foreign ministry spokeswoman Zhang Qiyue said at the ministry's regular briefing.

"The Chinese side will handle this aircraft in accordance with the results of the investigations."

"This plane is by no means an ordinary plane and the handling of this plane is by no means the same as the handling of an ordinary aircraft," she said.

Zhang's remarks came after Chinese leaders said they considered the row with the United States over the April 1 mid-air collision between the spy plane and a Chinese fighter far from over.

Another report adds: With a "Welcome to America" handshake, the crew of a US spy plane held in

China for 12 days stepped onto US soil in Guam yesterday.

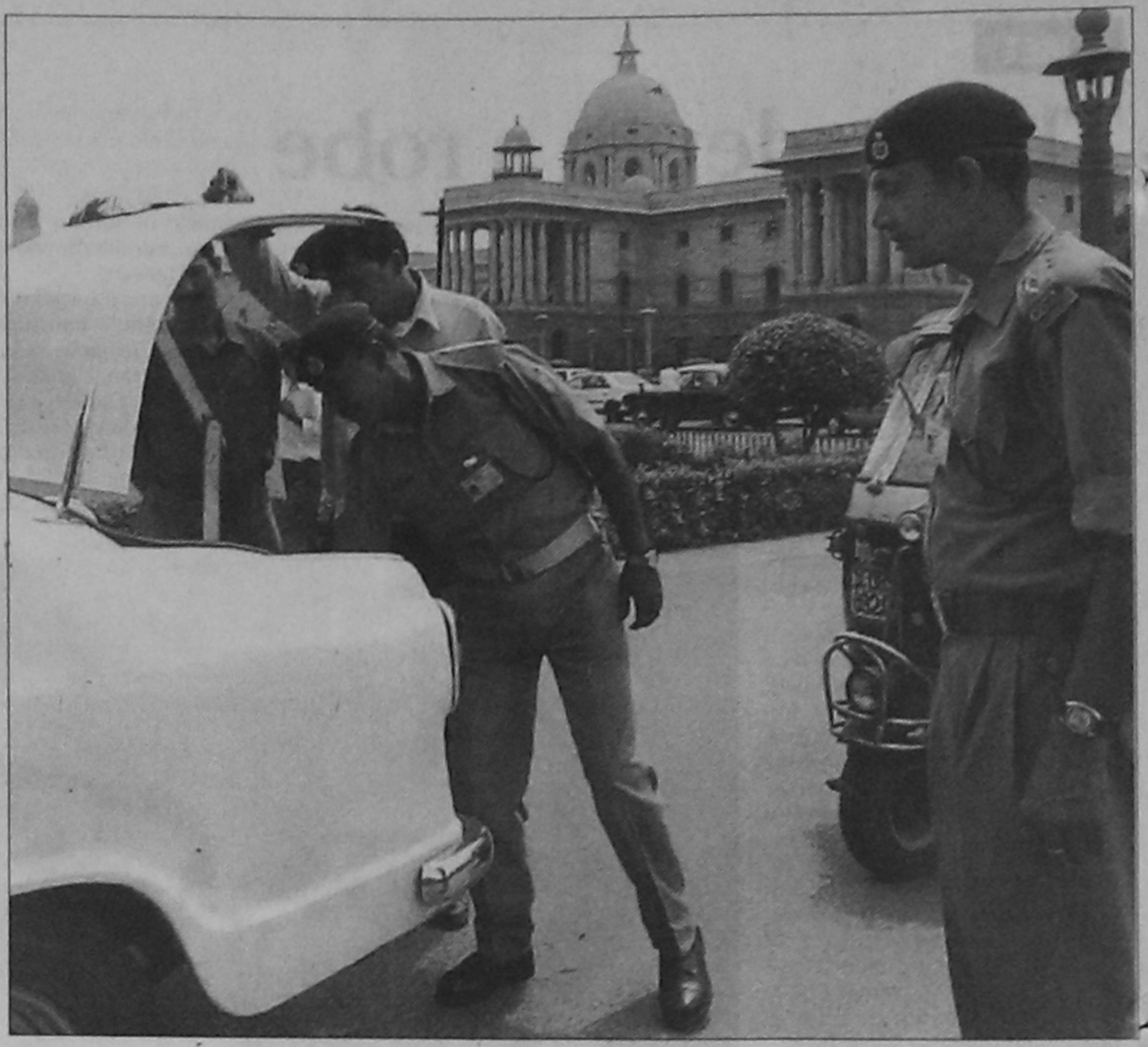
"Some of them had tears in their eyes as they saw the American flag and realised they were home," said Guam Governor Carl Gutierrez, who greeted the 24 US servicemen and women as they stepped off the chartered aircraft which flew them to this US Pacific Territory from China's Hainan island.

"They looked good, healthy, happy and pleased to be home," he told AFP.

The arrival just before 2:00 pm (10:00 BST) of the chartered Continental Air Micronesia Boeing 737 at this US air force base followed one of the worst crises between Beijing and Washington in decades.

The crew had been flying an EP-3E reconnaissance plane off the Chinese coast on April 1 when they were involved in a collision with a Chinese fighter jet which crashed, killing pilot Wang Wei.

The high-tech spy plane was then forced to land China's Langshui air base on Hainan Island.



Indian Paramilitary troops inspect a car in front of the Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's office in New Delhi yesterday where a bomb was packed with four kilograms of high-explosive and was rigged to a defective timer device. The New Delhi police said the powerful bomb was defused which might have been planted by "fundamentalist elements" but ruled out the involvement of Kashmir's dominant Lashkar-Taiba guerrilla force.

Milosevic in hospital after 'mild' heart attack

Former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, jailed on corruption and abuse of power charges, suffered a "mild" heart attack Wednesday evening, a prison source said yesterday.

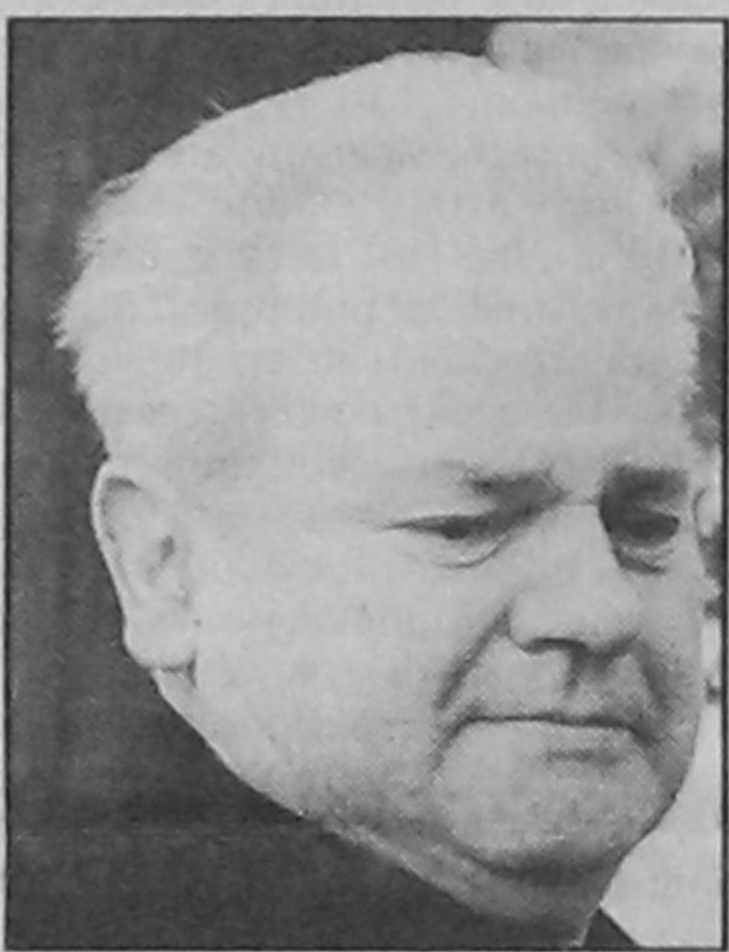
The source, reached by telephone, told AFP Milosevic was being treated in the prison infirmary, contradicting news reports that he had been rushed to Belgrade military hospital Wednesday evening.

"We can say that he suffered a mild heart attack," the source said. "He is in a separate room and being observed by doctors from outside" the prison, said the source, who asked not to be identified.

No information was available on 59-year-old Milosevic's current condition.

Milosevic, indicted for war crimes by the UN court in The Hague which is demanding his handover, was toppled from power last year by democratic reformers.

Earlier report said former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic has been rushed from a Belgrade prison to hospital suffering



Slobodan Milosevic

from heart problems, a family source told AFP.

The Tanjug news agency reported that Milosevic was taken to Belgrade's military hospital at around 11:00 p.m. (3:00 BST) Wednesday to be treated for cardiac problems caused by hypertension.

The former leader's state of health was not judged to be very serious by doctors who examined him, the agency added.

However a source close to the former president earlier described Milosevic's condition as "quite serious".

Milosevic, 59, had complained of feeling unwell earlier in the evening, and prison doctors decided to hospitalise him immediately, Tanjug reported.

Milosevic, toppled from power last year, is facing charges of corruption and abuse of power.

He gave himself up to the Yugoslav authorities on April 1, after an armed stand-off between his guards and security forces, and has been imprisoned since then in the VIP wing of Belgrade's central prison.

The wing has been nicknamed the "Hyatt", after the chain of luxury hotels, because inmates there receive hot water, can use a small canteen and get newspapers and cigarettes.

US arrests Pak admiral

The United States has arrested a retired Pakistani admiral pending extradition here to face corruption charges related to defence deals, reports said yesterday.

Admiral (retired) Mansur ul Haq, former chief of Naval Staff, had been living in the United States since allegations arose that he was engaged in receiving kickbacks on major defence contracts, the News Daily reported.

Late Wednesday the National Accountability Bureau (NAB), the military government's corruption watchdog, said it had asked the US authorities to make the arrest.

"As a consequence to the extradition request made by NAB and another request made through diplomatic channels the US Department of Justice has provisionally arrested Admiral (R) Mansoorul Haq," it said.

'Positive atmosphere' at Israeli-PA security talks

Sharon vows not to retake Palestinian land

There was a "positive atmosphere" at a top-level security meeting between Israeli and Palestinian officials and another session is planned for next week, an Israeli spokesman told military radio yesterday.

The next security meeting will be held on Monday, according to the radio report.

"I can not give a precise account of the proceedings, but the results of this meeting will be announced on the ground," Israeli government spokesman Gideon Saars said.

"Israel put forward just one demand, an end to the violence," he stressed.

"As long as the Palestinians fail to put an end to the attacks against

Israel emanating from Sector A (the Palestinian autonomous zone), Israel will be forced to do the job itself," said Saar, an apparent allusion to a major Israeli attack on a Palestinian refugee camp in the Gaza Strip overnight Tuesday.

In the first large-scale incursion by Israel well into Palestinian-ruled territory, a Palestinian policeman and a civilian were killed and around 40 people wounded as tanks destroyed parts of the Khan Yunis refugee, leaving 27 homes in ruins.

No other details were immediately available of Wednesday's US-sponsored security meeting which was held at the residence of US Ambassador to Israel, Marty Indyk, north of Tel Aviv.

Last Wednesday the first formal security meeting since Sharon took

office a month previously was marred when Israeli troops fired on the convoy of Palestinian officials returning to Gaza.

A subsequent meeting planned for last Monday was called off amid lingering Palestinian anger over the incident.

Meanwhile, Israel's hawkish Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said in an interview published yesterday he believed Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat was "beginning to soften", and vowed he had no plans to reoccupy Palestinian land.

Sharon, who took office more than a month ago pledging to use an iron fist to confront the Palestinian revolt, said he thought Arafat was beginning to understand that there will be no negotiations under fire.

Wahid orders crackdown against Aceh rebels

Frustrated by failed peace attempts and an escalating war of attrition, Indonesian President Abdurrahman Wahid has ordered a new military and police crackdown against rebels in Aceh province, a minister said yesterday.

Defence Minister Mohammad Mahfud said Wahid had signed on Wednesday a presidential decree authorising the security forces to target known separatist in villages and districts across the province, on the northern tip of Sumatra island.

"The police and military will focus their operations on armed opposition groups who are fighting against the government, or in other words separatists," he told reporters before a cabinet meeting at the presidential palace.

He said intelligence officers had identified separatists of the Free Aceh Movement to ensure that the operation would not result in civilian casualties.

"I am sure we will not target the wrong people," he said.

"In the past, Indonesia's security forces have been accused of widespread human rights abuses in the attempt to put down the long running rebellion in Aceh.

Wahid's order came as suspected rebels set fire to a warehouse belonging to US oil giant Exxon-Mobil near the village of Lhoksukon in the north east of the province.

Li Col Wanto Sumardio, chief of North Aceh police forces, blamed the separatists for the fire which broke out early Thursday. A spokesman for the oil company said the building which contained spare parts for construction equipment, was "substantially damaged."

Clinton to attend peace confce in Nov 2002 in India

Former US President Bill Clinton has agreed to be the chief guest at the sixth 'international conference on peace and non-violence' to be held in November 2002 here.

He gave his consent to participate in the conference during a brief meeting he had with Jain Muni Lokprakash Lokesh in the city on April 5 while touring Gujarat's earthquake devastated areas, a Shree Jain Swetamber Terapanthi Sabha release said here on Wednesday.

Clinton had released two books of Acharya Mahapragya namely 'Economic of Mahaveera' and 'Mahaveera's Scriptures of Health'.

The former US President said Mahaveera's message of non-violence and co-existence can only bring lasting peace in the strife-torn world, the release added.

Lack of sleep may raise ulcer risk

Working shifts, partying all night, long-haul travel and just a general lack of sleep may lead to an increase risk of ulcers, British doctors said yesterday.

Chemicals in the stomach and small intestine that repair tissue damage are produced mostly at night, so missing sleep could lead to a decrease in the molecules and a higher chance of developing ulcers.

Doctors at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne in northern England measured levels of a protein called TFE2, which repairs damage in the gut, in 12 healthy people during 24 hours to determine how their sleep patterns affected the production of the protein.

They found that levels of the protein followed a circadian rhythm and were lowest during the afternoon and early evening and highest during the night and sleep.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Office of the Executive Engineer PWD Division, Moulvibazar

Notice Inviting Tender Tender No. 52/M-2 of 2000-2001

Sealed tenders are invited in Bangladesh Form No 2911 for the undermentioned work as per terms and conditions stated below:

- Name of work : Conversion of existing Sarkari Shishu Sadans into Shishu Panbar Phase-II one at Srimgongal in the Dist of Moulvibazar (Sub-head: Providing Internal Sanitary & Water Supply Arrangement of Office & School Building).
- Estimated cost : Tk 1,56,263/=
- Earnest money : Tk 3,126/=
- Time allowed for completion of the work : 45 (Forty-five) days from date of issue of work order.
- Price of tender schedule : Tk 425/= per set (non-refundable).
- Place of selling & receiving of tender : Office of the undersigned and the office of the Executive Engineer, PWD Division-Sylhet/Sunamgonj/Habigonj. During office hours up to 18-4-2001.
- Last date of selling tender : a) Special Class, Combined, Class-I & Class-II approved Sanitary & Plumbing Contractors of PWD, Class-II approved Sanitary & Plumbing contractors of PWD Zone, Chittagong, Class-III approved Plumbing contractors of Sylhet PWD Circle, Sylhet.
- Eligibility of contractors/firm to compete in the tender : b) The intending tenderers must have VAT registration. c) Attested copy of VAT registration & TIN certificate is to be enclosed along with the tender.
- Date of receiving and opening of tender : Up to 12:00 Noon of 19-4-2001 and will be opened on the same day at 12:15 pm.
- Lottery (Applicable where necessary) : If more than one tenders are received having same rates stand lowest, selection will be made by lottery to be held on 30-4-2001 at 12:30 pm in office of the undersigned in presence of intending tenderers who like to be present.
- The undersigned reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason.

Md Abdur Rob Executive Engineer PWD Division, Moulvibazar.

BAPEX গ্যাস জাতীয় সম্পদ এর অপচয় রোধ করবে জাতীয় দায়িত্ব পালন করুন।

Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration and Production Company Ltd (BAPEX)
(A Company of Petrobangla)
HBFC Building (8th floor), 22 Purana Paltan, Dhaka
Construction Division.

Ref No 124.55.00 Dated: 02.04.2001

TENDER NOTICE

1. Tenders in sealed cover are invited by Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration & Production Company Limited (BAPEX) from BAPEX enlisted contractors for execution of the undermentioned works:

Sl No	Name of work	Estimated cost Tk	Time for completion of work	Price of tender (non-refundable) Tk	Contractor's class of enlistment
A.	Construction of culvert on the Bijna river near Koikhola village under Kasba thana of B'baria district under Saldanadi Gas Field	17,94,343.00	90 days	1000.00	'A'
B.	Bush cleaning at Well Nos 2 & 3 of Fenchuganj Gas Field Development Project under Kulaura thana of Moulvibazar district	1,30,679.98	30 days	500.00	'A' 'B' 'C'
C.	Construction of HBB Link Road (new) of Well No 3 of Fenchuganj Gas Field Development Project under Kulaura thana of Moulvibazar district	30,93,266.00	75 days	1000.00	'A'

2. Interested contractors can collect the tender schedule on cash payment during office hours from 15.04.2001 to 26.04.2001 from any of the following offices:
A) Accounts Department, BAPEX, Ibrahim Mansion (3rd floor), 11 Purana Paltan, Dhaka.
B) Accounts Department, Petrobangla, 3 Kawran Bazar C/A, Dhaka.
C) Titas Gas T&D Company Ltd., 105 Kawran Bazar C/A, Dhaka.
D) Gas Transmission Co Ltd., Sector 3, Road 12, House 1, Uttara Model Town, Dhaka.
E) Natural Gas Co Ltd, 102 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka.
F) Bangladesh Gas Fields Co Ltd., Court Road, B'baria.
G) Bakhrabad Gas Systems Limited, Chanpapur, Comilla.
H) Sylhet Gas Fields Co Ltd, Chiknagui, Sylhet.
I) Jalalabad Gas T&D Systems Ltd., Gas Bhaban, Mendigob, Sylhet.
J) Regional Office Complex, BAPEX, Halishahar, Chittagong.
K) Western Zone Gas Co Ltd., Nalka, Sirajganj.
L) Madhyapara Granite Mining Co Ltd., Madhyapara, Parbatipur, Dinajpur.
M) Barapukuria Coal Mining Co Ltd, Chowhati, Parbatipur, Dinajpur.

3. Tenders will be received at Construction Division, BAPEX, HBFC Bhaban (eighth floor), 22 Purana Paltan, Dhaka office as well as the offices mentioned at Serial No 2 B to M upto 12:00 noon of 29.04.2001 and the submitted tenders will be opened on the same day at 12:30 minutes in presence of the attending tenderers (if any) at the Construction Division, BAPEX, as well as the said offices, simultaneously.

4. Tenders shall have to submit 2.5% of their quoted amount as earnest money with the tender in the form of Pay Order/Bank Draft from any scheduled commercial bank in Bangladesh in favour of Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration & Production Co Ltd. In case the quoted rate is more than 5% below the estimated cost, the tenderer shall have to submit rate analysis for each item of the quoted rate, and additional earnest money at the rate 10% of the quoted amount, with the tender, without which tender will be treated as cancelled outright.

5. The authority reserves the right to accept any tender or cancel/reject all tenders without assigning any reason or bearing any responsibility.

DFP-8975-4/4
G-675

General Manager (Construction)

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Bangladesh Television
121, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue
Shahbag, Dhaka-1000

Tender Notice
No. TV (Engg). 05 Computer 01/2001

Rate quotations in 2 (two) envelope system are invited from manufacturers/manufacturers' representatives for supply, installation, testing & handover of News Room Software & Tele Promoter with accessories for BTU on local currency payment basis under the project titled Introduction of Computer System in Bangladesh Television. Tender schedule can be purchased at Tk 750.00 (seven hundred fifty) only (non-refundable) in cash from Accounts Section, central office, Bangladesh Television, 121, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Shahbag, Dhaka-1000 during office hours. Specification and all terms & conditions of tender are given in the schedule. Tender schedule will be sold up to 30 April, 2001 and no schedule will be sold after 30 April, 2001.

Rate quotations should be dropped in prescribed tender box kept at the office of Project Director, (Introduction of Computer System in Bangladesh Television) by 12:00 Noon of 2 May, 2001. Only the envelopes of commercial & technical quotations of the rate quotations received will be opened on the same day at 12:10 minutes in presence (if any) of the tenderers.

Bangladesh Television reserves the right to reject any or all rate quotations without assigning any reason.

Md Maidul Haq Chowdhury
Additional Chief Engineer, BTU
And
Project Director
Phone: 9662158

DFP-9331-9/4
G-684

DFP-9370-10/4
G-677