

Sharon spells his terms for Palestinian state

Level of violence drops dramatically

AFP, Jerusalem

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said yesterday a future Palestinian state must be strictly limited in sovereignty and area, covering less than half the West Bank seized by Israel in 1967 and deprived of armed forces.

It would have to accept Israeli troops guarding its borders and be barred from any treaties with states hostile to Israel, Sharon said in an interview published in the daily Maariv.

"Such a state could only be formed in agreement with Israel, and would only extend over some 42 percent of the territory" of the West Bank, or no more than the Palestinians already control totally or partially under previous accords.

The Palestinians would have to accept "limitations" on their sovereignty, Sharon said. Their state "would have no arms. Israel would have to maintain control of its borders for years and it could not sign treaties with states hostile to Israel."

The Palestinians, who also control 70 percent of the Gaza Strip, have ruled out anything less than a state covering all the territory occupied by Israel in the 1967 Middle East War, including east Jerusalem, which they want as their capital.

Sharon has already ruled out any concessions on Jerusalem, home of disputed sites holy to Muslims and Jews.

Meanwhile, the level of violence dropped dramatically yesterday in the Palestinian territories amid hopes of Israel's crippling blockade on the Palestinian territories being eased.

An Israeli military spokesman said a Jewish settler was wounded in the legs by Palestinian shooting near the Erez crossing point between Israel and

the Gaza Strip, and a bomb exploded near an Israeli patrol.

The settler, who was "quite seriously hurt" by the firing from near the village of Beit Hanoun, was taken to hospital, the spokesman said.

The bomb exploded as an Israeli patrol was passing in the southern Gaza Strip near the border with Egypt, causing no casualties, the spokesman added.

However Israeli troops were still braced for trouble which has regularly followed the end of midday prayers in the mosques of the West Bank and Gaza Strip since the Palestinian uprising against Israeli occupation broke out at the end of September.

The Palestinians said after a security meeting on Wednesday that Israel had pledged to ease the blockade by removing some border restrictions, opening roads, increasing the number of Palestinians allowed to go to their jobs in Israel, and "attempting" to lift the siege on towns in the West Bank.

The measures are expected to be taken before a new security meeting, only the third since hardline Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon assumed office more than a month ago, takes place on Monday.

The daily Haaretz, quoting "reports reaching the army", said Friday Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat had ordered his security services to crack down on the firing of mortars by Palestinian groups in the Gaza Strip.

Sharon, who has vowed not to resume peace negotiations until the Palestinians stop hitting the Israelis, said in an interview published Thursday that Arafat "is beginning to soften" under Israeli pressure.

An authoritative Israeli source confirmed Friday a report in the daily Maariv that Avi Dichter, the head of Israel's internal security service Shin Beth had issued a warning to Arafat in a personal meeting this week.



Chinese President Jiang Zemin (R) confers with Cuban President Fidel Castro (L) upon Jiang's arrival on Thursday in Havana. Jiang's visit to Cuba, part of which lies just 145 km from the United States, comes a day after the resolution of an 11-day standoff between Washington and Beijing over a US spy plane and crew, detained in China after a collision with a Chinese jet.

Troops begin truce amid Chandrika's call for peace

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lankan security forces began observing a unilateral truce yesterday to mark the traditional New Year as President Chandrika Kumaratunga called for peace and unity.

The defence ministry said that troops were ordered to halt offensive operations against the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) from midnight Thursday until Tuesday morning.

"I wish you all a happy Sinhala and Tamil New Year which will bring you peace, happiness and prosperity," the president said in her seasonal message.

She hoped the New Year could lead to the beginning of an era to end the country's drawn out Tamil separatist conflict which has claimed more than 60,000 lives over the last two decades.

The government declared the new year truce for four days even as the Tamil Tigers were observing a one-sided truce since Christmas eve. The rebels have asked the government to reciprocate their truce.

The government said in a statement Wednesday listed the names of 10 people it said were LTTE cadres under "arrest" and said they would be freed, without giving any indication of when.

Among the 10 names were two members of the majority Sinhalese community.

The LTTE have also freed several security personnel and merchant sailors held hostage for several years as a goodwill gesture to push Norway's attempts to broker peace on the island.

Over the weekend, the Tigers issued fresh demands that the government lift a ban on them, ease economic sanctions and reciprocate their truce before entering peace talks.

There has been no formal response from the Colombo government to the latest Tiger demands.

Norway has been trying to broker peace talks for nearly two years, but has failed to arrange a face-to-face meeting between the two antagonists.

UK releases details of Benazir's bank accounts

REUTERS, London

A London court has released 22,000 pages of documents detailing bank accounts and assets of former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, a British newspaper said yesterday.

The move will allow Pakistan's military government to extend its investigation of corruption allegations against Benazir according to the Guardian.

Benazir won a major victory last week when Pakistan's Supreme Court set aside corruption convictions against her and her husband, Asif Ali Zardari, and ordered a retrial.

Benazir living abroad in self-imposed exile, and Zardari, jailed in Pakistan since 1996 on other

charges, had appealed against a 1999 conviction by a special Accountability Court that sentenced them to five years in jail and fined them \$8.6 million for accepting kickbacks from a Swiss firm.

Benazir said after the ruling that a big hurdle to her return to Pakistan had been removed by the judgement and that she would now discuss the date with her colleagues.

But on Thursday, Bow Street magistrates' court in London released detailed financial documents about the couple and statements taken from nine associates.

Pakistan's National Accountability Bureau (NAB), the government's white collar crime fighting agency, has been trying to secure the documents since the

Curfew in Cincinnati to quell racial violence

AP, Cincinnati

With police in riot gear out in the streets, the mayor declared a state of emergency and imposed a curfew amid the worst outbreak of racial violence in Cincinnati since the aftermath of the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968.

Mayor Charles Luken acted on Thursday, the fourth day of rioting over the shooting of an unarmed black man by a white police officer.

"Despite the best efforts of the good citizens of our city, the violence on our streets is uncontrolled and it runs rampant," Luken said. "The time has come to deal with this seriously. The message is that the violence must stop."

Only people going to and from work in this city of 331,000 will be

allowed on the streets between 8 pm and 6 am, the mayor said. Seven curfew violators were arrested, but two hours into the curfew, the streets were quiet.

Gov Bob Taft ordered the state Highway Patrol to assist Cincinnati police, and the mayor said he may ask Taft to send in the National Guard.

As of Thursday, 86 people had been arrested in the looting, arson, vandalism, assaults and other violence in mostly black sections of Cincinnati. More than 60 people have been injured, including at least 25 taken to hospitals, police said.

The violence in Cincinnati's most sustained racial unrest since the rioting prompted by the assassination of King, the great black civil rights leader of the 1960s.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Office of the Executive Engineer Local Government Engineering Department Habiganj

Memo No: LGED/XEN/HABI/2001/965 Date: 03-04-2001

Tender Notice No-45/2000-2001

Sealed tenders are hereby invited for execution of the following schemes under Sylhet Division Rural Infrastructure Development Project from the valid pre-qualified contractor/construction firm of RDP-3, LGED Special class. A class in Bangladesh Form No-2911 along with the additional terms & conditions attached with this tender notice & tender schedule for the works. Tender schedule could be purchased from the offices of the undersigned; Project Director, RDP-3, LGED, HQ, Dhaka; Executive Engineer, LGED Sylhet/Sunamganj/Moulvibazar, & concerned Upazila Engineer Office of Habiganj District up to 22-04-2001 during office hours. Tender will be received up to 1.00 PM on 23-04-2001 in the specified tender boxes of the above mentioned offices & the boxes will be opened at 1.30 PM on the same day in presence of the tenderers or their authorized representative (if any).

- Additional Terms & Conditions**
- In the tender schedule rate must be quoted as over all per cent of above/less or at par based on estimated cost both in figure & in words in the 2nd page of 2911 Form & at the last page of the tender schedule. In case of any discrepancy rate written in words will be considered for evaluation.
 - The tender schedule shall not be exceeding over all rate five per cent (5%) less than the estimated cost. Exceeding over all rate 5% less than the estimated cost the tender will be treated as cancelled.
 - Quoted rate clearly be written in figures, in words in the specified place of the tender schedule & in the 2nd page of 2911 Form. Overwritten, use of fluids or erasing by any means will not be accepted & the concerned tender will summarily be rejected & the subjected tender will be considered non responsive.
 - Tender with a quoted amount more than 5% (five per cent) above the estimated cost will be required to be supported by detailed analysis of every rate quoted in the tender schedule for necessary scrutiny by the authority. Tender without analysis & photocopy overwriting, erasing by any means etc in the analysis will not be accepted & will summarily be rejected.
 - In case of more than one tender or same quoted rate & being the lowest contractor may be selected by means of lottery or by way of performance.
 - Earnest money (security) amounting & 2.5% (Two point five per cent) of the total quoted amount must be submitted along with the tender in the form of BD/CD from any recognised & scheduled commercial bank in favour of Executive Engineer, LGED, Habiganj. Successful tenderer will have to deposit security 7.5% (seven point five per cent) of total quoted amount in the form of BD/CD from any recognised and scheduled commercial bank in favour of Executive Engineer LGED, Habiganj, within 7 (seven) working days from the day it has been asked for.
 - Government decisions related to VAT & Income Tax etc will be effective for the tenders. According to the govt circular certificate for tax-payers identification number should be enclosed with tender document & no tender will be accepted without it.
 - In case of purchasing schedule it is not required to present physically to show enlistment/pre-qualification, contractors may purchase the schedule by any of their representative. Name of works, seal & signature of issuing authority must be in the tender document (schedule). While submitting the tender contractors have to submit photocopy of enlistment/pre-qualification license along with other required document stated in the tender notice otherwise tender will be treated as cancelled.
 - If any tenderer protect other tenderers in purchasing schedule for submitting the tender or help in doing so or taking initiative by any contractor then the concerned contractor's enlistment will be cancelled.
 - Tenderers will have to submit receipt of purchased schedule with the tender document. Code No must be written clearly over the envelop for each group.
 - Tender may be submitted to the tender receiving offices by registered mail with AD. In this case tender must reach the concerned offices before the last time of receiving date & time otherwise it will not be acceptable.
 - With proportionate progress in proportionate time the total works should be completed according to the specification of the schedule within the time mentioned in the work order.
 - Only the tenderers those will be qualified to participate in tender who are valid pre-qualified enlisted contractors of RDP-3, LGED Special class and A class who have experience in successfully completion of road or bridge/culvert construction work in a single work order with an amount of at least Tk 10,00 (ten) lacs. The experience certificate (from the person not below the rank of Executive Engineer) to be submitted with tender.
 - The contractors who had failed to perform proportionate progress of work without any reasonable causes in case of one work under RDP-3 or two works under SDIDP will disqualify to participate in the tender and their tender (s) will not be accepted.
 - Payment will be made when fund will be available. Estimated cost of the respective scheme may be varied. Earth work must be done before starting pavement work. This tender notice is precised. Other detailed information regarding the tender could be collected from the office of the undersigned during office hours. The authority preserves the right to accept any or reject all the tenders without showing any reason thereof.

Gr No	Name of scheme	Estimated cost (Tk in lac)	Earnest money	Value of tender document	Time allowed (days)
182.	Improve of Gatabalabazar East side to Community Clinic Road by HBB.	3.00	7500.00	300.00	60
183.	Impro. of Gatabala Village-Gatabala Primary School Road by B.C.	6.00	15000.00	500.00	60
184.	Const of 1x1.00x1.00m box culvert on Sakirmohammed-Dewandi via Panchash Rd (CH-750m, 1250m) & 1x1.50x1.50m box culvert on Panchash-Mohimura Road, CH-100 m.	3.10	7750.00	300.00	60

DGP-9157-8/4 G-662

Executive Engineer LGED, Habiganj



Former Health and Welfare Minister Junichiro Koizumi, a leading candidate for the presidential election of Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), delivers his policy speech at the LDP head office in Tokyo yesterday. A day after the LDP campaign to choose its new president on April 24 formally kicked off, two straw polls conducted by newspapers showed that more than half of ordinary citizens supported Koizumi. From right: Candidates for the LDP presidential election, LDP's Policy Chief Shizuka Kamei, Reform Minister and former premier Ryutaro Hashimoto, Minister for Economic and Fiscal Policy Taro Aso and Koizumi.

Advani trying to subvert supremacy of law: Bukhari

AFP, New Delhi

India's top Muslim cleric yesterday blasted Home Minister L.K. Advani for saying the controversial site of a mosque razed by Hindu zealots eight years ago was effectively a Hindu temple.

Syed Ahmed Bukhari said in a statement that Advani was trying to subvert "the supremacy of law" as the dispute over the demolition of the 16th century Babri Mosque was pending before Indian courts.

The razing of the mosque in the northern town of Ayodhya on December 6, 1992 sparked some of post-independence India's worst Hindu-Muslim violence in which 2,009 people were killed.

Advani, accused with two other ministers of inciting crowds to demolish the mosque, said on Wednesday that the Ayodhya site was that of a Hindu temple, both in the eyes of the law and the people.

Advani made the statement while appearing before the Libheran Commission investigating the mosque razing.

Bukhari said Advani's remarks reflected the two-faced nature of Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's Hindu nationalist BJP party.

"The BJP has two faces, first one of Vajpayee who talks of secularism and the second of his cabinet colleagues who take pleasure in hurting sentiments of Muslims with reference to the Babri Masjid," he added.

He said Vajpayee was encouraging his party leaders towards their ideal of making India into a nation ruled only by Hindus.

"Vajpayee sings in a different tune while meeting leaders of Muslim countries," Bukhari said, adding that Vajpayee had during a recent visit to Iran lavished praise on Islamic leaders in building Indian civilisation.

PLA claims victory in US spy plane crisis

AFP, Beijing

China's armed forces yesterday claimed victory over the United States in the spy plane crisis and endorsed the Sino-US agreement which led to the release of the US aircraft's crew.

The military played a key role in the 11-day crisis as they were holding the 24 crew of the US EP-3 Aries

surveillance plane on the southern island of Hainan before they were released Thursday.

Analysts suggested headline elements in the armed forces, traditionally highly-suspicious of the United States, were driving the crisis and may have been unhappy over the release of the US crew.

The US plane is still at Linghui airbase on Hainan, where it made an emergency landing after colliding with a Chinese fighter jet on April 1, and Sino-US talks are to be held next week to discuss its return.

An editorial in the People's Liberation Army Daily praised China's firm stance throughout the stand-off as a triumph for national dignity in the face of American arrogance.

Delhi confident of breaking parliamentary impasse

AFP, New Delhi

The Indian government said yesterday it was confident that an all-party meeting scheduled for the weekend would break the paralysis afflicting parliament over an arms bribery scandal.

"Discussion and debate are the essence of democracy ... and the opposition is in the mood for discussion now," BJP spokesman Vijay Kumar Malhotra told AFP.

"They probably feel it will be counterproductive" to prolong the

impasse, he added.

Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee has called the all-party meeting for Saturday -- two days before parliament's budget session resumes after a three-week recess.

Parliamentary business was totally frozen for 10 days before the recess, with opposition MPs calling for the government to resign over a video expose showing top politicians, civil servants and military officials apparently taking bribes from journalists posing as arms dealers.

Suicide blast claims 25 in China

AP, Beijing

A guard on a bus carrying detained migrant workers detonated a suicide bomb, killing himself and the other 24 people on board, a human rights monitor said yesterday.

The bus was on a highway Monday near the city of Huidong, in the eastern province of Guangdong, when one of the two guards set off a homemade explosive, the Information Centre for Human Rights & Democracy said.

The blast ignited a fire that quickly swept through the bus, the Hong Kong-based center said. The driver, the second guard and 22 detainees could not escape because the windows had bars.

Greenhouse gases contribute to higher ocean temperatures

AFP, Washington

Oceanography, lead author of a study by the US Energy Department and the National Science Foundation.

"It really does add strength to the claims that global warming is here. But, it also suggests that the immediate impact may not be as great, because the oceans may slow things down a little."

Climate models created in past studies did not factor in ocean temperatures: to examine global warming, causing some studies to predict modern air temperatures would increase at a higher rate than they actually have and leading some naysayers to discount the climate change theory.

Greenhouse gases emitted due to human activity have caused a major increase in ocean temperatures over the last 50 years, two teams of scientists reported in studies appeared yesterday in the journal Science.

The two new modelling studies, based on millions of deep ocean temperature measurements compiled from 1948 to 1995, show that global warming has extended to the world's oceans, considered the "memory" of Earth's climate system.

"Warming in the oceans is bad news and good news," said Tim Barnett of Scripps Institution of



Three Christian devotees are nailed on a wooden cross during a crucifix ritual in San Pedro Cutud village, north of Manila yesterday. At least 12 devotees were nailed to crosses as devotees reenact the crucifixion of Jesus Christ on Good Friday in the belief that through this act, their personal problems will be granted holy intercession.