

# India, Pakistan test fire missiles within hours

AFP, New Delhi  
 India yesterday test fired its Akash surface-to-air missile, just hours after Pakistan tested a medium-range ballistic missile capable of carrying a nuclear warhead deep into Indian territory, the defence ministry said.

The missile test was "successful" and was conducted at 4.30 pm local time from a remote testing range on the country's east coast.

"It was a routine test. User trials have been taking place," defence ministry spokesman PK Bandopadhyay told AFP.

Islamabad had earlier yesterday announced it had test fired its home-grown Hatf-IV or Shaheen missile, with a range of up to 800 kilometres.

The missile is capable of carrying a nuclear warhead deep into Indian territory, Pak military officials and defence experts in Islamabad said.

"Prior notification was given to neighbours as well as some friendly countries," a defence ministry spokesman told AFP.

A senior Pakistani defence analyst and former high ranking air force official said the test was a major achievement given the range of the missile, which he said could travel up to 800 kilometres.

"It is a very big achievement. The test was due a few months ago but it was deferred," retired air marshal Ayaz Ahmed, the former number two of the

Pakistani air force, told the wire service.

"It is a tactical missile with a range of at least 700 kilometres. It is a multi-purpose, multi-role missile. It goes deep into the adversary territory and is capable of carrying a nuclear payload," he said.

"It will deter India from carrying out a nuclear or conventional attack," he added.

In New Delhi, an Indian official said India was not worried by the test firing, the fourth time Pakistan has tested a short- or medium-range missile since May.

"We are not unnecessarily perturbed by this kind of missile test," an Indian defence ministry spokesman told AFP in New Delhi.

Tensions between Pakistan and India have been high since last December, when a deadly attack on India's parliament blamed on the Islamic militant groups Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad threatened to spark a new war.

Both groups were founded in Pakistan but were banned by President Pervez Musharraf in January.

Hundreds of thousands of troops have massed since the attack on each side of the country's common border.

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## ASM NURUNNABI

The rapid development of Dhaka City and its surrounding areas has been the inevitable outcome of the tremendous pressure exerted on its scarce land resources by an ever-growing population. And given the unchecked and ongoing influx of people from elsewhere in the country into this megalopolis, it is a foregone conclusion that the city will continue to be transformed into a concrete jungle and expand in every possible direction, gobbling up every available inch of land in the process.

Understandably, such rapid urbanisation is unavoidable. But its environmental fallout has spelled the disappearance of the area's once conspicuous wildlife. And as far as Dhaka's traditional lifestyle is concerned, it has all but vanished, and along with it some of the characteristic pastimes and their caterers.

Take the case of monkeys that were once quite noticeable in the old city about three or four decades ago. One would invariably stumble upon these fellow urban primates

## DOWN TO EARTH

# Little things of bygone days

## A trip down Dhaka's memory lane

who made the old city, particularly its Gandaria, Wari, Nawabpur and Lalbagh areas, their habitat.

Over the years, the monkey population has gradually shrunk and now only some stray members of the species can be found in isolated pockets of the old city, teetering on the brink of extinction.

The cause for the monkey's disappearance is definitely environmental. In course of time, the locality has undergone a lot of urbanisation for which a large number of fruit bearing trees -- the main food source and shelter for the monkeys -- were cut down.

Another victim of fast urbanisation is the horse and the professions that evolved around this marvelous creature. In the olden days, horse-drawn carriages were an important mode of transportation in the city. Even in the not too distant past when Dhaka was not so crowded, horse-drawn carriages would be used to transport people within the city on a regular basis. But with the increasing number of mechanised vehicles and rickshaws, these carriages have fallen into disuse.

In their heyday, the city horses would be raced in the Race Course Maidan, now Suhrawardy Udyan. Nowadays, only a few bony, ill-fed horses can be found in isolated spots in the old city.

Also, the donkey that was used to carry the washerman's load has virtually disappeared from the city.

And with the donkey, the washerman's beast of burden, has also all but disappeared the washerman himself. Even a couple of decades ago, it was common to see the washerman making his daily rounds to collect his customers' clothes for laundry and ironing. The washerman would usually get paid for his services on a monthly basis.

This particular profession is now on the wane as most washermen now work for laundries, which have sprouted all over the city.

Another group of people who

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## Body soon to decide fate of Ctg court bldg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

An expert committee will be formed within a week to examine whether the century-old Chittagong court building should be preserved as a historical site or demolished.

The government will take a decision on the issue after the committee submits its report, Housing and Public Works Minister Mirza Abbas said here yesterday after a crucial meeting on the fate of the building.

Commerce Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury, Chittagong Divisional Commissioner Katerbur Rahman, Deputy Commissioner Md Shafiqul Islam and high officials of Public Works Department (PWD) attended the meeting, held at the DC's office.

Meeting sources quoted the commerce minister as saying, "The government will act considering the good and bad aspects of the issue and above all, keeping in

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PHOTO: STAR

Police mount guard on the Dhaka University campus yesterday as part of stepped-up security measures against any possible untoward incidents after reopening of the university Thursday.

# Five Iraqis killed in US-British raids

PTI, Baghdad

Five Iraqi civilians were killed and 11 others wounded when US and British warplanes bombed southern Iraq on Thursday, an Iraqi military spokesman said.

"Enemy warplanes bombed civilian installations in the town of Nassiriyah, 375 kilometres south of Baghdad, killing five Iraqi civilians and wounding 11 others," the spokesman said.

He claimed surface-to-air missiles and anti-aircraft batteries had

forced the "enemy warplanes to flee to their base in Kuwait," and that the US and British aircraft had conducted 55 raids over 18 areas in the south of the country during the day.

The US military said earlier that US and British warplanes struck in southern Iraq yesterday after an aircraft came under fire as it dropped leaflets on Iraqi air defence positions warning gunners not to fire on coalition aircraft or "You could be next."

Pentagon spokesman Lieutenant Dan Heltage said US

and British planes attacked an Iraqi air defence headquarters and operations centre which was believed to be the source of the fire.

With the United States also stepping up pressure for a renewed international campaign against Iraq, the raid was near Tallil, about 250 kilometres southeast of Baghdad, he said.

"The air strike was in retaliation for shooting at the aircraft dropping the leaflets that say don't shoot at us," Heltage said.

Lebanon's Daily Star Online quoting an Iraqi military spokesman also said US and British jets attacked targets in southern Iraq on Thursday killing five civilians.

The US Central Command said from its Florida headquarters that the warplanes patrolling a "no-fly zone" over southern Iraq attacked a military air defence centre south-east of Baghdad.

It said the US and British aircraft

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## Madrassah student slaughtered in Sylhet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A Madrassah student was slaughtered at village Kalidaha in Golapganj upazila of the district yesterday morning.

The victim was identified as Abu Salam Shablu, 12, a student of Chandanpur Darul Ulum Madrassah.

According to police, Deen Islam, 32, an employee of local ice cream factory, stopped Shablu while he was going to a mosque to say Fazr prayers at around 4:30 am. He forcibly took Shablu to the factory and then slaughtered him with the help of others.

The reason behind the murder could not be known till filing of this report at 7 pm yesterday.

On receiving the news, Golapganj police rushed to the spot and recovered the body. They sent it to the Sylhet MAG Osmany Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

Police arrested Deen Islam from Maijgaon Railway Station in the afternoon. Victim's father Abdur Rahim filed a murder case with Golapganj police station.

## 'Acts of rival candidates'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A ward commissioner of the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) has said the killings of four ward commissioners were the 'acts' of their rival candidates in the DCC election in their respective wards.

"It is well understood that these (killings) are the acts of those who contested the election but failed to come out successful," commissioner of ward No. 42 Salimullah Solu told BBC Bangla Service yesterday.

Salimullah himself is an accused in a number of criminal cases including three for murder.

Asked about criminal cases against many of the ward commissioners, he said there are cases

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# Plunder of Tanguar Haor on as Ramsar project delayed

IQBAL SIDDIQUEE, Sylhet

More than two years after the declaration of Tanguar Haor in Sunmaganj district as a Ramsar Site, implementation of the project is yet to begin.

Sources said tender floated by the district administration twice for private investment in the Ramsar project had to be stalled under orders from the ministry concerned.

This has made the fate of the project uncertain and the government is also being deprived of huge amounts of revenue, which were normally being collected through fishing and other purposes.

On the other hand, organised groups have been plundering fish resources, plants and trees in the haor for the last two years. Sources attributed this to the delay in implementation of the Ramsar project

due to intervention from the ministry concerned.

Besides, some influential quarters have also been trying to make Tanguar haor 'free from the Ramsar programme' and for arranging lease of it. "It now seems there are virtually no authorities to see the state of affairs in the haor," one source said.

The country's biggest natural sanctuary of so many species of fish, birds and water plants, Tanguar haor is spread over about 20,000 acres of land with about 50 beels (big water bodies). It is a site having around 60,000 birds of various species and 140 species of fish. Over one lakh guest birds also fly to this area in the winter. Besides, clusters of various types of plants and trees are in abundance in the haor area.

Tanguar Haor was declared as a Ramsar area on 6 January, 2000

during the immediate past Awami League rule. The government signed the Ramsar Charter the same year. Initially, the process of executing the Ramsar project was delayed due to a tug of war between the forest and environment ministry and the land ministry. Finally, it was settled on February 12 last year that the environment ministry was the proper authority to implement the project. Previously, the land ministry used to lease out the fishing areas in the haor.

The government then took initiatives to ensure water preservation, raising of fish and plant production as well as for creating a sanctuary for birds and plants there. Fishing and hunting is now strictly prohibited in the haor area, but the reality is oth

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## Unidentified aircraft drops mysterious packets in W Bengal?

AFP, Kolkata

An unidentified aircraft entered Indian airspace in West Bengal on Thursday and dropped two packets near a village, police said.

"The plane came around noon and dropped some packets in a pond," said A.K. Prasad, additional superintendent of police in the Uttar Dinajpur district where the incident took place.

"They are still in the pond. We are yet to know what the packets are. Police have rushed to the place."

Prasad said the pond was in the Chopra area of the district in northwestern West Bengal on the India-Bangladesh border, about 440 km from state capital Kolkata.

Meanwhile, the Indian air force yesterday dismissed claims that mysterious packets had been air-dropped into a pond in West Bengal.

"We have carried out a complete investigation of the incident. It has been confirmed that there was no evidence on the ground of any air-dropping," squadron leader R.K. Dhingra of the Indian Air Force told AFP.

"There were also reports that something was dropped into a pond and subsequently the water colour changed. These reports were also found to be baseless on physical verification," Dhingra said.

He said there had been no Indian Air Force aircraft in the area and that investigators were still trying to ascertain whether any unidentified aircraft had entered Indian airspace.

"Radar of the Indian Air Force and Kolkata Airport's air traffic control failed to pick up any intrusion into the northern district of West Bengal as the aircraft was flying low," he added.

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## Bugbear infects millions of computers worldwide

AFP, Sydney

Millions of computers worldwide have been infected this week by a fast-replicating virus called Bugbear and security experts warned yesterday that the threat was still accelerating.

Bugbear, known as a mass-mailing worm because it spreads itself through computer users' e-mail programs, was first identified by a security team in Sydney on Sunday, said Lindy Yarnold, a computer security expert with Symantec.

Since then it has spread worldwide, affecting millions of computers in Europe, the United States and Asia, with Britain being the hardest hit followed by Australia and New Zealand, experts said.

"We have upgraded this threat from a category 3 to a category 4, our second highest threat level," Yarnold told AFP.

"At category 4, that would mean millions of users affected," she said.

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# Road accidents kill 6 in Feni, Mymensingh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least six people were killed in separate road accidents in Feni and Mymensingh yesterday and the day before.

Our Correspondent from Feni reports: Three people were killed when a Chittagong-bound bus from Sonapur hit their motorbike at Lemua on Dhaka-Chittagong highway at around 11 am yesterday.

The dead were identified as Mejbuddin Ahmed, 30, Shipon, 26, and Iqbal Hossain, 21.

Mejbuddin died on way to Mirersharai hospital while Shipon and Iqbal at Feni hospital.

In Mymensingh, three people were killed in separate road accidents in Phoolpur and Gouripur upazilas yesterday and the day before, according to UNB.

Police said a four-year-old boy Manjurul Haque Bappi was killed on the spot when a bus knocked him down at Kallapara on Mymensingh-Kishoreganj road in Gouripur upazila at about 11 am yesterday.

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|       | Sun Rises | Sun Sets |
|-------|-----------|----------|
| Oct 5 |           | 5-42 pm  |
| Oct 6 | 5-52 am   |          |

### Prayer Timings

Oct 5

|         | Azan  | Jamaat |
|---------|-------|--------|
| Fajr    | 4-45  | 5-10   |
| Zohr    | 12-45 | 1-15   |
| Asr     | 4-30  | 4-45   |
| Maghrib | 5-52  | 5-58   |
| Esha    | 7-45  | 8-15   |

Source: Islamic Foundation