

EU mulls banning Tigers

Big blow to LTTE for terror link

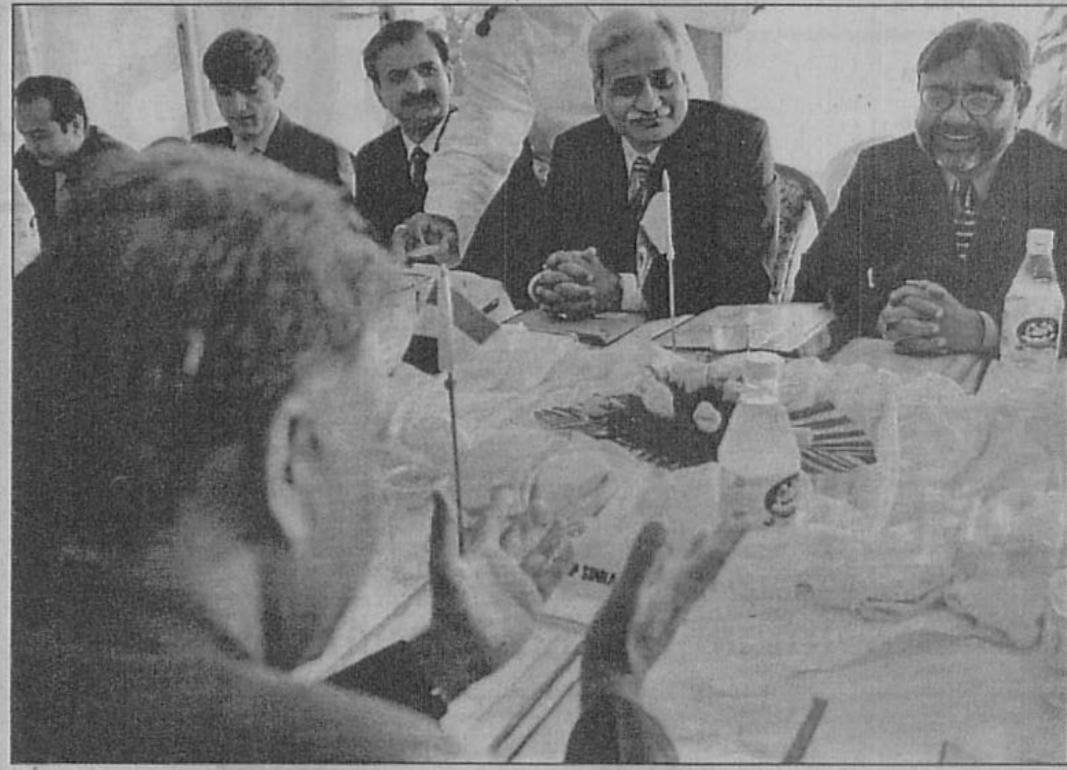
AFP, Colombo

In a diplomatic blow to the Tamil Tigers, the European Union said yesterday it will refuse to meet visiting rebel delegations because of the group's continued terrorism in Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict. The EU for the first time also announced it was "actively considering" banning the rebels. European diplomats here said that members, while mulling a full-fledged ban on the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), had agreed to take several other steps to crack down on Tiger activity in their countries. "We have not come to the stage of a full ban," one diplomat said. "But member states are sending a strong message to the LTTE that they have been put on notice. They would face a ban any time." An EU statement released by the

British high commission (embassy) in Colombo voiced concern about a "continuing use of violence and terrorism" by the Tigers. "The European Union has agreed that with immediate effect, delegations from the LTTE will no longer be received in any of the EU member states until further notice," the statement said. "The pursuit of political goals by such totally unacceptable methods only serves to damage the LTTE's standing and credibility as a negotiating partner and gravely endangers the peace process so much desired by the people of Sri Lanka." The EU also said it is considering listing the Tigers as a terrorist group to curtail political activities such as fund-raising. Several countries have already listed the LTTE as a terrorist organization including the United States, Britain and India. Britain currently

holds the presidency of the 25-member EU. Sri Lankan government spokesman Nimal Siripala de Silva said they were still studying the EU statement and would respond soon. EU officials said member states had also agreed to take additional national measures to check and curb "illegal or undesirable activities" of the LTTE in their own countries. The Tigers claim to maintain offices in 42 countries, including several European capitals where Tamils live as political refugees after having fled ethnic violence at home. Diplomats said the EU statement was provoked by the August 12 assassination of Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar. The murder further strained a shaky ceasefire brokered by Norway and in place since February 2002.

The government accused the Tigers of carrying out the killing but the rebels have denied involvement. The ethnic conflict has claimed more than 60,000 lives since 1972. An LTTE delegation travelled to Europe in April and met senior officials and politicians from the Netherlands and Ireland. There was no immediate reaction from the LTTE after the EU announcement, but the group's political chief S. P. Thamilselvan told AFP last week that any move to ban the Tigers would jeopardise the peace process. "We don't believe that the European Union will be naive (enough) to marginalise the LTTE, and thereby the Tamil people, because when they are removed from the equation, the peace process will collapse," Thamilselvan said.



Indian joint secretary of the foreign ministry, Dilip Sinha (L) talks with Pakistan's additional secretary of communications ministry Mohammad Abbas (R) at the start of a two-day meeting in New Delhi yesterday.

UK sets up 7 Muslim working groups to tackle extremism

ANSAR AHMED ULLAH, from London

British Home Secretary Charles Clarke has set up seven working groups to boost steps for integration and tackling extremism following the London bombings in July. The working groups have recommended a number of proposals like formation of a National Advisory Council of Imams and Mosques to advise mosques on how to prevent those being used by extremists, set standards, and increase the leadership skills of imams. The groups also proposed a national forum against extremism to discuss issues relating to tackling extremism and hold a country-wide 'roadshow' of influential, popular religious scholars to expound the concept of Islam in the West. Home Secretary Charles Clarke recently said, "Since July, we have had an ambitious programme to encourage Muslim communities to confront extremism." He also said, "But of course, tackling extremism is not something that can be done by government alone. We look forward to continuing the dialogue with Muslim communities and supporting the work that they are undertaking."



A farmer evacuates a dog from his flooded house in Hai Hoa commune, in the northern province of Nam Dinh in Vietnam yesterday following the passage of typhoon Damrey. The area was flooded following a break in a dike caused by the typhoon which brought in heavy rains.

Typhoon Damrey hits Vietnam

REUTERS, Hanoi

Typhoon Damrey smashed into Vietnam yesterday after killing 16 people in China, tearing into vital networks of sea dykes on a long stretch of coastline after more than 330,000 people had been evacuated. The 16 died on the Chinese island of Hainan as the typhoon plowed across early on Monday, most of them when buildings collapsed or trees were felled by powerful winds which left economic damage estimated at 10 billion yuan. One person was killed in Vietnam's Thanh Hoa province, where the typhoon landed on Tuesday, while trying to tie down the roof of a house, the state-run Tien Phong (Vanguard) newspaper said. Vietnam had worked frantically as the typhoon approached to evacuate as many people as possible and deployed small armies to shore up the sea dykes.

India, Pakistan hold talks on bus services, flights

AFP, AP, New Delhi

India and Pakistan met yesterday to agree details of new bus services between border cities and discuss an increase in flights as a part of a peace process, officials in both countries said. One set of talks was held at a hotel in the Indian capital New Delhi on the "operationalisation of these two bus links - Lahore-Amritsar and Amritsar-Nankana," an Indian foreign ministry spokesman said. The India delegation is headed by Dilip Sinha, joint secretary at the foreign ministry, while Mohammad Abbas, additional secretary in the Ministry of Communications, is leading the Pakistan side for the two-day meeting. The two countries agreed in May in Islamabad to run buses between the Sikh holy city of Amritsar and Pakistan's second largest city of Lahore, but left technical details to be decided at a second round of talks.

They also agreed in principle to run a second bus service between Amritsar and the Pakistani town of Nankana Sahib, the site of a Sikh shrine near Lahore. After the meeting in May Pakistan delegation leader Abbas had said more preparations were needed before a date for the launch of the 56-km service could be set. "We have to work out certain modalities and as a matter of fact the date depends on the tour operators of the two countries," he had said. Simultaneously, Pakistani and Indian aviation officials began talks in Rawalpindi, a garrison city near Islamabad, to increase the number of flights and improve passenger services, a defence ministry official told AFP. The Indian side is led by the director general of Indian ministry of civil aviation Satendra Singh, while Muhammad Ashraf Chaudhry, additional secretary of Pakistan's defence ministry is leading his side.

Air links between the two countries were severed after India blamed Pakistan-based militants for a December 2001 attack on its parliament that brought the nuclear-armed neighbours to the brink of war. Under a series of fence-mending moves since April 2003, the two sides agreed on December 1, 2003 to restart air services and the first commercial flight from New Delhi landed in Pakistani city of Lahore on January 9 last year. Currently, official airlines from the two countries operate flights between two cities in India - New Delhi and Mumbai, and two in Pakistan - Lahore and Karachi. Pakistan and India have fought three wars since independence in 1947. The reopening of transport links across the border has been a feature of the new peace dialogue, which began in January last year. They have also agreed to revive a train service between Munnabao in India and Khokrapar in Pakistan.

Pak SC upholds Sarabjit's death sentence

PTI, Islamabad

Adding to Sarabjit Singh's woes, Pakistan Supreme Court on Tuesday upheld the death sentence given to him in another bomb blast case in Lahore in 1990. The apex court verdict came even as there was an uproar in India against the death sentence given to him in three bomb blasts in Lahore and Faisalabad, following which President Pervez Musharraf has agreed to look into the mercy plea. The Supreme Court had on August 18 upheld the death sentence given to Singh, for allegedly carrying out three bomb blasts in Lahore and Faisalabad in 1990.

Targeted killing of Hamas men to go on: Israel

AFP, Gaza City

Israel vowed yesterday to continue targeted killings of members of the radical Palestinian groups Hamas and Islamic Jihad in the Gaza Strip as the air force carried out more overnight air raids. Defence Minister Shaul Mofaz made the announcement on army radio after Israeli troops arrested 82 Hamas and Islamic Jihad members overnight in the West Bank. "Yes, the Israeli army will continue to use all means necessary," said Mofaz when questioned about whether Israel would continue targeted assassinations and bombing raids on the Islamist stronghold of the Gaza Strip. Palestinian leader Mahmud Abbas's spokesman swiftly condemned Mofaz for trying to destroy hopes of calm following Israel's pullout from the Gaza Strip and urged the international community to rein in Israel. "We warn Israel against continued assassinations and raids in Gaza because it will destroy the

peace and quiet," Nabil Abu Rudeina told AFP. "Continued assassinations will explode the entire situation. We are asking the international community, especially the United States, to move immediately and put strong pressure on Israel to stop this," he added. Hamas announced on Sunday it had ordered a halt to rocket attacks into Israel from its Gaza Strip stronghold, but there has been no let-up in air raids over the territory from which troops were withdrawn two weeks ago. Two Hamas and two Jihad militants have been killed in Israeli air strikes since Saturday, after Hamas blamed a deadly blast at a rally in northern Gaza on Israel and began firing a salvo of rockets into the Jewish state. "There is no ceasefire, Hamas has done something unforgivable and we must force them to observe the new rules of the game," said Mofaz. "They killed innocent Palestinians during a parade on Friday and then accused Israel. And in order to back up this lie, they

fired dozens of Qassams... and wounded Israeli civilians. We will not let this pass." The Israeli air force carried out more raids on Gaza overnight including on three bridges in the northern Beit Hanun area, which they said had been used by militants "to reach sectors from where it was possible to fire Qassam rockets at Israel." A Palestinian security official said one person was slightly wounded in a strike on the southern Gaza town of Khan Yunis, seriously damaging a building used by money changers and another by Abbas's ruling Fatah party. Mofaz said that even if Hamas had announced an end to the firing of rockets, it was secretly pressing other militant groups to launch attacks. "We will not allow them to continue with that policy," he said. Around 380 suspected militants have been arrested in the West Bank since Sunday, including Sheikh Hassan Yusuf, considered a top Hamas leader in the West Bank.

India, China end border talks with little progress

AFP, Beijing

Asian giants India and China ended a sixth round of border talks yesterday with no apparent progress in settling a dispute that has languished since a 1962 frontier conflict, officials said. "The talks have concluded, I really have nothing to share with you on the progress made," said Sanjay Verma, spokesman for the Indian Embassy in China. "Both sides were aiming at setting up a framework in which to resolve the border issue." Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Qin Gang also did not give specific details about the two days of talks. "With the development and improvement of China-India relations, the atmosphere for resolving the border issue has improved," he told a regular briefing. "The two sides have the sincerity to seek a solution to this issue." He said the two sides had agreed to hold the next round of talks in New Delhi, at a date to be set via diplomatic channels.

Indian National Security Adviser M.K. Narayanan was India's top negotiator and his Chinese opposite number was Vice Foreign Minister Dai Bingguo. Narayanan was set to leave Beijing on Wednesday morning, Verma said. "China sincerely hopes the boundary question can be settled in a fair and reasonable way at an early date," top Communist Party official Jia Qingling was quoted as telling Narayanan by Xinhua news agency. "The special representatives from the two countries should proceed from the overall interests of China-India ties and continue to make progress in reaching a framework for the settlement of the boundary question." Narayanan also met with Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing, Xinhua said. The agreement to hold the talks came during a meeting between Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Chinese President Hu Jintao on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly session in New York earlier this month.



England found guilty of abuse at Abu Ghraib

REUTERS, Fort Hood

A court-martial found US soldier Lyndie England guilty on Monday of abusing prisoners at Iraq's Abu Ghraib prison in a scandal that caused international outrage. The former chicken factory worker now faces a prison term of up to 10 years, for convictions on six out of seven abuse-related charges. England, 22, showed no visible reaction as she stood at attention to hear the verdict. In photographs published around the world, England, a young female Army reservist, was shown holding a naked Iraqi prisoner by a leash and pointing to an inmate's genitals.

Iran vows retaliation as UN showdown nears

REUTERS, Tehran

Iran on Monday threatened to restart uranium enrichment and to stop allowing UN snap inspections of its atomic facilities, if moves to send it to the UN Security Council were not reversed. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on Saturday passed a resolution requiring that Tehran be reported to the council for possible sanctions, after Iran failed to convince the world its atomic ambitions were entirely peaceful. "Unless the resolution is corrected or if its implementation is insisted upon, Iran will be forced to cancel all its voluntary and temporary measures including implementation of the Additional Protocol," said a foreign ministry statement, read out on Iranian state television. The Additional Protocol to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) allows short-notice intrusive checks of atomic facilities by UN weapons inspectors. Foremost among Iran's voluntary measures is the suspension of uranium enrichment, a process it has already threatened to restart if

sent to New York. Washington has accused Iran of developing its uranium enrichment program for nuclear warheads, but Tehran insists it needs it only to make fuel for power stations. On Friday, Iran's IAEA delegation showed some board members two letters saying Iran would begin enriching uranium and end snap inspections if the resolution were passed. Earlier in the day, Iranian Vice-President Gholamreza Aghazadeh had condemned the IAEA resolution but had stopped short of making any threats, which diplomats had expected. "This resolution is based on an invalid legal precept, an unjustified technical ground and a misguided political forecast," Aghazadeh told the IAEA's General Conference. The IAEA board resolution requires that Iran be referred to the Security Council at an unspecified date. EU diplomats said they expected the board would decide to send its report on Iran's nuclear NPT breaches to the UN Security Council during the agency's next board of governors' meeting in November.

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এতদ্বারা বিজ্ঞান এবং তথ্য ও যোগাযোগ প্রযুক্তি মন্ত্রণালয়ের অধীন Computer Access Centre for Software & Hardware Research Development and Networking শীর্ষক বিশেষ অনুদান প্রকল্পের অধীন ১২টি শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানে কম্পিউটার নেটওয়ার্কিং ল্যাব স্থাপনের নিমিত্ত কম্পিউটার ও আনুষঙ্গিক যন্ত্রপাতি ক্রয় করে সরবরাহের জন্য আগ্রহী প্রকৃত ব্যবসায়ী/সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট থেকে ২১-০৯-২০০৫ তারিখের মধ্যে দরপত্র আহবান করা হয়েছিল। অনিবার্য কারণবশতঃ দরপত্র দাখিলের সময়সীমা আগামী ১২-১০-২০০৫ তারিখ বেলা ১২.০০টা পর্যন্ত বর্ধিত করা হলো। দরপত্রের নিয়মানুযায়ী উক্ত দরপত্রের সিডিউল-এর ক্রয় মূল্য ৭৫০/- (সাত শত পঞ্চাশ) টাকা। নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর অফিস থেকে দরপত্রের সিডিউল সরবরাহ করা হবে। পূর্বের শর্তাবলী অক্ষুণ্ণ থাকবে। প্রাপ্ত দরপত্রসমূহ ৩১-১০-০৫ টায় দরদাতাদের (যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকেন) সম্মুখে খোলা হবে।
প্রকল্প পরিচালক
Computer Access Centre for Software & Hardware Research Development and Networking Project
GD-1537



US anti-war activist Cindy Sheehan is arrested by police during a protest against the war in Iraq in front of the White House in Washington Monday.

Protestant leader rejects N Ireland power-sharing

AFP, Belfast

The head of Northern Ireland's largest Protestant party refused yesterday to share power with the Irish Republican Army's political wing, despite international findings that the militia has scrapped all of its weapons. Ian Paisley, head of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), took a hard line after emerging from talks with international monitors following their historic announcement Monday that the IRA had put its arsenal beyond use. "It's a nonsense to say that decommissioning has been completed," Paisley said after he was briefed on the findings by John de Chastelain, the retired Canadian general who oversaw the disarmament process. "We are not going into government with Sinn Fein," Paisley added. Sinn Fein is the political wing of the IRA, the main Catholic paramilitary group, which fought for decades to end British rule in the province. The British and Irish governments are hoping de Chastelain's announcement will kick-start talks to restore a joint Protestant-Catholic assembly after a three-year hiatus -- a key step toward a permanent peace settlement. Paisley, who as DUP leader is crucial to any resumption of power-sharing, demanded more detailed evidence of disarmament and attacked the credibility of two clergymen who witnessed and certified the decommissioning drive. Methodist pastor Harold Good and his Catholic counterpart Father Alex Reid backed de Chastelain's assessment that the IRA had acted on its July 28 pledge to ditch weapons. But Paisley charged that the clergymen "were appointed by the IRA, not the governments." In handing his report detailing the weapons decommissioning process to the British and Irish governments, de Chastelain had said he was satisfied that the dismantled arms "represent the totality of the IRA's arsenal." He said the weapons put beyond use -- including surface-to-air missiles, flame throwers, machine guns, explosives and other arms -- matched estimates of the Catholic paramilitary group's arsenal produced by British and Irish security forces.

Four soldiers killed in ambush in Thai south

AFP, Yala

Four soldiers were shot dead yesterday when militants ambushed their patrol in Thailand's Muslim-majority south, the latest in a spate of deadly attacks on troops and police in the past week. "The soldiers were riding motorcycles on patrol when militants ambushed them and robbed them of their machine guns," police Lieutenant Colonel Mustorpha Mani told AFP by telephone. They were patrolling a stretch of road near Chakwua village in Yala province, in advance of a convoy of teachers, when they were attacked around 2:30 pm, he said. Teachers and schools, seen by militants as a symbol of Bangkok's influence, are frequent targets of shootings, bombings and arson attacks. Armed police and soldiers escort teachers to and from class every day. After the ambush, the militants set tyres ablaze, dropped spikes and hauled logs onto the road to prevent security forces from chasing them, army Lieutenant General

Adul Seangsingkoae said. Adul said he had ordered 500 troops into the area. Earlier Tuesday a Muslim schoolteacher was shot dead by suspected Islamic insurgents in neighbouring Pattani province, police said. Surasen Mama, 30, a teacher at Prasarnwitaya school, was killed when suspected militants riddled his car with bullets as he drove to work. Their deaths came four days after two police officers were killed in a bombing as they escorted teachers to school in neighbouring Narathiwat province, and a week after two marines were taken hostage and brutally beaten to death. The 18-hour hostage-taking last week captured the nation's attention, drawing royal condolences for their families and a vow from Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra to hunt down the "beasts" who killed them. Amid the violence, Queen Sirikit began her annual retreat in the south, accompanied by her two daughters Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn and Princess Chulabhorn.