LONDON, May 31: Several members of the former Ethiopian government and military commanders have given themselves up to the rebels, according to a report broadcast by Ethiopian Radio Thursday, reports agencies.

The radio, monitored by the British Broadcasting Corporation, named 12 members of the former government, party officials and military leaders, who it said "gave themselves up to Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) combatants this afternoon.

They gave themselves up "in accordance with Wednesday night's announcement to stabilise the peace and security of Addis Ababa", the radio report said.

An announcement broadcast by the radio overnight Wednesday said that the EPRDF gave officials of the former regime 48 hours to surrender.

Hope for famine relief in the Horn of Africa has improved with the rebel takeover of Ethiopia and the uncovering of new food supplies in Sudan, a US aid official told Congress on Thursday.

· . But the official and other witnesses at a Congressional

MADRAS, May 31: Indian detectives probing the bomb assassination of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi are questioning journalists with possible links to Sri Lanka militants, police sources said yesterday, reports Reuter.

The Press Trust of India (PTI), news agency quoting official sources, said other investigators were seeking a third accomplice of the woman believed to have blown Gandhi up with plastic explosive strapped to her waist.

Authorities had earlier circulated a photograph of another man, burly and middleaged, said to have been posing as a journalist, who is believed to have accompanied the assassin. Police are also looking for a fair complexioned woman also seen at the election rally with the assassin.

Police sources said officers of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) searched the offices of the periodical Tamil Nation, mouthpiece of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), which is edited in Madras and published in Lon-

Mengistu's men surrender

hearing outlined a still-grim picture of the region where relief officials say millions of people face possible starvation.

"The changes we are witnessing offer hope that relief efforts in northern Ethiopia will now be ester and that the root causes of the needs in that region can be addressed." said Andrew S Natsios, Director of the US Agency for International Development's Foreign Disaster Assistance Office.

Natsios said, however, that the continuing conflict in Ethiopia was hungering US efforts to aid Sudanese and Somalis fleeing wars in their own countries.

Natsios testified before the House Select Committee on Hunger.

Major concern over the famine caused by drought and war in countries around Africa's northeastern tip has shifted in recent days from the

Sudan to Ethiopia, Natsios testifled. Other affected countries include Somalia and Djibouti. In Sudan, he said, predic-

tions that 300,000 people would die were made before large amounts of food were discovered being hoarded by merchants waiting for shortages to push the prices up.

He said that a large number still could die, but much more food is available in the region than previously thought. He said the United States plans to provide about one-thought of the needs and can do that without additional appropria-

Estimates of the amount of food needed very, however. Natsios said Ethiopia requires about 750,000 metric tons, while United Nations estimates top 1.3 million metric

Meanwhile, the US Committee for Refugees, private

refugee information group, called for US military help in getting food and medical help to the displaced throngs.

Two dozen Ethiopians are dying every day in Sudan, a government official said Thursday in appealing for international aid for refugees from the civil war in neighbouring Ethiopia.

Col. Mohammed Khalifa, a member of Sudan's ruling military janta, said illness and lack of health facilities are killing the Ethiopians. He said he expects the death tool to rise.

Interior Minister Maj. Gen. Al-Zubari Mohammed Salih said 100,000 Ethiopian soldiers and civilians have crossed into Sudan to the west since rebel forces took over the country on Tuesday.

He said 15,000 of them are starving and an equal number are suffering from malnutri-



ADDIS ABABA (Ethiopia): Two Ethiopian women walk by the presidential palace Thursday as children play on the charred remains of an Ethiopian army tank destroyed during the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) takeover of the capital.

— AFP/UNB photo

Roh's ability questioned

SEOUL, May 31: The country's top opposition leader on Friday questioned President Roh Tae-woo's ability to govern, warning that the presi-

dent must form a neutral government. "I think Mr. Roh Tae-woos ability to rule the country has reached its limit, said Kim Dae-jung, President of the New Democratic Party, the No. 1

opposition party. "The only way to settle the present political crisis is for him to form a neutral government, Kim said in a prepared statement for delivery at a major outdoor rally in Seoul.

Kim said the political crisis has been caused by Roh's inability to handle high inflation and corruption scandals. He also accused the government of intensifying a crackdown on political dissent and labour.

Roh has introduced wide democratic reforms, including greater freedom of the press, since taking office in 1988. Critics say he has backtracked

in the past year.

Police search LTTE paper office

don, and seized documents. The Tigers have denied a role in the assassination, but Indian Law and Justice Minis-

Rajiv's killing: Lankan woman arrested

NEW DELHI, May 31 : Police in India's southern Tamil Nadu state have detained a young Sri Landan woman for questioning in connection with the slaying of former Premier Rativ Gandhi, the Press Trust of India (PTI) said, reports

Shanthini Joshephine, 30, was picked up when she was found "under suspicious circumstances" at a railway junction station in Tamil Nadu's Madurai town late Wednesday.

ter Subramanian Swamy has said evidence so far points to a planned conspiracy by the LTTE, which is fighting for a separate Tamil state in Sri Lanka's north and east.

Another CBI team went to Colombo, the Sri Lankan capital, on Thursday. Bradman Weerakoon, Adviser to Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa, told reporters the three officers would meet local officials in connection with the investigation.

Police sources in Madras say the man at the assassination scene posing as a journalist tossed a notepad he was holding onto the speaker's

platform before fleeing. The photograph now being circulated throughout the state shows him wearing a white "kurta" shirt and white pyjama trousers - dress common to northern India.

4 Lankan troops, 1 12 Tamils killed in fighting

COLOMBO, May 31 Government troops have resumed offensive operations following a four-day truce for a Buddhist holiday. Four Sinhalese soldiers and 12 Tamil rebel were killed. mili tary officers said Friday, reports AP.

Six rebels were killed when troops laid an ambush at Kadaraveli village in eastern Batticaloa district, said officers of the Joint Operations Command.

Three more rebels were shot dead in two separate incidents in northern Sri Lanka, they said.

The four soldiers were killed and five more were wounded when rebels attacked troops moving out of a military camp at the northeastern town of Mullattivu. Three rebels also were reported killed in the fighting, the officers said.

Rajiv's death upsets political calculations

NEW DELHI, May 31: The slaying of Rajiv Gandhi, the former prime minister and Congress Party leader, has upset all political calculations in India. No one knows how voters will react to the assassination, reports AP.

Bombay bookies called off all bets on India's general election when Gandhi was assassinated. The stock market tumbled, then bounced back the next day when the Congress Party asked Gandhi's widow Sonia to take his place. Prices plunged again when she

refused the offer. Forecasters are unsure whether voters will tilt toward Congress in sympathy over Gandhi's assassination, or if they might be frightened off by the party's confusion and by

the leadership crisis it now

Gandhi, the 46-year-old Congress leader and prime minister from 1984 until he lost the 1989 election, was killed May 21 when a young woman triggered a suicide bomb during a campaign rally in south India. No one claimed responsibility, but police suspect Tamil militants from neighboring Sri Lanka.

Forty per cent of the nation had gone to the polls on the previous day. After the killing, voting was postponed until mid-June for the other 60 per cent of the districts.

The breakdown of the results will tell much about the impact of Gandhi's assassina

The bookies and the more

scientific pollsters had made Congress the odds-on favourite to win the most seats in elections for the 543-member Lok Sabha, the lower house of parliament. Running a strong second was the Bharatiya Janata Party, a right-wing Hindu revivalist party that wants to change the bedrock principle that India is a secular state. Neither had been expected

to win a majority. After a week of indecision, Congress on Wednesday elected a veteran party stalwart, P.V. Narasimha Rao, 69, to succeed Gandhi as party

president. Rao is an ex-foreign minister who dabbles in poetry and literary translations. His greatest political asset is that he does not belong to any faction

bidding to fill the power vac-In a recent editorial, the

newspaper, indicated that Congress will continue to campaign on the Gandhi image. But his absence is likely to transform Congress - and the nation — in several ways. First, it will bring a diffusion of power in Congress,

National Herald, the party's

which had been monopolised for 400 years by the Gandhi family. It started with his grandfather, Jawaharlal Nehru, and continued with his mother, Indira Gandhi. Rao, who is in ill health, is

unlikely to want the job of prime minister if Congress forms the next government and is not standing for election to parliament. From now on, the party has said, the two jobs will be held by two people.

Swaminathan Aiyar, an editor of the Times of India, said Nehru and the Gandhis should not be blamed for concentrating power - that voters preferred dynasty to democracy. "India has degenerated into neo-feudalism," he wrote.

BREFFE

3 Pak kidnappers killed: Pakistani police said on Thursday they killed three bandits who had kidnapped two people for ransom in the southern province of Sind, reports Reuter from Karachi.

They said at least four others were arrested following gunbattles in the Sukkur and Khairpur areas ahead of a planned operation against some other bandits who were holding three Chinese engineers kidnapped on May 11.

The kidnapping of the three Chinese followed the release of three kidnapped Japanese students and the death of kidnapped Swedish engineer in a gunbattle between police and bandits.

PLO's plea to stop Jewish entry: The Palestine Liberation Organisation called on the United Nations on Thursday to halt the creation of new Jewish settlements in the Israeli-occupied territories, reports Reuter from Tunis.

The PLO executive committee, in a statement issued after a two-day meeting in Tunis, invited "the UN Security Council to play (its) role in applying resolutions related to halting (Israeli) settlements and to ensure international protection for our people."

An estimated 100,000 Israelis have settled on the West Bank and Gaza Strip since Israel captured the territories from Jordan and Egypt in the 1967 Middle East war.

Uranium leaks from US N-plant Officials declared a low-level state of emergency Thursday at Nuclear plant in this southern state after uranium was poured accidentally into a waste system tank, reports AFP for North Carolina.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), which monitors safety at US Nuclear facilities, said 150 kilograms (330 pounds) of Urantum was found suspended in a liquid solution in a waste processing tank.

That amount was three times the smallest quantity which could cause a "a critical reaction," or release of radioactivity, NRC officials said.

Maoists kill 8 policemen in India: :A land mine killed eight policemen in the southern state on Andhra Pradesh Thursday, news agencies reported, says AP from New Delhi.

Leftist guerillas of the Peoples' War Group, a Maoist-inspired organisation, detonated a land mine under a jeep of the special task force for anti-Maoist activities in the state, United News of India said.

The attack occurred in the village of Labbarathee in the East Godavari district, about 940 kilometers (580 miles) southeast of New Delht.

The task force was driving to a neighbouring village where Peoples' War Group guerillas had a allegedly burned five houses, the news agency said.

Mandate of 'Blue Helmet' extended: The UN Security Council has extended for six months the mandate of its "Blue Helmet" force deployed since 1974 between Syria and Israel, reports AFP from New York.

The UN Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) mandate was renewed unanimously by the 15-member council in its resolution 695.

The UNDOF was created in May 1974 to monitor the cease-fire between Israel and Syria and watch over the return of opposing troops to international frontiers. The UN force currently is formed by 1,324 soldiers from

Austria, Canada, Finland and Poland.

killed in Soviet train blast : An explosion aboard a train bound for Soviet Azerbaijan killed 11 people and injured eight, the Independent news agency

Postfactum reported, says Reuter from Moscow. The agency described the death toll as preliminary and said the cause of Thursday's blast in Dagestan on the coast of the Caspian sea was being investigated by a government

commission already at the site of the accident. Trains have been attacked in recurrent waves of unrest in the region, particularly those travelling between Azerbatian and Armenia.

US to keep carrier in Gulf There are eight allied

rier inside the Gulf for as long as American troops are deployed in the region, the commander of a carrier battle group said Wednesday, report

US aircraft carriers entered the Gulf during the Gulf crisis caused by Iraq's August 2 inva-

sion of Kuwait. At the peak of the crisis, there were four US carrier battle groups operating inside the waterway, plus another two in the Red Sea.

After the liberation of Kuwait in February, the Navy scaled down its Gulf presence to two nuclear-powered carriers and their battle groups.

"We will be here as long as there is potential for instability in the area," Rear Adm. Philip M. Quast said in

the largest of the navy's The USS Theodore Roo-

sevelt battle group was tempo-

rally shifted to the Mediterranean to oversee allied rescue operations of Kurdish refugees in northern Iraq. The Nimitz, with 5,500 men aboard, arrived April 17. Its aircraft fly reconnaissance

missions over Kuwait and Iraq. and protection of US ground forces and allied minesweepers is a top priority. Around 75,000 American

troops remain in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Some 40 US Navy ships are still deployed in the region. Defense Secretary Dick Ch-

eney has acquiesced to a request from Kuwait to maintain US ground troops in the northern emirate for an unspecified number of months to navies conducting minesweeping operations in the northern Gulf. A Japanese minesweeping contingent is in the southern Gulf port of Dubai preparing to join the

route out of the northern Gulf is expected to open Saturday. The 2,000-foot (600-meter) wide route is 85-90 per cent free of mines, but the US Navy will still escort merchant ships that desire protection. General Colin Powell.

A mine-free deep water

Washington's top military officer, said on Thursday gulf coalition forces may withdraw from Iraq sooner than expected, after the repatriation of Kurdish refugees.

But Powell, Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, said after a brief visit to the multi-

national security zone in northern Iraq that the coalition nations would be ready to use any means necessary to ensure President Saddam Hussein did not crack down on Kurds again.

Powell did not specify a date for the withdrawal. He also cautioned. "We are in no hurry. There is no haste."

But his remarks suggested the coalition could withdraw its 21,000-strong forces from about mid-June - a date already suggested by some Allted officials because of the relatively trouble-free resettlement hundreds of thousands of refugees.

Powell signalled to Baghdad that the outside world would be watching very closely to ensure the refugees could rebuild their lives in peace and security after the Allies pull out.

'Lauda Air

BANGKOK, May 31: An Aus-

"We think it is more and more plausible that an engine caught fire, that it impeded." said Dr Peter Blumauer, an Interior Ministry official heading the Austrian police delegation in Thailand to investigate Sunday night's crash.

porting the theory that it im-

flight were killed.

crashed after engine failure'

trian official said on Friday that experts believed that the more likely cause of the Lauda Air Airliner disaster in Thailand was engine failure rather than a bomb, reports Reuter.

He said investigations had examined the left-hand engine of the Bocing 767-300 and found it heavily burned, sup-

All 223 people aboard the

Croatia threatens to secede from Y'slavia

BELGRADE, May 31: The republic of Croatia pledged on Thursday to break away from Yugoslavia by June 30 unless turmoil dividing the Balkan Federation is solved, reports The clear warning of a split

came amid growing international pressure to hold Yugoslavia together in a crisis that has left the state without a President and on the verge of civil war.

The northwestern republic's parliament unanimously agreed to declare independence by June 30 if no accord is reached by June 15 with the

country's other five republics

on how to live together under

Croatia's moves appeared to counter warnings by leaders from France, Germany, the Soviet Union and the European Community on Thursday that Yugoslavia's breakup could destabilise Europe.

a new arrangement.

LILLE (France): German Chancellor Helmut Kohl (R) greets the public May 30 during his

arrival with French President Francois Mitterrand (L) at the town hall here. The two

leaders are taking part in the 57th Franco-German summit.

Croatian President Franjo Tudjman has repeatedly said his region will break away if the feuding republics do not agree to turn the Yugoslav federation into a loose alliance of sovereign states modelled on the European Community.

But by formally approving

the decision, the parliament

pushed Croatia a step further

down the road to secession

with neighbouring Slovenia

which has vowed to declare independence next month. The two republics.

-AFP photo

Yugoslavia's richest, are opposed by Serbia in a dispute over the country's future that prompted clashes which have killed more than 20 people this year and increased fears of a civil war. Serbia, the biggest republic,

wants Yugoslavia to remain a centrally-rulled federation. Croatian Radio said the parliament ordered the govern-

ment to prepare legal and state measures for "the dissociation and full independence of the republic of Croatia" if no agreement is reached with the other republics by June 15.

"The deputies agreed that the state and legal measures would have to be tabled and forwarded to the Croatian assembly for adoption by June 30 at the latest," the radio

The decision came hours French President Francois Mitterrand and German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, meeting in the French city of Lille, expressed great concern at Developments in Yogoslavia

"They view the worsening clashes, which have cost considerable loss of life, as a danger to the stability of the region and to Europe as whole," a joint statement said.

Off the Record

paternity claim LONDON: Captain Mark Phillips, the estranged husband of Princess Anne, is lacing a paternity claim over a five-year-old child after a brief affair with another woman, two papers said here on Thursday, reports Reuter.

Mark Phillips faces

Lawyers for the woman involved, horse rider Heather Tonkin, are to begin proceedings to this week, the Daily Mail said. The woman alleges that she spent a night with Captain Phillips

and that he is the father of her child, a girl called felicity, nicknamed Bunny, the paper said. "My ambition is to get Marks' public acceptance of her", Ms

Tonkin was quoted as saying. Further details of the paternity claim were not to be disclosed

to the press, her lawyers said. Captain Phillips, aged 42, who separated from his wife, the Princess, in 1989, has never accepted that he is the father of the

child, another paper, the Daily Express said. \$34,000 bathroom for dogs

MONTREAL: Montreal will spend 34,000 dollars to build an experimental bathroom for dogs in a city park, reports AP. The enclosed facility will feature three prefabricated concrete poles, three-foot-high (one-meter-high) urinals nestled in a bed of crushed stone, several newly planted

trees, a border of shrubbery and park benches for owners. Council member Nick Auf der Maur called the experimental facility a good idea but said the price tag was "insane." Auf der Maur also questioned the logic of building bathrooms for dogs in a city that constructed an entire subway system without public toilets and has systematically eliminated toilets for humans in city parks.

Each year, officials say the city's 50,000 dogs leave an estimated 100 tons of excrement on streets and in parks. In the meantime, Montreal canine patrols will be on the prowl. with powers to meet out fines of up to \$ 300 dollars to

Unknown spacecraft

owners who let their pets defecate illegally.

SEATTLE, (Washington): A NASA satellite has found a cloud of orbiting space debris left behind by an unknown spacecraft, a US space scientist said on Wednesday, reports Although the particles in the cloud were small, ranging

from the size of fine sand to dust, it could pose a danger to other missions, Institute for Space Science and Technology scientist John Oliver said. The debris was detected by NASA's long duration exposure

facility, launched in 1984 and returned to earth in January 1990. It was designed to detect meteorites, bits of comets and other material floating in space near earth. Shortly after launch, the satellite flew into a swarm of

material. "With each turn around the planet, it met debris cloud. With each orbit. It hit a clump," Oliver told a meeting of the American Astronomical Society.

He said the material seemed to have been left in the tarail of a spacecraft that had flown in a path frequently used by US military and Soviet satellites. He may soon be able to identify which craft left it.

Stolen Picasso found

NEW YORK: Police on Thursday recovered a Picasso painting worth about one million dollars that had been stolen several years ago from the home of a Manhattan art collector and secretly replaced with a forgery, authorities said, reports

The painting, a 1943 oil portrait titled, "Head of woman with golden earnings" had belonged to the late family McFadden-Staepfli, a socialite from Philadelphia who died in January, said police inspector Charles Prestia.

Prestia said the Picasso art work and another by the Belgian painter Rene Magritte, had been secretly stolen from one of the three Manhattan homes that McFadden-Staemst resided in between 1980 and 1985. Both paintings were replaced with forgeries, which were

not revealed to be fakes until last year. Prestia said the Picasso was worth about one million, while the Magritte Painting, a 1954 work titled," Sans Famille" was

appraised at between 1.5 million and 1.7 million dollars. The Magritte painting has not been recovered, he said.

an interview the USS Nimitz, ABOARD THE USS NIMITZ. May 31 : The US Navy will probably keep an aircraft caraircraft carriers.