

US prepares 68 lakh secret reports

WASHINGTON, Apr 4: The US government generated 6,797,720 secrets in 1990, only one thousand more than the year before and far less than the number expected for this year, said a report released Tuesday, reports AFP.

President George Bush wrote a special cover letter to the report thanking the government for helping sealed lips while satisfying the public's desire for information on the Gulf war.

Under very trying circumstances, this system worked most effectively in safeguarding the information that had to be protected in order for our military operations to succeed, Mr. Bush wrote.

The number of secrets is expected to skyrocket in 1991 when the whispers from the Gulf crisis and war are added to the regular security concerns that led to nearly 6.8 million hushed pieces of information this year.

Their impact is likely to be significant wrote Steven Garfinkel, Director of the Information Security Oversight Office, which produces the annual secrecy report.

Yet the number of secret documents has dropped dramatically since the days of the administration of Ronald Reagan. In 1985, the security office reported 15,000 new secrets in its Annual Report.

Congress had been pushing for more selective use of security classifications and appeared encouraged by the recent control in secret making.

Iraqis leaving Allied-controlled ceasefire zone

RIYADH, Apr 4: Hundreds of Iraqi troops on Wednesday began moving out of an Allied-controlled sector of the ceasefire zone near the Kuwait-Iraq border, the US Central Command said, reports AP.

From 200 to 300 Iraqi soldiers evacuated the two buildings about 200 metres (yards) inside Kuwait, said the Central Command spokesman, Air Force Maj. Keith Gillett.

Gillett said he knew of no other Iraqi troops left in the Emirate. He didn't know why the Iraqis had entered the zone.

A Kuwaiti tank commander at the border told The Associated Press on Monday that the incursion was an attempt by Iraq to lodge a post-war claim to an area of about two square miles (five square kilometers) south of the Iraqi-held port of Um Qasr.

The Allied demarcation line runs mostly through southern Iraq but it dips into Kuwait in the contested area near Um Qasr.

UN Council asks Iraq to destroy weapons of mass destruction

US won't pull out troops until Iraq accepts truce terms

NEW YORK, Apr 4: The UN Security Council voted 12-1 Wednesday to require Iraq to destroy its weapons of mass destruction and meet other conditions in return for a formal end to the Gulf war, reports AP.

Of the 15 council members, Cuba voted against the ceasefire resolution and Yemen and Ecuador abstained.

Council members negotiated for nearly two weeks over the working of the US-proposed document in UN history which set out in detail what Baghdad must do to regain full sovereignty following its crushing defeat at the hands of US-led forces.

The United States said it will not withdraw its forces from southern Iraq or yield control over Iraqi airspace until Baghdad accepts the ceasefire conditions.

The resolution, number 687 also calls for the immediate lifting of an embargo on shipments to Iraq of food and other goods considered necessary to meet essential civilian needs.

It demanded that Iraq and Kuwait pledge to respect a 1963 agreement drawing their common border and authorized the creation of a UN peacekeeping force to monitor the border area.

It also demanded that Iraq destroy all its biological and

chemical weapons and related equipment as well as its long range ballistic missiles and continued an embargo on arms sales to the Baghdad government.

Baghdad also submit to international inspections and control of all nuclear material.

A US-led international coalition crushed Iraq's army in a four week aerial bombardment and 100 hour ground offensive launched to end Baghdad's seven-month occupation of neighbouring Kuwait.

The war had been authorized by an unprecedented Security Council resolution adopted in late November.

In a statement to the

Council shortly before the vote, Iraqi ambassador Abdul Amir al-Anbari harshly criticized the ceasefire conditions and said Baghdad reserved the right to demand reparations for damages wrought by US-led forces during the Gulf war.

The ambassador also said the Council's demarcation and surveillance of a border between Iraq and Kuwait impinged on the sovereignty of both states.

Insisting that the US-led assault against his country went beyond the Security Council's mandate authorizing the use of force to drive Iraq from Kuwait, Mr. Al-Anbari

said Iraq "reserves the right to demand reparations for all damage sustained losses for which coalition forces are responsible."

Another message says: The following are the key points contained in the resolution formalizing a ceasefire with Iraq adopted by the United Nations Security Council Wednesday.

The next recalls the UN previous resolutions condemning Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, recommends Kuwait's sovereignty and territorial integrity and calls for an end to the presence of foreign military forces in Iraq as soon as possible.

BRIEFLY

Hundreds killed in Sudan: Sudan said its forces had killed hundreds of rebels in fierce fighting in western Equatoria province, reports Reuter from Nicosia.

Sudanese radio, quoting a senior army officer, said late on Wednesday that the rebels died in a fierce battle the previous night.

Major-General Muhammad Abdullah Awaysah said: "The Armed Forces clashed with the outlaws last night and a ferocious battle ensued in western Equatoria area, from which they fled, leaving behind them hundreds of dead, armoured vehicles, cars, heavy and light weapons and ammunition."

More troops deployed in Croatia: The federal army deployed more armoured units in Croatia on Wednesday as the Yugoslav collective presidency appealed for an end to escalating tensions between Serbs and Croats, AP reports from Belgrade.

Tanks and other armoured vehicles were patrolling areas of northern and western Croatia where ethnic Serbs have rebelled against local center-right authorities.

The eight-member federal presidency met for a third day to seek a resolution to the dispute between the two republics which threatens to break up the fragile federation.

But the session, which also included the presidents of the six republics and other senior officials, apparently failed to make any headway to resolve the Yugoslav crisis.

Algerian poll June 27: Algeria will hold its first multi-party general elections on June 27, President Chadli Genjedid said on Wednesday in Algiers, reports Reuter. Chadli announced the date on television.

More than 40 political parties have emerged since the President introduced a multi-party system in 1989 after years of control by the ruling National Liberation Front.

The leading opposition party is the Islamic Salvation Front.

Pak newsmen for free media: Pakistani journalists attending government-sponsored seminar on Wednesday demanded an end to government control of the media, Reuter reports from Islamabad.

Various committees announced their recommendations after the two-day seminar and called for a freer press easier access to information and an end to state control of radio and television.

Opening the seminar on Tuesday, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif threatened to deprive newspapers of government advertising and urged them to cooperate in running the country.

US to develop N-rocket: The US Defense Department is secretly trying to develop a nuclear-powered rocket to lift large weapons into orbit for the Star Wars antimissile programme, an arms control advocacy group says in Washington, reports AP.

Nuclear propulsion on a rocket the size of the Titan 111, a workhorse of the space programme probably could triple its payload, Steven Altergood of the Federation of American Scientists said late Tuesday.

The federation was formed after World War II by some scientists of the Manhattan Project that developed the first atomic bomb. It has been active in pushing arms control ever since.

Altergood said his organization found out many details of the rocket project, called "Project Timberwind", through "interviews with a number of project participants." Some details are not known.

One-party rule protested: Thousands of street hawkers and students clashed with riot police in the center of the Cameroon capital Yaounde Wednesday in escalating protest against President Paul Biya's one-party rule, reports Reuter.

Witnesses saw police firing teargas grenades at the crowd and kicking and clubbing many demonstrators.

Protesters threw up street barricades, burning one bus and smashing windows in two others.

Witnesses said the hawkers, backed by students, wanted to stage a rally demanding freedom for political prisoners and a national conference to chart political reforms in the central African country.

Nahayan meets Schwarzkopf: United Arab Emirates President Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan al-Nahayan met in Abu Dhabi with the commander of Allied Forces in the Gulf, General Norman Schwarzkopf, and thanked him for liberating Kuwait, officials reported Wednesday in Abu Dhabi, reports AP.

sheikh Zayed lauded the United States and allied stance during the Gulf war and noted that the recapture of Kuwait (from Iraq) and the rejection of hegemony and aggression will effectively contribute to the implementation of a new world order, an official quoted him as saying at the Tuesday evening meeting.

"The honorable and responsible stand of the coalition forces deserves praise from humanity because it will ensure security and stability Sheikh Zayed added.

Iraq asks Kurds to back home: Iraq Wednesday appealed to its Kurdish citizens to return to their homes, pledging they would not be punished for the defeated anti-government revolt in the north, reports AFP from Nicosia.

"The official authorities will not hold anyone accountable for anything other than crimes of murder, war, rape and theft, or for taking up arms against the state and the law," the official Iraqi News Agency said.

The agency, monitored in Nicosia, quoted an official statement issued after a meeting of Iraqi leaders, chaired by President Saddam Hussein.

100,000 Kurds stranded: More than 100,000 Iraqi Kurds are stranded on a snow-swept ridge near the Turkish border and Turkish soldiers have fired over their heads to keep them back, a British Broadcasting Corporation report said Wednesday in London, reports Reuter.

BBC reporter Tom Carver, who accompanied Kurds fleeing Iraqi government attacks in northern Iraq, said he saw a 10-mile-long (16-km) jam of humans, vehicles and animals at the head of a valley on a mountain route to the Turkish border.

"When we finally reached the Turkish border after 12 hours of walking, we found spread out across an exposed snow-covered ridge line around 100,000 people shivering amongst their small bundles of blankets and food," Carver said.

Advani retracing Indira's steps

NEW DELHI, Apr 4: In his quest for power, Mr Lal Krishna Advani is retracing Indira Gandhi's electoral trail after her defeat in 1977. An eleventh hour change in programme had him missing the thinly-attended Boat Club rally and going to Karnataka, where the BJP strategists had him launch the state campaign from a nondescript temple town — one-and-a-half hours from the



nearest airport, a town without even a rail-way station, reports UNI.

Staging her comeback in 1978, Mrs Indira Gandhi had come to the same temple town as a part of her strategy to win from Chikmagalur.

Central to this strategy is Karnataka's other Heggade, the dharmadhikari of the ancient temple of Dharmasthala. It was to Virendra Heggade and his Sankaracharya of Sringeri in Karnataka that Mrs Gandhi owed her 1978 victory against Mr Virendra Patil in a large measure.

Amidst reports that the mandir issue had strengthened the BJP's position considerably in Karnataka, the party's brains trust in New Delhi decided to take a leaf out of Mrs Gandhi's book in launching the party's poll drive in the southern state. Mr Advani travelled to Dharmasthala one day ahead of his planned arrival in Karnataka, prayed at the ancient temple and secured the blessings of Virendra Heggade, just as Mrs Gandhi had done in 1978 before starting her campaign in Chikmagalur.

In choosing the date for Mr Advani's visit, the BJP leadership acted with an impeccable sense of timing. The temple had just been renovated — for

the first time in its history dating back several hundred years. And Mr Advani arrived on a day when the temple was to be closed for a few days running; as a result, there were at least 100,000 people seeking dharmadhikar Heggade's blessings when the BJP leader arrived — against a normal daily figure of around 5,000.

BJP sources here believe that retracing Mrs Gandhi's footsteps through temples and mutts will pay more electoral dividend now than ever before in the light of reports of a surge in the party's popularity in Karnataka. During this campaign, it has, for instance, revived memories of the arrest of an ashta mutt swami from Karnataka during the VHP-sponsored kar sewa in Ayodhya. The swami had gone to Allahabad on pilgrimage and was arrested en route on the assumption that he was a kar sewa. By tradition, ashta mutt swamis from Karnataka are required to bathe daily in running water, a facility denied to this swami in detention. But when news reached Karnataka about the swami's arrest — and denial of running bath water — it so exercised Kannadigas that the state's chief secretary was forced to take up the matter with his counterpart in Uttar Pradesh to secure the holy man's release.

The BJP believes it has already cashed in on the sentiment created as a result of the swami's arrest. While Mr Advani was addressing a public meeting at Udipi en route from Dharmasthala to Bangalore, Pejawar Swamy (the head of one of eight mutts in Karnataka set up by Madhavacharya, founder of the dhwaita theological school) walked up the dais and blessed Mr Advani in public. As a holy figure whose turn to become chief priest of Udipi's famous Sri Krishna temple falls once every 14 years, Pejawar Swamy wields considerable influence on the public in north Karnataka.

By all accounts, Mr Advani's decision to retrace Mrs Gandhi's steps has revived the VIP stature of Chikmagalur constituency, Al-ready, a section of congressmen have been suggesting that Mr Rajiv Gandhi should contest from Chikmagalur in addition to Amethi.

Bush happy

JUPITER (Fla), Apr 4: President Bush said he was "extremely pleased" with the UN resolution establishing a permanent Gulf War ceasefire and said Iraq now must respect the will of the world, reports Reuter.

"It is now up to Iraq's government to demonstrate that it is prepared to respect that will of the world community and communicate its formal acceptance of this resolution," Bush said.

In a statement to the council shortly before the vote, Iraqi Ambassador Abdul Amir al-Anbari harshly criticised the ceasefire conditions and said Baghdad reserved the right to demand reparations for damages wrought by US-led forces during the Gulf War.

The Ambassador also said the council's demarcation and surveillance of a border between Iraq and Kuwait impinged on the sovereignty of both states.

Insisting that the US-led assault against his country went beyond the Security Council's mandate authorising the use of force to drive Iraq from Kuwait, Al-Anbari said Iraq "reserves the right to demand reparations for all damage sustained ... losses for which coalition forces are responsible."

Rama Rao fighting for survival

HYDERABAD, Apr 4: The coming Lok Sabha poll is likely to be a major test for the political survival of the National Front chairman, Mr N. T. Rama Rao, who is striving to refurbish the image of his Telugu Desam Party (TDP), which was routed in the last polls, reports PTI.

Dethroned in 1983, the Congress (I), under the leadership of Dr M. Chenna Reddy, not only regained power in the assembly polls in 1989, but also won 39 of the 42 Lok Sabha seats from Andhra Pradesh.

With the replacement of Dr Chenna Reddy by Mr N. Janardhana Reddy as chief minister in December 1990, and with Mr V. Hanumantha Rao taking over as the new PCC (I) president, the party will be going to the polls under a new state leadership

What if Iraq defies resolution?

UNITED NATIONS, Apr 4: If Iraq repudiates the tough UN resolution dictating terms for a cease-fire, UN diplomats say painful trade sanctions will continue and eventually force Iraq to capitulate, reports AP.

Earlier this week, US Ambassador Thomas R. Pickering said that if Iraq defied the resolution, then the Security Council "will certainly have to decide what it will do next, as it has had to do with each of the resolutions with which Iraq has not complied."

But he added that after the Allied air and ground war, Iraq accepted the terms of an earlier "checklist" to formally end the war.

Western diplomats have said that the allied military coalition that drove Iraq from Kuwait could resume military action, but that is considered a remote possibility. Still, the resolution authorizing the use of force has not been lifted and, in fact, was reaffirmed March 2 in a council resolution.

If Iraq does not comply, then there will be no permanent cease-fire, no withdrawal of foreign forces from southern Iraq and the region and no lifting of trade sanctions. Iraq has denounced the resolution as humiliating and said it would punish the Iraqi people for generations to come. Iraq's UN ambassador told the council Wednesday that the resolution reached too far, but he has said officials in Baghdad must study it before deciding whether to accept it.

Iraq has accepted all other Security Council resolutions passed in response to its

Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait. On Wednesday, Pickering said the Iraq government, "and preferably, Saddam Hussein" should send a clear letter saying he accepts the terms of the latest resolution.

Earlier this week, Sir David Hannay, the British ambassador, said Iraq could face "the resumption of hostilities" as well as continued suffering caused by crippling trade sanctions. Food and humanitarian aid now is allowed into the devastated nation.

At each stage, he said, when Iraqi President Saddam Hussein rejected international demands to quit Kuwait, the Iraqi people have suffered and they will

continue to do so unless Iraq bows to the will of the international community. If Iraq does accept the terms of the resolution, then elaborate UN enforcement machinery sets to work in various areas: disarmament, compensation and delimitation of borders.

The United Nations is authorized to help demarcate and guarantee the current Kuwait-Iraq border, to oversee the destruction of weapons of mass destruction and to inspect Iraq's stockpiles.

The United Nations also would administer a fund for compensating victims of Iraqi aggression. Iraq is ordered to pay a portion of its future oil profits into the fund.

Off the Record

Pandas carnivorous?

BEIJING: A giant panda who savages and eats sheep has raised questions in China about whether the cuddly animals really are vegetarian, reports Reuter.

The panda has lumbered down from the mountains of Sichuan province, where most pandas live and graze on arrow bamboo, to kill more than 20 sheep.

A Tianjin city newspaper, seen in Beijing on Wednesday, said some people believe this may be a turning point in the eating habits of the endangered animals.

Experts, however, say pandas have evolved from carnivores to herbivores and the killer panda is a rare throwback, according to Tuesday's edition of the Jin Wan Bao.

The New China News Agency said on Tuesday giant pandas are out of immediate danger because arrow bamboo is sprouting again.

The agency quoted wildlife protection officials in Sichuan as saying the future of pandas and looked grim in 1983 with the expected withering of arrow bamboo.

Since then 92 starving pandas have been given emergency treatment and 66 have survived. The prospects for the survival of the rest are much brighter.

Rescue efforts have now shifted from searching for starving pandas to medical research and "comprehensive protection," the agency said, without elaborating.



Youth presents Stalin's nose to Kremlin

MOSCOW, Apr 4: A TEENAGER attacked the bust of Josef Stalin that marks his grave on Red Square, knocking off its nose to show his hatred of the dictator, a newspaper reported on Friday, reports AP.

The 17-year-old vocational school student, who was not identified, has been charged with desecrating a grave, which is punishable by up to three years in prison, according to Komsomolskaya Pravda.

The nose reportedly was handed over immediately to the Kremlin Commandant's Office, presumably so the bust could be repaired.

Acts of protest at Lenin's Mausoleum, the most treasured of Soviet shrines, are rare but not unheard of. There have been instances of protesters trying to immolate themselves on Red Square or throwing firebombs at the marble structure firebombs where the corpse of Soviet founder Vladimir Lenin is displayed under glass.

Because of the 24-hour honor guard and other unseen security officers, however, such demonstrations bring rapid arrest.

The defacing of the bust occurred on Sunday when the student vaulted a short, decorative railing in front of the Lenin Mausoleum, and ran behind the marble structure to where Stalin and other Soviet leaders are buried, the newspaper said.

He chose the moment at the top of the hour when the changing of the honour guard occurred so they had no time to stop him, the newspaper said.

Using an unspecified heavy metal object, the youth struck the bust with a couple of heavy blows, then dropped the tool and surrendered peacefully to the guards who rushed up to detain him, Komsomolskaya Pravda said.

The youth told investigators he wanted to display his hatred of Stalin "and draw public attention to the fact that the butcher's ashes continue to lie at the Kremlin wall," the newspaper said.

After Stalin died in 1953, his body was displayed alongside Lenin's inside the mausoleum, but it was removed in 1956 after Nikita S. Khrushchev denounced him

Pakistan, US trying to divide Afghanistan: Najibullah

KABUL, Apr 4: Afghan President Najibullah said Wednesday he was confident that his government forces could retake Khost from Mujahideen fighters.

In an interview with Agence France-Presse, the pro-Soviet leader also accused Pakistan and the United Nations of trying to divide Afghanistan after the fall of the strategic

garrison city.

Speaking at the presidential palace, Najibullah acknowledged that Khost fell Monday into the hands of the Mujahideen fighting to over-



KHOST, Afghanistan: Afghan Mujahideen take away ammunition April 2 from the captured Khost garrison in eastern Afghanistan after defeating Soviet-backed Afghan government troops March 21. After over 12 years of fighting, the fall of the garrison town has boosted morale amongst the Mujahideen. — Photo AFP/UNB

Shrines being repaired: Iraq

NICOSIA, Apr 4: Iraq's minister of religious affairs said Wednesday that his agency has begun repairing three of Shi'ite Islam's most sacred shrines, damaged in the Iraqi civil war, reports AP.

The official Iraqi News Agency quoted the minister, Abdullah Fadel, as saying the ministry had readied gold, silver and other building materials to restore the shrines of Najaf and Karbala.

The golden-domed mosques in the two cities received shell and bullet damage in fighting last month between Shi'ite Muslim rebels and troops loyal to Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

throw his government.

He had previously said on Afghan television only that his government had "lost contact" with the city.

Mujahideen sources in Peshawar, Pakistan, have said the city was captured Sunday after two-and-a-half weeks of intense fighting.

Najibullah alleged that the Mujahideen victory was assisted by a "large-scale attack" by Pakistani forces.

Islamabad, which hosts three million Afghan refugees and allows seven Afghan Mujahideen groups to base themselves in Peshawar, has always denied any direct involvement Afghanistan's 12-year civil war.

The President indicated that all civilians in Khost had fled the city and that the fighting had left many people dead and wounded. He gave no casualty figures.

"During this war we have lost Kunduz, Jalalabad and even some major roads," Najibullah said.

"Not only did we retake them, but we also succeeded in improving security afterwards," he said. "In a year's time, you will see that Khost will have a new face."

Pakistan, he alleged, has used military means toward a political goal of setting up an Afghan resistance government in the province of Khost.