

Iraq violating human shield resolution : UK US starts setting up arms depots in Gulf

CAIRO, June 4 : The United States has begun setting up depots for stockpiling weapons in the Gulf in case of future war in the region, diplomats and defence analysts said.

The mainly Arab analysts, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said depots were being established in the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

Command centres were also planned in Oman and Bahrain, they told Reuters in a series of interviews over the past two days.

But they said that Washington's help in sorting out post-Gulf war security was being hindered by differences between the Gulf Arabs on the one hand and Egypt and Syria on the other over the size and composition of a Gulf security force.

US Defence Secretary Dick Cheney said last week that Washington was stockpiling arms and ammunition in Israel.

The analysts said Washington had agreed to keep an armoured brigade — about 5,000 troops — in Kuwait until the end of the year, but wanted Egyptian and Syrian forces to participate in the region's defence.

"The Gulf Arabs and Wash-

ington still need their (Syrian and Egyptian) presence to absorb sensitivities over having Western troops remain in the area," said an Arab Ambassador.

In a surprise move last month, Mubarak announced that he had ordered the withdrawal from the Gulf of all 35,000 troops Egypt had contributed to the US led forces that evicted Iraq's occupation army from Kuwait in the war that ended last February.

Syria said on Sunday it was recalling its forces from the Gulf and the first batch had arrived home. But it was not clear if it planned to pull out

all its 20,000 troops there.

Diplomats said Mubarak was unhappy over the failure of the Gulf Arabs and Kuwait in particular to issue a formal invitation to keep Egyptian soldiers there.

Oman's Sultan Qaboos Bin said an Kuwaiti Defence Minister Sheikh Ali Sabab al-Salem al-Sabah visited Cairo last month to try and iron out the problems, and officials say Cheney, who is visiting Egypt, has briefed Mubarak on his contacts with Gulf Arab leaders.

Analysts said Kuwait has asked Egypt and Syria for largely symbolic military con-

tribution. In Egypt's case this would have taken the form of a 500 strong special forces battalion and an infantry brigade — all told some 2-3,000 men.

But Egypt was cool to the idea, the analysts said, on both political and financial grounds. "Egypt has rejected all offers made by Kuwait," said retired Brigadier Mourad el-Desouky, head of military studies at Cairo's al-Ahram strategic studies centre.

Instead, Cairo and Damascus sought a bigger military role in any Gulf force, in line with an agreement signed in Damascus last March between Egypt,

Syria and the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member-states.

A senior Egyptian official who asked not to be named said Kuwait wanted to cut spending on Arab troops sent there during the Gulf crisis from 15 billion dollars to five billion dollars.

"Pride comes into it," said one diplomat. "The Egyptians and Syrians feel they were essential for western military intervention in the Gulf war and they resent being used as a cheap fig-leaf for a continued western presence there."

AP adds : Britain on Monday

accused Iraq of violating the UN Security Council's "human shield" resolution by detaining a former British hostage.

The complaint comes as the Security Council is preparing to conduct its first 60-day review of Iraq's compliance with council resolutions on the Gulf crisis.

The council is to consider whether to lift the embargo on the import of non-military goods into Iraq "in light of the policies and practices" of Baghdad.

Britain, as one of the five permanent council members with veto power, could block

2 candidates among 4 shot dead in Punjab

CHANDIGARH, June 4: Two candidates for Samana and Nabha Assembly seats were among four persons shot dead by suspected militants near Patiala in Punjab since last night, police said here today, reports PTI.

The election was countermanded for Samana and Nabha assembly seats.

The Akali Dal (Mann) candidate, Baldev Singh Lang, for the Samana assembly seat and the independent candidate, Pritam Singh Dhadhera, for Nabha assembly seat, were killed when the militants attacked the car in which they were travelling near village Rangera on the outskirts of Patiala city, police said.

The two others killed included their car driver, Ajit Singh, and one of their associates.

Militants attacked them while they were returning to Patiala after canvassing.

Fifteen candidates contesting 18 assembly seats

BRIEFLY

Bush resumes jogging : President George Bush revealed Monday that he has already resumed jogging after being stricken by a thyroid-triggered heart irregularity a month ago. AP from Washington says.

Bush told reporters at a White House reception that he jogged for half-a-mile (0.8 kilometres) around his vacation home during his stay in Kennebunkport, Maine, last week over the Memorial Day weekend.

Bush said he is feeling no after-effects from his bout with the thyroid ailment and doctors are reducing the medication he now takes daily.

He said he jogged for a half-mile and walked for two miles (3.2 kilometres) around his oceanfront home during his May 24-29 stay. Bush also played 63 holes of golf during his holiday.

He considered going jogging Monday but "I didn't want to press it," the President said. Bush, who turns 67 on June 12, said he may go jogging on Tuesday.

Roh accepts Bush's invitation : South Korean President Roh Tae-woo has accepted President George Bush's invitation to pay a state visit to the White House on July 2, it was announced Monday, AP from Washington says.

"The two presidents will review bilateral relations and discuss ways to strengthen peace and security on the Korean peninsula and in northeast Asia," spokesman Marjin Fitzwater said.

Roh's government has been in crisis for the past two months amid student riots and anti-government protests. The turmoil was triggered by the fatal beating of a student by police on April 06.

Roh has changed his Prime Minister and five Cabinet members in a bid to halt the unrest, but dissidents have demanded his resignation and the formation of a new government.

Shevardnadze denies rumours : Former Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze on Monday denied rumours he aspired to the post of UN Secretary General. Reuters reports from Paris.

"(Javier) Perez de Cuellar is my friend," Shevardnadze told a French television journalist who asked if, as rumoured, he hoped eventually to replace Perez de Cuellar.

"He is the best United Nations Secretary General. He absolutely must remain for a third term," added Shevardnadze, who is in France promoting sales of the French-language edition of his book "The Future Spells Freedom."

UNHCR calls for permanent fund : The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has called for the creation of a permanent fund to cope with future refugee emergencies, with Japan responsible for setting it up. Reuters from Paris says.

The High Commissioner, Japan's Sadako Ogata, said in an interview published by Le Monde on Monday the aim was to create a fund which would allow the international community to react swiftly to human disasters.

"We need money, equipment, material — food, blankets and tents — and staff. Our work can only be effective if we have these three things," she told the French Daily.

Seven killed in boat capsizes : A boat caught in a sudden downpour capsized in a river in central India drowning at least seven passengers. Press Trust of India said Monday, AP from New Delhi reports.

Villagers helped police fish out seven bodies from the river, while seven passengers swam to safety. Police said seven more passengers were untraced and believed drowned. Among the dead was a five-year-old child.

There were 21 people on the ferry, the news agency said. The incident occurred Sunday night on the Pech river, which is on the border of the central state of Madhya Pradesh. Press Trust said.

US rejects Perez's proposal : The US government on Monday rejected as too low UN Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar's proposal that Iraq set aside 30 per cent of its future oil revenues to compensate for damages resulting from its invasion of Kuwait and the Gulf war. AP reports from Washington.

Instead, Washington proposed that half of Iraq's oil revenues be used to meet compensation claims.

"As a result of the damages incurred, and Iraq's continued repressive policies, we believe the figure suggested is too low," US State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler said.

US officials previously have suggested a 40-50 per cent level. But diplomats in New York said the five permanent members of the UN Security Council had generally agreed to leave the matter to Perez de Cuellar and the UN Compensation Commission.

Perez de Cuellar made his proposal Friday in a report to the Security Council, which has projected annual Iraqi oil exports to reach 21 billion dollars by 1993, assuming that UN economic sanctions are lifted and Iraq is allowed to resume exports.

African leaders sign AEC treaty : African leaders gathered in Abuja signed a treaty on the creation of an African Economic Community (AEC) by the year 2025 on Monday, the first day of the 27th summit of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). AFP from Abuja says.

The treaty of Abuja provides for the step-by-step creation of the economic community, with the establishment of an African common market at an earlier stage, over the next 25 years.

The AEC will be closely modelled on the structure and workings of the European Community.



SEOUL : South Korean Prime Minister-designate Chung Wan-Shik is escorted by aides away from Korea Foreign Studies University June 3 after students threw eggs and flour at him during a visit to the campus. Students denounced Chung for the death of student Kim Kui-Jung, who died in a demonstration in Seoul May 26. — Photo AFP/UNB

Crackdown on ROK students : 360 held

SEOUL, June 4 : South Korean police began arresting students on Tuesday in a crackdown ordered by an outraged President Roh Tae-woo after his Prime Minister was assaulted by students at a Seoul university, reports Reuters.

More than 360 students were detained on Monday night following the attack on newly appointed Prime Minister Chung Wan-Shik at Hankook University of Foreign Studies. Twenty were still in custody at noon (0300 GMT) on Tuesday.

An additional 16 students — some identified from television news videotape seized by police — were ordered arrested specifically for the assault on 62 students were arrested on

Tuesday for demonstrating against the Prime Minister at the main government offices in central Seoul.

Chung, appointed on May 24, was kicked, punched, pelted with eggs and flour, and dragged through the campus by several hundred students who chanted "Muderer".

The Prime Minister, a conservative educator and former Education Minister, had gone to the campus, south Korea's Premier institution for foreign studies, to deliver a lecture on "Guidance for student life".

Aides said Chung had minor bruises on his face, neck and back. He briefly visited his office on Tuesday morning and then returned home.

"I'm filled with sorrow for causing worry to the people and damaging (the image) of

the nation," Chung told reporters.

"Such an incident took place because we did not teach the students well," he said. "I feel like whipping myself on the calf."

Korean Children, on the rare occasions they are disciplined, are struck on their calves.

The assault deeply shocked most South Koreans whose Confucian traditions teach respect for authority, elders and teachers. The semi-official Yonhap News Agency said Roh was "extremely angered" when told of the assault.

"Such acts, which transgress moral laws, will never be pardoned," Roh told aides, according to Yonhap.

It also prompted other strong official responses forecasting a harsh crackdown on student activists.

"The government will no longer treat benevolently students who use campuses as outposts for ideological and political struggles."

Foreign forces helped LTTE in Rajiv's assassination

MADRAS, June 4 : Senior Indian intelligence officials said on Monday they were investigating the possibility that "foreign forces" helped Sri Lankan Tamil separatists blow up former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, reports Reuters.

The officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, would not reveal what evidence they had for the unspecified foreign link in Gandhi's assassination by a woman suicide bomber on May 21.

They said investigators were pursuing four theories about who planned Gandhi's murder near Madras, capital of southern Tamil Nadu state and just across the narrow Palk strait from the stronghold of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in northern Sri Lanka.

"Of the four, the LTTE is the main suspect and we believe they could have been in it with some foreign forces," said one official. He and other senior officials refused to say what the three other theories were.

A team of investigators from the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), India's main crime agency, is in Sri Lanka examining evidence against the LTTE, which has denied any involvement in the assassination through a spokesman in London.

Police said Gandhi was blown up by a woman in her late 20s who bowed to greet him at an election rally and then activated an electric switch which set off plastic explosives strapped to her waist.

235 Muslim militants held in Kashmir

JAMMU (India), June 4: A total of 235 Muslim militants and those accused of harbouring them have been round up in a crackdown by security forces in the last three days, officials here said Monday, reports AFP.

The special drives was prompted by a sudden spurt in militant violence since Friday in which they fought gunbattles with security forces across the Kashmir valley leaving some 30 people dead and 38 more injured, the officials said.

Most of 235 were taken into custody from the valley's Baramulla, Badgam and Puhana districts the worst hit in the new wave of violence.

The officials here in this winter capital of northern Jammu and Kashmir state said the situation was still "tense" in these areas

The CBI officials said five women LTTE members held in a Madras jail would be interrogated for clues to the identity of the woman assassin and a man who stood by her just before she greeted Gandhi.

They have refused to talk before. They are tough, but we are determined now," he said.

The CBI official, who has dealt with insurgencies in other parts of India, said the evidence pointed to the LTTE, a group unique in its methods of operation, discipline and motivation.

Unlike separatists in Punjab, Kashmir and Assam, the LTTE alone has carried out suicide attacks as a routine.

trained women for important missions and used explosives extensively, he said.

The ferocity of the LTTE against its enemies is another reason the group is suspected of masterminding Gandhi's assassination.

Gandhi sent troops to Sri Lanka in 1987 to enforce a peace accord he had brokered between the Tigers and Colombo to end the separatist campaign.

The accord quickly broke down and the Indian soldiers fought the Tigers for nearly three years until being withdrawn at Colombo's insistence last year.

Police officials said the

LTTE was also experienced in handling explosives, especially senior cadres trained in Lebanon in the late 1970s.

The LTTE has considerable support in Tamil Nadu, home to India's 50 million Tamils. Police launched a crackdown on their operations in the state in January.

State police chief Walter Dawaram said that since then his men had seized tonnes of explosives and thousands of electric detonators, dismantled a system the LTTE used to carry out illegal international monetary transactions and cracked their radio communications.

Call to declare Pak Shi'ites non-Muslims

ISLAMABAD, June 4 : A powerful Sunni Muslim organisation has condemned alleged Iranian interference in Pakistan and called for the dismissal of minority Shi'ites from the cabinet and other influential posts, reports AFP.

Following passage of a controversial bill to enforce Sharia (Islamic Law) in Pakistan, the Anjuman Sipah-e-Sahaba (ASS) called on the government at a convention here Sunday to declare Shi'ites, who make up 20 per cent of Pakistan's 110 million population, "non-Muslims."

The ASS also demanded the removal of Shi'ites from the cabinet of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and from other key posts. Most Pakistanis belong to various Sunni Muslim sects.

Riot police stood by and armed police guarded Shi'ite places of worship here as several thousands ASS members heard about 40 speakers denouncing the Shi'ite sect and neighbouring predominantly Shi'ite Iran.

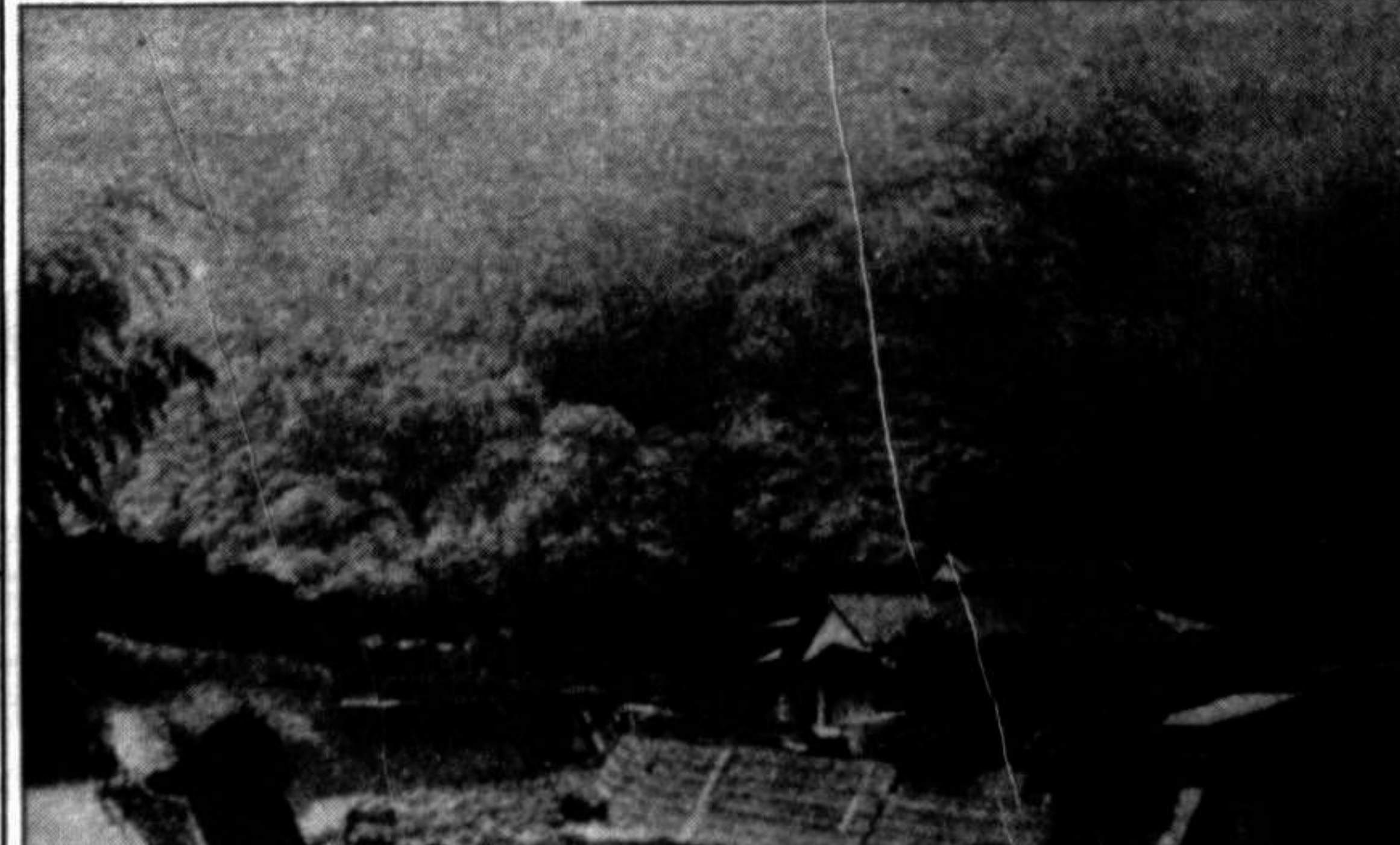
Based in Jhang, a dusty town in the central province of Punjab, ASS has branches in all

four Pakistani provinces. Its stronghold, however, is Punjab, Pakistan's most populous and politically important province.

ASS founding leader Maulana Haq Nawaz Jhangvi was shot dead in February 1990, and his murder remains unsolved.

The organisation accuses Shi'ites of showing disrespect for successors of the Prophet Mohammad (SM).

Authorities banned public gatherings here ahead of the ASS meeting due to fears of sectarian violence



SHIMABARA, Japan : Smoke from avalanche of lava fragments approach houses after the eruption of Mount Unzen in Shimabara, Nagasaki prefecture June 3. Twenty people were injured and 29 people including two French and an American are missing, according to local authorities. — Photo AFP/UNB

Off the Record

Skull of Prince William fractured

LONDON : A playmate swinging a golf club Monday accidentally fractured the skull of Prince William, the 8-year-old son of Prince Charles and Princess Diana, Buckingham Palace said, reports AP.

The Palace said the injury was not life-threatening, but required a 70-minute operation to correct a depressed fracture on his forehead, said a Palace spokesman, who commented on condition of anonymity.

William, second in line to the British throne, was expected to remain in the hospital for "a few days," the spokesman said. Princess Diana, who cancelled a visit to Yorkshire planned for Tuesday, stayed with him at London's Great Ormond Street hospital for children.

Prince Charles left his son's bedside to attend a performance of the opera "Tosca" at Covent Garden. He was in close touch with doctors, the Palace spokesman said.

The spokesman said William was accidentally hit on the head with a golf club during his lunch-time break at the Ludgrove school in Wokingham, just west of London.

William was with friends on the school putting green when he was hurt, the spokesman said. Play was supervised, he said.

A spokeswoman at the school said: "No one was being nasty or unkind to Prince William. He is a very much liked boy here at the school." The Prince started at the boarding school in September.

William has a reputation for being boisterous and has proved to be competitive at school sports days.

After the accident, members of the Royal Protection Squad drove him six miles (10 kilometres) to the Royal Berkshire Hospital, where William "was chirpy and chatting away," the spokesman said.

William was later transferred by ambulance with police escorts to the London hospital. His mother rode with him.

Millionaires by mistake

TALLAHASSEE (Florida) : A store clerk's mistake has turned Karol and Margaret Majoros into Florida Lotto millionaires, reports AP.

The St. Cloud couple claimed their 14.2-million-dollar jackpot from the May 18 drawing, lottery officials said Monday.

Majoros said he bought the ticket at a convenience store in St. Cloud, Florida, near Orlando. He originally bought eight tickets, but the clerk accidentally printed three more and he agreed to buy them.

One of the three extra tickets turned out to have the winning number.

Their winning ticket, a random computer selection, will pay the Majoros' 710,000 dollars annually for 20 years.

Their family did not claim the prize until they set up a trust to put their affairs in order, said co-trustee Douglas C. Kaplan.

"They've tried to avoid making grandiose plans," said Kaplan.

"Obviously they're going to upgrade their lifestyle a bit without really bending it out of shape."

Star Wars fallout

LOS ANGELES : The "Star Wars" trilogy may become a sextet, reports AP.

George Lucas, the producer of the popular space adventures, has plans for another three films in the series—"prequels" that take place before the first three movies.

While "everything at this stage is speculative," the next series is expected to follow the early adventures of Ben "Obi-Wan" Kenobi, Darth Vader and the child Luke Skywalker, said Lynne Hale, a spokeswoman for Lucasfilm Ltd.

"George Lucas has an idea of what he wants to do, but we are not even pre-production at this stage," she said.

Hale stressed there is no completion date for the first film, but said the three would be finished over the next five to seven years.

The three original movies — the 1977 "Star Wars," "The Empire Strikes Back," released in 1980, and 1983's "Return of the Jedi" — are among the most popular films of all time, netting more than 700 million dollars among them.