

# BRIEFLY

**17 killed in US plane crash:** At least 17 people were killed on Wednesday evening when a twin-engine turboprop aircraft crashed during a thunderstorm five miles west of the airport in this southern US city, reports Reuter from Birmingham.

According to initial reports from emergency authorities, the plane crashed into a Suburban housing area killing 12 of 13 passengers one of two crew members and four people on the ground.

**US may abandon Clark air base:**

The United States may abandon Clark air base in the Philippines because a study indicates it could cost 800 million dollars to repair damages there from mount Pinatubo's volcanic eruptions, US defence official said on Wednesday, Reuter reports from Washington.

But the officials who asked not to be identified, stressed that no final decision had been made and that talks on future US use of Clark and Subic Bay naval base would resume in Manila next week.

**11 killed in Punjab:**

Militants killed at least 11 security personnel and injured 10 of them, eight of them seriously, in two different incidents in Punjab since last night, PTI reports from Chandigarh.

A Punjab police constable, two special police officers and five home guard were gunned down by a gang of militants when they attacked the Bhawani Garh Police Station in Sangrur district early this morning.

Another constable and a civilian were injured in the incident.

The second incident took place in the Lalpur Police Station area in Taran district when the militants engineered a line mine explosion killing two assistant sub-inspectors and one police constable.

Eight constables were also seriously injured and two got away with minor injuries in the incident.

**Li meets King Fahd:**

Chinese Prime Minister Li Peng met King Fahd of Saudi Arabia Wednesday to discuss economic cooperation as well as the post-war situation in the Gulf, Saudi officials said, AFP reports from Riyadh.

Li, on his first visit to Saudi Arabia since diplomatic ties were restored with Riyadh in July 1990, also met with Saudi Defence Minister Prince Sultan ibn Abdel Aziz to discuss cooperation in various fields, they said.

Li, who has already visited Egypt, Jordan and Iran, is due to visit Syria and Kuwait.

In Kuwait, he is to discuss reconstruction efforts in the Emirate as well as the return of thousands of Chinese workers who fled after Iraq invaded on August 2.

**2 shot dead in Kurd clash:**

At least two mourners were shot to death Wednesday when police opened fire on rock-throwing Kurds at the funeral of a murdered Kurdish politician, a human rights group said, AP from Diyarbakir reports.

Turkey's semi-official Anatolia news agency reported that 40 people were injured, including a Kurdish parliamentarian, in the clash. It quoted hospital officials as saying that most of the casualties suffered bullet wounds.

Local sources said security force reopened fire on the crowd, which had stoned a police station. They said about 35,000 Kurds attended the funeral.

An Associated Press photographer, Burhan Ozbilici, said there were scuffles between club-wielding policemen and stone-throwing rioters. He said police beat him and confiscated most of his film.

Armoured personnel carriers patrolled the streets and hundreds of people had been detained, Ozbilici reported.

Nezvat Helvacı, head of the independent Human Rights Association, said in Ankara that the two mourners were shot to death and that an unknown number had been detained.

The mourners had come out to pay tribute to Vedat Aydin, the local chairman of the People's Labour Party (PLP). He was found dead in a nearby province on Monday. His wife told reporters that Aydin was abducted from his house Friday night by four men who claimed to be policemen.

**Iron curtain still hung across Germany:**

The iron curtain still hangs across much of Germany almost a year east and west formally merged, Reuter from Berlin says.

Between rejoined roads and rail lines more than two thirds of the 1,393 km (863 miles) of, steel fence and concrete wall that for 40 years split communist east from capitalist west remains intact, the ADN news agency said on Wednesday.

ADN said units of the old east German border troops kept on solely to dismantle the fortifications would complete a third of the job by the end of September.

**Pindi summons Indian envoy:**

The Pakistan Foreign Ministry Wednesday summoned the head of the Indian High Commission in Islamabad to protest the shelling by Indian troops of two Pakistani villages in Kashmir on June 30, officials said, AFP reports from Islamabad.

An officials statement said the Indian army had used loudspeakers to order the villagers in Polasa and Trotti to leave their homes and had then opened fire after 150 of the 200 families had left.

The shelling caused "substantial" damage, the statement added.

The Indian diplomat was told the shelling was a "blatant violation of the line of control," which divides the northern state and was drawn up under the bilateral Simla agreement in 1972.

**7 Bangladeshi refugees abandoned on Turkish coast**

ANKARA, July 11: The captain of an Indian-flagged cargo ship landed 46 Asian asylum-seekers on the Turkish coast after telling them they were on the Greek island of Rhodes, Anatolian News Agency reported on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

It quoted Gendarme officers as saying eight Indians, seven Bangladeshis and 31 Sri Lankans had come ashore near the Mediterranean resort of Marmaris on Monday night. Three others were being sought.

The Asians told the Gendarmes the crew of the Indian ship had given them nothing but hunks of bread to eat for 26 days and had stolen all their valuables before dumping them in Turkey.

Their situation is being investigated and their asylum requests will be dealt with later, "Foreign Ministry spokesman Murat Sungur told reporters on Wednesday.

Anatolians quoted one Asian as saying: "the captain told us

this place was Rhodes Island in Greece. He dropped us here. He said: "we'll be back after we dock our ship at the harbour."

Rhodes lies about 20 km (13 miles) from the Turkish coast and about double that distance from the town of Marmaris.

There was no word on where the ship had picked up its passengers or its present whereabouts. The name of the ship was not immediately known.

An earlier AFP story adds: A mystery ship abandoned 46 Asians, including 18 women, on a beach at the Yachting Port of Marmaris on the Aegean Sea during Monday night, officials here said on Wednesday.

Turkish military sources in Marmaris said that 31 Sri Lankans, eight Indians and seven Bangladeshis, had wanted to "take refuge in Greece or Italy" and had landed in Turkey "by mistake."

They had been put ashore "secretly" without passports by an unidentified vessel, the officials said.

4 arrested for bid to draw \$ 33b in name of Saddam

## Bush considering another military strike against Iraq to wipe out N-arms

WASHINGTON, July 11: US President George Bush is actively considering a military strike against Iraq to wipe out its remaining nuclear programme which was much larger than previously thought, a US television network reported on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

The United States is analysing spy satellite photographs of about 100 potential new targets where Iraqis might have buried nuclear weapons components during the Gulf War, an unidentified senior Pentagon official told NBC television network.

Sources also told the network the Pentagon is completing plans to strike what is left of the programme but that no attack was imminent.

The Pentagon had no comment on the report.

Information in a not-yet-released United Nations report said Iraqi President Saddam Hussein would eventually have had 20 to 40 nuclear weapons, the news programme said.

The US and alleged bombing of military sites during the Gulf War skipped

as unimportant some sites now thought to be where nuclear components were buried, the official said.

Bush said on Wednesday he was sceptical that Hussein had disclosed everything about his secret nuclear programme and again verbally prodded the Iraqi military to topple Saddam.

"I'm not convinced that it's total", the President said of the 29 pages of Iraqi disclosures sent to the United Nations on Monday. The document detailed Iraq's secret programme to enrich uranium that could be used to make nuclear weapons.

Bush said he was deadly serious and hoped Saddam did not repeat his mistake of last year in miscalculating the depth of US and Allied resolve to use force in the Gulf.

At the United Nations US and UN officials said nuclear experts had been doing calculations based on the information submitted by Iraq on how much enriched uranium Baghdad might have but they said this was not the same as solid evidence that Iraqi still has a lot of un-

declared uranium and of the materials lying around.

Bush said he had discussed the issue with Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney on Tuesday and would be talking to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak about it on

nuclear capability in the Gulf war but that he could offer no assurances that it would ever be completely destroyed.

A Dallas report adds: A US authorities arrested four men claiming to represent Iraqi President Saddam Hussein on charges they tried to withdraw 33 billion dollars from the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, officials said on Wednesday.

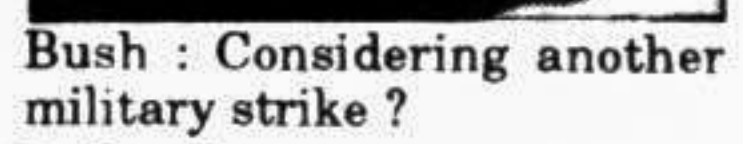
US Justice Department officials said men presented an international certificate at the bank showing the money was owed to them but the document was dated 1967 and apparently signed by US Treasury Secretary James Baker.

Baker now US Secretary of State was Secretary of the Treasury from 1985-88.

A US secret service agent said in court papers that the suspects ultimate goal may not have been to get cash but a receipt for 33 billion dollars so they could use it to defraud others.

The men were charged with trying to pass a forged security, official said.

After the men were arrested on Monday, 14 similar certificates totalling



Bush: Considering another military strike?

Bush said his goal was to establish a mechanism to ensure Iraq is living up UN requirements forbidding weapons of mass destruction and other Gulf war ceasefire terms. He said the United States had eliminated much of Iraq's



SHAKLAWA, Iraq: Kurdistan Democratic Party chief Massoud Barzani (R) welcomes Iraqi officer Mohammed Abou Zeid July 10 at his Headquarters in Shaklaw. Barzani, a delegation composed of the seven other parties of Kurdistan Front is to leave for Baghdad to pursue "highest-level" talks with the Iraqi government on counter-proposals to Iraq's constitutional plans. — AFP/UNB photo

## 6 Punjab militants storm Home Minister's house

NEW DELHI, July 11: A group of six unidentified persons, suspected to be militants from Punjab, stormed into the house of Indian Home Minister S B Chavan in Bombay early Wednesday, reports Xinhua.

The house was presently being occupied by his son-in-law Bhaskarrao Patil-Khatgaonkar, who is the Maharashtra (an Indian western state) Minister of State for Cooperation, Patil-Khatgaonkar was away at Hyderabad, capital of the southern state of Andhra Pradesh, when the incident

took place and he learnt about the incident only on his return to Bombay.

According to reports reaching here today, the militants who were armed with stenguns and pistols forced their entry into the house, asking about Patil-Khatgaonkar whereabouts. His wife had a providential escape, as she was sleeping on the first floor, where the house-breakers did not go.

When contacted by reporters, Patil-Khatgaonkar said that no property was stolen or ransacked from the house by

the militants. Police has meanwhile sounded a state-wide alert and beefed up security at the residence of Patil-Khatgaonkar.

The reports said that S B Chavan, during his tenure as the Chief Minister of the Maharashtra state from 1975-1977, had continued to receive anonymous letters threatening his life. There was tight security around him during his tenure as Chief Minister and later when he shifted to Delhi as Union Minister in 1980.

## Afghan sabotage plot uncovered in Pakistan: One arrested

ISLAMABAD, July 11: Pakistani intelligence has uncovered a plot allegedly masterminded by the Afghan Secret Service Khad to attack sensitive targets in Pakistan, the Official Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) said Wednesday, reports AFP.

He said the plan was prepared at a high level meeting in Kabul some weeks ago which allocated lavish resources for its executives.

The report said Khad, trained two Pakistanis in the Afghan city of Jalalabad and

infiltrated them into Pakistan to plant bombs in Peshawar and Islamabad.

One of them was arrested with over a dozen high intensity explosive devices, the report added.

The men were believed responsible for an explosion at a bus stand in Charsadda in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) June 30 in which one person was killed and seven injured, AFP said.

The report said Khad was behind 71 incidents of sabotage including explosions

in the NWFP bordering Afghanistan over the past six months.

Reuter adds: A leading member of the Afghan ruling party said on Wednesday that the Soviet-backed government had held secret talks with Mujahideen guerrillas in Kabul. If confirmed, the talks would be the first acknowledged meeting between the two sides in Kabul.

Najmuddin Kawyani, Vice-President of the Watan (Homeland) party, declined to give details of the meetings.



MOSCOW: Bangladesh's Foreign Minister Mustafizur Rahman meets with Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh in Moscow July 10. Rahman is here on a four-day visit. — AFP/UNB photo

## 'Sakharov prize' for Suu Kyi

STRASBOURG (France), July 11: The European Parliament awarded its Sakharov Prize for freedom of thought on Wednesday to Burmese opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi, who has been under house arrests since 1989, reports Reuter.

The human rights prize worth 15,000 ecus (18,000 dollars), was accepted by Aung San Suu Kyi's 13-year-old son Kim in a ceremony at the assembly's Strasbourg Chamber.

In a speech to the Parliament, Aung San Suu Kyi's British husband Michael Aris

made an impassioned plea to Burma's military junta to allow him and their two sons to visit her.

Aung San Suu Kyi led the opposition National League for Democracy to a landslide election victory in May 1990 but Burma's ruling generals, who put her under house arrest in July 1989, prevented her from forming a government.

The prize is named after Soviet physicist and human rights campaigner Andrei Sakharov, who died in 1989.

Previous recipients include South African black leader Nelson Mandela and Czechoslovak politician Alexander Dubcek, leader of the abortive "Prague spring" reform movement.

In London, Britain welcomed the award and called on Burmese authorities to release Aung San Suu Kyi immediately.

The foreign office said Aung San Suu Kyi had been "denied the most basic human rights, including visits by her husband and children."

"Her majesty's government calls on the Burmese authorities to put an end to this shameful state of affairs immediately," a foreign office spokesman said.

"We are appalled that the flagrant abuse of human rights continues in Burma despite repeated calls for restraint by the international community," the spokesman said.

## China invites Hunsen for peace talks

BANGKOK, July 11: China has invited Cambodia's pro-Vietnamese Prime Minister Hun Sen for talks later this month, according to an official Phnom Penh Radio report monitored here today, report AFP.

Hunsen told Radio Phnom Penh he had been invited by the Chinese government for a three-day visit after a meeting, also in Beijing, of Cambodia's warring factions.

China is the main backer of the Khmer Rouge, the strongest guerrilla faction fighting the government installed 12 and a half years ago in Phnom Penh by invading Vietnamese forces.

Hunsen is to represent his government at the peace talks in Beijing July 16-17.

The talks have been organised by Prince Norodom Sihanouk, who has taken a central role in peace efforts to end the war and acted as a bridge between the Khmer Rouge and the Phnom Penh government.

After the talks, Hunsen is to be the guest of Prince Sihanouk in the North Korean capital of Pyongyang.

## Assam frees 175 Maoist guerrillas

GUWAHATI (India), July 11: The Assam government freed 175 jailed Maoist separatists on Wednesday and rebel leaders freed an Indian geophysicist held for 10 days in the troubled Indian border state, reports Reuter.

Officials said the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) members were released despite the death of a kidnapped Soviet engineer who was part of an exchange deal.

Geophysicist Pholanath Jaiswal was released in the remote town of Jorhat near the border with Burma, they said.

The fate of a further 12 hostages kidnapped by ULFA, fighting for an independent Assam, was still unknown.

ULFA said on Tuesday Soviet Mining Expert Sergei Gritchenko, was killed after grabbing a gun from a rebel guard and trying to escape.

## Off the Record

### Groombridge Palace on sale

LONDON: Groombridge Palace, the country mansion used in the shooting of the period mystery movie, "The Draughtsman's Contract," is up for sale at an estimated price of 3.25 million pounds (5.2 million dollars), Realtors Strutt and Parker said, reports AP.

The firm said the Mountain family was selling the 300-year-old house in Kent. The family has been living there since 1919, when they began recreating an interior dating to the 17th-century era of the Stuart monarchs.

The 1982 British film about sex and murder, set in 1694, was filmed by writer-director Peter Greenaway in the Jacobean house, located 34 miles (55 kms) south of London. The house has more than 20 rooms, a moat, and a fine garden designed by the diarist John Evelyn.

After the house is sold, Sotheby's plans to auction its contents, including period furniture, paintings and armour, which are expected to realise more than 1 million pounds (1.6 million dollars).

### US panda's mating in UK suggested

WASHINGTON: The National Zoo is suggesting its male giant panda, Hsing-Hsing, spend a mating season in London in a new effort to bolster the dwindling population of pandas, reports AP.

Zoo spokesman Bob Hoage said Friday that discussions with London Zoo officials were in an early stage. For one thing, London does not yet have a female panda, although it is expecting one from China.

Other zoos closer to London also have male pandas who might be available.

"There are several solitary males in Europe whose mates have died," Hoage said.

If the offer is accepted, Hsing-Hsing could leave as early as this fall.

Hsing-Hsing and his mate Ling-Ling have lived at the National Zoo since 1972, but efforts to raise offspring have proved unsuccessful.

Ling-Ling suffers from chronic infection of the reproductive and urinary tracts, and her cubs too have been plagued by infections. She has had five cubs since 1985, but none lived longer than four days.

Only 1,100 to 1,500 giant pandas survive in the wild in China, with perhaps another hundred in zoos. Only a small number of those born in captivity in China, Mexico, Japan and Europe have survived.

### Mushroom mania

ANCHORAGE (Alaska): Mushroom mania has struck The Last Frontier, reports AP.

Residents near the town of Tok — a town of 1,200 about 265 miles (425 kilometers) northeast of Anchorage — are streaming into nearby forests to pick morels — a pricey gourmet mushroom that's growing thickly in the area.

At least one woman quit her job to pick morels full time and dozens of other residents are venturing out before work, on their lunch breaks and after hours, taking advantage of Alaska's sunshine, which lasts until after midnight.

Out-of-state buyers pay pickers two dollars a pound. About 8,000 pounds (3,600 kilograms) are picked each day.

"It's fast, easy money," said Alice Ames, 62. She said she knows two women who picked 11 pounds (4.95 kilograms) of the cone-shaped mushrooms in 10 minutes.

Dried morels, or black mushrooms, sell for 25 dollars a pound in the United States and can fetch up to 75 dollars a pound in Europe. Morel lovers say they taste like beef when sauted.

## Bush seek Congress approval to shut down 25 bases

WASHINGTON, July 11: President George Bush asked Congress on Wednesday to approve a controversial plan to close 25 military bases and nine research sites in the United States by 1997, reports Reuter.

He made the announcement at a White House news conference after meeting a seven-member independent commission that recommended the cost-cutting move which would have a major financial impact in some areas of the country.

Congress now has 45 days either to approve or reject the proposed list of bases without change.

The closing of 16 navy, 13 air force and five army facilities and realignment of an additional 48 military sites would eliminate some 80,000 military and 35,000 civilian jobs.

"I signed the forwarding of the commission report with a total acceptance to the United States Congress earlier on Wednesday, Bush said.

Bush said that bases must be closed because the United States will make major cuts in its military forces in the next few years. The plan is expected to undergo heated de-

bate in Congress but administration officials have predicted it will pass.

Pennsylvania and new Jersey officials, including the four US Senators from the states, filed suit on Monday to block the proposed shutdown of the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard, one of the biggest facilities on the list.

Other major facilities recommended by the commission for closing include army bases at Fort Chaffee Arkansas; Fort Ord, California; and Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana. The navy bases included were at Seattle; Beville, Texas; Sunnyvale and Long Beach, California.

Among big air force bases recommended for closure are Carswell AFB at Fort Worth, Texas; Myrtle Beach AFB in South Carolina; Lowry AFB in Denver; Grossom AFB in Indiana; and Bergstrom AFB, Austin, Texas.

Bush accepted the commission plan which would close 13 air force, eight navy and four army bases after Defence Secretary Dick Cheney advised him to do so. The President, said earlier he would rely on Cheney's counsel.