#### Alleged Rajiv's killer had 'private army'

MADRAS, July 21: Accused in the Rajiv case, landlord Shanmugam who committed suicide yesterday was reportedly controlling a "private army" equipped with lethal weapons and a powerful communications network, posing a serious challenge to Customs and Police officials and terrorising the local population of Vedaranyam and the adjoining coastal belt, reports PTI.

Informed sources told PTI that Shanmugam had kept the police for the past several years till he surrendered a few days ago, having realised that he could not evade the CBI dragnet any more.

The sources said the "notorious smuggler" who had allegedly harboured the alleged assassin of Rajiv Gandhi, Dhanu and prime suspect, Sivarasan, was known in local police circles as a 'slippery customer'.

Shanmugam, who went underground after' the Rajiv killing, attended the funeral of a close relative days before his arrest though by then the CBI was on his trial shielded by his 'army' Shanmugam evaded arPLO approves meet between Baker, 3 Palestinians

# Riyadh offers to lift economic boycott if Israel stops settlements

JEDDAH (Saudi Arabia), July 21 : Saudi Arabia has offered to suspend its 43-year economic boycott of Israel in exchange for a freeze on Jewish settlement of Israeli-occupied Arab land, reports Reuter.

The announcement, which followed talks between Saudi Kind Fahd and US Secretary of State James Baker on Saturday, increases pressure on Israel's Hardline government to halt its drive to settle Jews in territories it captured in 1967.

But Israeli officials quickly rejected the Saudi offer, saying the Arab boycott was illegal and had no connection with the settlements.

"Just as we didn't like the linkage established between the two issues by the G-7 in London, we don't like the linkage from Jeddah," said one official in Jerusalem.

Baker first floated the idea rest effortlessly, the sources of a simultaneous settlement freeze and suspension of the

23 killed in Salvador fighting:

Heavy fighting between El Salvador's leftist guerillas and

government troops in the northern and eastern countryside

Friday and Saturday left at least 23 dead and 32 wounded, the

National Liberation Front (FMLN) in Dulce Nomber de Maria,

and 10 more were declared missing in action. Eight rebels

died, the armed forces said. The FMLN reported inflicting 32

4 killed in Yugoslavia : Four people have

been killed in fresh violence between Serbs and Croats, and a

Croatian government official said corpses were being left to

not in fields in the eastern part of the Yugoslav Republic,

was shot from a moving car while sitting in his house on

Saturday and another man was killed after firing on police

"In Slavoni. bodies are rotting in the fields. We can not

pick them up because of the danger of being fired upon (by

Serbian guerillas)", Croatian Health Minster Andrija Hebrang

Plan for oil-drilling in Amazon slated:

Politicians in Peru's Amazon on Saturday demanded the

government reverse itself and reject a US of company's plan

The government has said it will let Houston-based Texas

In an announcement in the Lima daily Expreso, the presi-

The people of Loreto and its regional government will

Crude Exploration, Inc. look for oil in the Pacaya-Samiria re-

serve, located in Loreto state, 530 miles (850 kms) northeast

dent of the Loreto regional assembly demanded cancellation

firmly and courageously defend Pacaya-Samira," the an-

nouncement said. People have a "right to demand respect for

Peru's main political parties, ranging from the Marxist United

Hostage issue to be resolved : Lebanese FM :

The Foreign Minister Rares Bouez said Saturday that the

government is doing all it can to resolve the plight of western

Foreign Minster Rares Bouez was speaking at an airport

"Secretary Baker brought up this question and we empha-

"We stressed the efforts by the Lebanese state to con-

news conference after arriving from Cairo, where he met with

sized to him that Lebanon is the foremost hostage in the issue

tribute towards finding a solution for this question which is

reflecting adversely on foreign aid, visits by foreign figures to

Lebanon and difficulties faced by the Lebanese in obtaining

6 killed in Peru violence : At least stx

people were killed and two wounded when Peruvian security

forces clashed with about 80 Maoist guerillas who attacked a

town in the southeastern region of Ayacucho, witnesses said

ant militia force and wounding two others, witnesses said.

at least five guerillas, a wounded militiaman told Reuters.

The guerillas attacked Huamangilla, one member of a peas-

The militia, backed by police, repelled the attack, killing

ICRC visits prisoners in Iraq: The

International Committee of the Red Cross has visited several

hundred Iraqi soldiers taken prisoner by Kurdish rebels in

recent fighting in northern Iraq, an ICRC spokeswoman said

The ICRC said its workers also helped evacuate dozens o

people wounded in fighting Wednesday and Thursday around

the town of Suleimaniyeh, some across the border to the

medical supplies to the area from Tehran, Iran, and prepar-

ing more for shipment from Baghdad, the Iraqi capital,

The all-Swiss humanitarian agency said it is bringing

The spokeswoman, Karen Saddler, could not say exactly

A first group of 29 casualties were evacuated Thursday

how many captives taken by the Kurds have been visited or

night from Sayid Sadek to a hospital in Paveh. Sixteen more

wounded were transported Friday from Sayid Sadek to

38 killed in Punjab: At least 38 people were

killed in the strife-torn Punjab province Saturday, Press Trust

shot to death by police. The rest of the dead were civilians.

Those killed included 16 Sikh militants, most of them

The report gave the names of only three of the murdered

civilians. They were Harbhajan Singh, a real estate dealer shot-

and killed by two cycle-borne militants; Balbir Kaur and

Bhupinder Singh. All apparently were Sikhs - as evident from

Among the dead militants was Mehtab Singh, a hard core

The news report did not give the names of the other slain

guerilla leader of the outlawed Bhindranwale Tiger Force,

one of the half-dozen top militant groups fighting for Punjab's

militants but said that two of them were the so called area

commanders of the Khalistan Commando Force, another top

Khalistan or Land of the Pure is the name Sikh militants

Left Party to the free-market promoting Liberty Movement.

The announcement was signed by the regional leaders of

the resources buried in their lands," it said.

hostages held in Lebanon, reports AP from Beirut.

US Secretary of State James A Baker III.

on Saturday, reports Reuter from Ayacucho.

Saturday, AP from Geneva reports.

how many there might be in total.

Iranian town Paveh.

needed.

Suletmaniyeh.

their names.

of India said, AP reports.

independence from India.

would give to an independent Punjab.

guerilla organization.

of the hostages," said Bouez.

entry visas abroad," he added.

to drill in a jungle nature reserve, AP reports from Lima.

Police said a man in the Slavonian area of eastern Croatia

Troops skirmished with rebels of the Farabundomart

The army said one soldier was killed, seven were wounded

army said, AFP reports from San Salvador.

army casualties in the battle.

Reuter reports from Zagreb.

from a road block near Ostjek.

told a news conference.

of Lima.

a town in the northern province of Chalatenango.

boycott in March, but both Israel and Arab states rejected their part of the bargain.

The idea gathered new impetus last week when the world's seven major industrial nations endorsed it at the Group of Seven (G-7) summit in London. Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak became the first Arab leader to back the proposal after meeting Baker on Friday.

Baker welcomed the Saudi decision, noting US law had long banned observance of the boycott and that Washington regarded israeli settlement as an obstacle to peace.

"We're pleased to see this step by the Saudi government because it indicates a willingness to takes steps towards Israel if Israel ready to reciprocate," Baker said. His fifth Middle East peace

mission reaches it climax in Israel today.

a significant gesture by the

Arab economic giant, which has scrupulously observed the boycott since it was implemented by the Arab world after

the creation of Israel in 1948. The Saudi statement also backed Baker's efforts to convene an Arab-Israeli peace conference based on United Nations resolutions which speak of Israel withdrawing

from occupied territory in exchange for peace. The statement said Saudi

Arabia wanted an end to the Arab-Israel conflict that was "just, practical and acceptable". The statement appeared to refer to the primary boycott of

boycott of foreign companies doing business with the Jewish Israel rejects Saudi offer

JERUSALEM, July 21: Israeli officials rejected on Saturday a Saudi offer to suspend its economic boycott if Israel agreed to freeze settlement of Jews in the occupied

territories, reports Reuter. Saudi Arabia made its offer in a statement issued after US Sccretary of State James Baker met King Fahd in Jeddah on Saturday.

The Saudi move represents the two issues by the G-7 in London, we don't like the linkage from Jeddah," said one

Israel itself and to a secondary

up in the negotiation process. This week, the Group of "Just as we didn't like the cott. The call was echoed on linkage established between Friday by Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and backed by

Agha and Hanan Ashrawi would Israeli official who declined to meet Baker this night.

Officials said the Arab boycott was illegal and had no connection with the settlements, which would be taken

Seven industrial nations (G-7) urged a halt to settlements and a suspension of the Arab boy-

Opposition MPs stage walkout

## Pak bill passed to suspend SC in terrorist-affected areas

ISLAMABAD, July 21: The Senate on Saturday passed a constitutional amendment allowing the government to suspend the Supreme Court and establish special courts in "terrorist-affected areas" to curb the soaring crime rate, reports AP.

The government wants to deal with terrorists and miscreants with an iron hand and to ensure provision of quick justice to the people," Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif told the state-run Associated Press of Pakistan.

Outraged opposition Parliamentarians stormed out of the Assembly railing against the government for banning debate and steamrolling the amendment through the Lower

"They have destroyed our traditions, our laws, our values," Farooq Leghari, a spokesman for former prime minister Benazir Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party, was quoted as saying in the English-language Nation news-

"We've already seen who the government considers to be terrorists - its political opponents," said Salman Taseer, a spokesman for Ms. Bhutto's left-of-center party.

the government has dismissed the opposition's fears as "misconceived and unfounded."

The amendment threatened to rip Sharif's ruling Islamic coalition apart but was rewrit ten several times until its critics were silenced.

The National Assembly, the powerful law-making Lower House of Parliament, passed the constitutional change late last Thursday with the re-

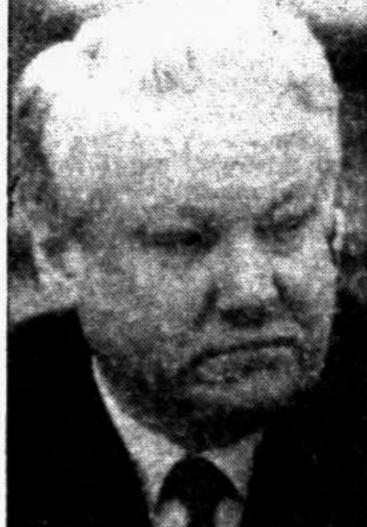
quired two-thirds majority. The president must now approve the amendment, but that is seen as only a formality.

The amendment allows the government to suspend the Supreme Court and establish special courts in areas of the country designated as "terrorist-affected areas." It allows only one appeal.

"It will now be possible to duly punish the culprits, positively redress the grievances of the aggrieved party and provide simple, speedy and easy dispensation of justice," Sharif told the state-owned Pakistan

Times newspaper.

Sharif stemmed mounting opposition to his amendment when he dropped a contentious clause that would have given Pakistan's police sweeping power. Even mem-



#### Yeltsin issues his first decree

MOSCOW, July 21: The Russian press has published the first decree by the First Russian President, Boris Yeltsin, dealing with urgent measures aimed at the republic's development, reports IAN

The decree stresses among other things that non-state ed ucational establishments should be supported. The state bodies in charge of education and science shall be subordinate directly to the Russian President, Kurnty writes.

There are plans to evolve a comprehensive programme, children of Russia, and a system of state support for highschool and university students.

Pursuant to the decree, college and university professors and lecturers will be given a rise on January 1992 to make their salaries and pay rates twice as high as the average for Russian industry. School teacher and other educational workers shall not earn less than the average industrial wages. Student grants shall not be lower than the minimum wages in Russia, or not lower than 80 per cent thereof for students at specialised sec ondary schools.

bers of his own ruling party

and near anarchy in the thickly forested southern Sindh province prompted him to seek a change in the constitution. Kidnappings-for-ransom are an almost daily occurrence in the province, where bandits roam with near impunity.

been overrun by political and ethnic rivals. Thousands of people have been killed or injured in gunbattles between warring factions.

About three weeks ago 20 people were massacred in Sharif's home province of Punjab.

Ms. Bhutto was on a threeweek tour of Europe and northern Africa. She is expected to return to Pakistan sometime next week.

The former premier, who was unceremoniously dismissed from power last August and overwhelmingly defeated in polls three months later, has come under fire from both critics and supporters for her prolonged absences from Pakistan.

She has accused the government of trying to destroy her party through mass arrests. Her husband Asif Ail Zardari has been jailed since last Oct. 10 on several charges. including murder and kidnap-

#### India, Nepal agree to check smuggling

KATHMANDU, July 21: India and Nepal have agreed to undertake joint patrolling along the common border to check trans-border smuggling and other crimes, reports PTI.

Top police officials of both India and Nepal met at the Western Nepalese tourist resort of Pokhara recently and reached an agreement to this effect.

Discussions on ways to check murder, drug trafficking, smuggling of foods and cars and other crimes along the border areas of the two countries were held during the

feared a police state would be Mass murders, abductions

The cities of Sindh have

Israel has so far poured cold water on US attempts to bring Israelis and Arabs together. Syrian President Hafez al-Assad and Egyptian leader Hosni Mubarak have dropped all preconditions for direct

them will."

talks with the Jewish state. Mubarak on Friday urged Arab states to suspend their boycott of firms doing business with Israel if the Israeli government freezes settlements in the occupied territories. Israel Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir has so far rejected the

AFP from Damascus reports : The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) Saturday rejected recent US peace proposals because it said they exclude the PLO and fail to put pressure on Israel.

#### 2 Soviets wounded in clashes with Gypsies

MOSCOW, July 21: Two Russians were shot and wounded in clashes with Gypsies accused of selling vodka at four times the state price, the official Soviet news agency Tass said yesterday, reports Reuter.

In a report from Nevel, about 400 km (25 miles) west of Moscow, Tass said resentment over the vodka price had been building up for some time and riots erupted in the middle of week.

"An estimated 300 Russian young men walked towards a city borough where about 1,000 Gypsies were living. Out numbered police managed to prevent pogroms," it said.

Local officials claimed the angry crowd of Russians by promising to crackdown on vodka speculators and investigate crimes alleged to have been committed by Gypsies.

between two high-rise buildings near the grounds of the ministry in Tokyo's Roppongi district, the spokesman said.

"The rockets landed in the grounds of the agency away from any buildings or people." he said. "We don't know yet who is responsible for the at-

## Off the Record

#### Madonna's ideas on teenage pregnancies

LONDON: Madonna says parents who don't talk to their children about sex are partly to blame for teenage pregnancies and the spread of AIDS, reports AP.

The American singer and actress urged parents to talk to their children about safe sex, venereal disease and AIDS.

state. An Arab League office in

Damascus administered the

boycott, periodically publishing

lists of blacklisted companies.

The PLO has approved a

meeting between three

Palestinians and US Secretary

of State James Baker during

the latter's visit to Israel, a

PLO spokesman said yesterday.

Palestinian activist Faisal al-

Husseini and doctors Zakaria

The spokesman said that

The three are authorised to

explain to Baker the

Palestinian position regarding

the Middle East peace process

and hear responses to ques-

tions posed to Baker during a

previous meeting, the

East tour since March, seeking

to lobby support for a US pro-

posal on holding a US-Soviet

sponsored peace conference

visiting Syria and Egypt, he

will travel to Jordan and then

to Israel Sunday to complete

Reuter from Ankara says US President George Bush said

today he expected Israel to

agree to Middle East peace

talks already accepted by key

in Ankara that Secretary of

State James Baker had re-

ceived positive signals in Syria

and Egypt for US ideas on con-

hearts that when this is ex-

plained on his last stop, when

this is explained in Israel, that

all countries will see that it is

in their interests to come for-

ward and talk peace. And that's

what this is all about," Bush

some good idea. I'm very happy

that certain countries have

now seen the merit in these

ideas and I hope that all of

"We think we've put forward

"I believe in my heart of

vening a peace conference.

He told a news conference

Now in Saudi Arabia after

for the troubled region.

the tour.

Arab states.

Baker is on a fifth Middle

spokesman added.

Xinhua from Tunts adds :

"It should not be something we sweep under the rug and put in the closet. We should all just admit that our children are having sex at very young ages," she said in an interview on BBC Radio 1 to be broadcast Monday. A transcript was released on Friday.

"You have to talk to your children about those things because they exist, so what is the point in pretending that they don't?" she asked.

"It's a mistake. That's why AIDS is spreading in the heterosexual community very swiftly right now, because straight people think they can't get it."

#### Orphan jumps into Barbara's lap

ANKARA (Turkey): Barbara Bush mixed interest in ancient civilizations with a look toward Turkey's future in visits Saturday to a museum and an orphanage, reports AP.

A little orphan girl jumped on her lap after the wife of the US president hugged a dozen bubbling young children who welcomed her at the entrance to the orphanage in the Turkish capital.

She let the little girl sit on her lap for five minutes under a baking sun while a group of teen-age girls sang and danced for her to Turkish folk music. Mrs Bush accompanied the beat by tapping a knee.

Mrs Bush later looked amused when a little boy threw a small green ball at her. She caught it and threw it back. Mrs Bush, accompanying her husband on a two-day official

visit to this country, spent 1 1@2 hours at the museum and the orphanage with Turkey's first lady, Semra Ozal. She did not change her morning's arrival outfit, a purple

and white two-piece suit, adorned with rose shaped big buttons from the same material. It was a hot, sunny day, with a heat of 90 F (32 degrees

Celsius). Under extraordinary security measures, Mrs Bush first stooped at the Anatolian Civilizations Museum, housing arti-

facts dating from 8,000 B.C. She listened attentively to the explanations of a Turkish guide, and exclaimed, when she learned that a collection of

gold jewelry from 3,000 B.C. was found in a single tomb: "Oh, my goodness, what a find!"

#### Jayalalitha to take Rs 1 salary

MADRAS: The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Miss Jayalalitha. has decided to take a token salary of Rs one in her capacity as the State Chief Minister, an official press release said here on Saturday, reports PTI.

The release said she considered that it was not proper to take a salary as people had elected her to serve them.

#### Criticism of T-shirt culture under fire

BEIJING, July 21: Three weeks after China's leaders banned T-shirts bearing slogans of popular dissatisfaction, one provincial newspaper has rebuffed press criticisms of the "cultural T-shirt phenomenon", reports Reuter.

The Life newspaper (Shenghuo Bao), breaking step with the rest of China's state-run media, said the shirts represented high art, not high treason.

The shirts are not only the best clothes of the summer, they also give people something to look at," the paper said in its July 17 issue, received in Beijing this weekend.

Police swept through markets rounding up the shirts, which had slogans such as "I'm only trying to feed my family" and "I'm depressed, leave me alone."

Chinese officials have tried to extinguish public displays of dissent since a bloody crackdown on pro-democracy protests in Beijing's Tiananmen Square on June 4, 1989.

Key reformers, including former Communist Party boss Zhao Ziyang, were purged and the ideological reins were pulled tight.

Positive early news stories about the shirts - the China Youth Daily said they created "a humorous environment" soon gave way to angry denunciations as authorities demanded steeped-up vigilance against anti-social elements.

## Bush looms large over Ankara

ANKARA (Turkey), July 21: George Bush never looked bigger or better than upon his arrival in Ankara, reports AP. giant silk-screen portrait of

the US president, sporting more hair than the original, beamed down at Bush during welcoming ceremonies at the airport. Barbara Bush spotted it first,

keeping her face expressionless but nudging her husband to look at his larger-than-life portrait.

Downtown, an even larger, five-story-high version of the banner was draped above one of Ankara's major

streets, alongside one of

streets of Ankara to greet Bush on his trip in from the airport. Ozal ordered drivers to slow down so the

Thousands of people lined the

Turkish President Turgut

crowds could catch a glimpse of his famous guest. Bush, at a news conference with Ozal, said he and his wife were "deeply moved...by the warmth of the reception" from the crowds on the roadsides.

"No one is so sophisticated" not to be touched by such an outpouring of affection. Bush said, "I think that started this visit off on a very high plain."

Japanese leftist radicals

have repeatedly attacked gov-

ernment targets with simple

homemade rockets in recent

The incident today followed

weekend reports that the

government was preparing to

submit bills to parliament so

#### Two rockets fired at Japan's defence ministry

TOKYO, July 21: Two rockets were fired at Japan's Defence Ministry central Tokyo today morning but caused no damage, a police spokesman said, reports Reuter.

Police found the launch site

that it 'could send troops overseas to help deal with natural disasters. Japan is constitutionally re-

stricted from sending troops out of the country.

### Schwarzkopf ready to attack Iraq again on Bush's order CAIRO, July 21: US General army in northern Iraq.

Norman Schwarzkopf, commander of the allied forces that ousted Iraq from Kuwait in the Gulf War, said Saturday he was ready to attack Iraq again if his president asked

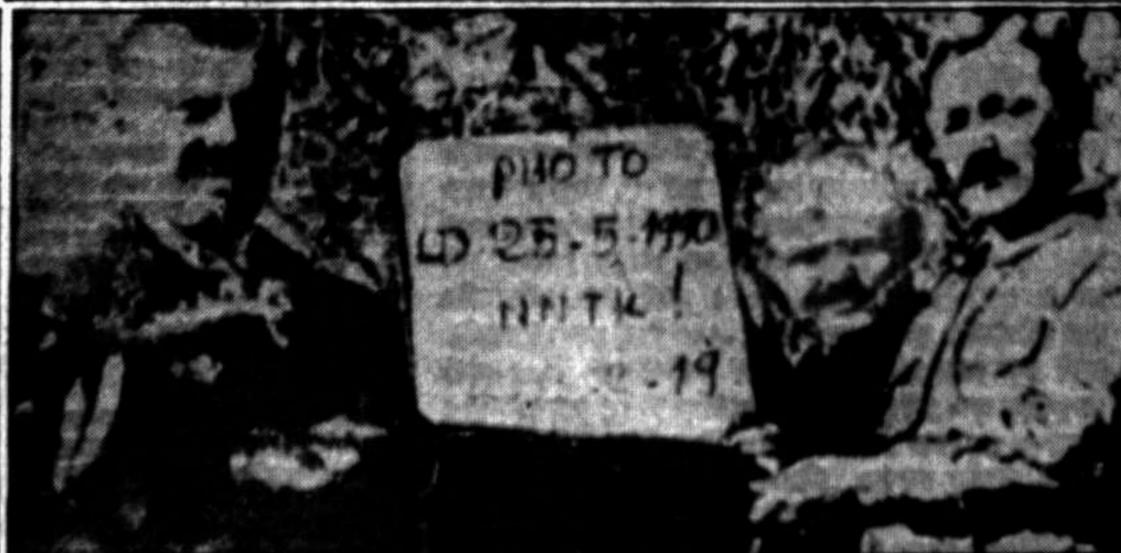
him, reports PII. The General, who had just met Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak during a two-day visit to Cairo, told reporters that he was 'prepared to start again' if President George Bush carried out a threat to strike against Iraq.

The United States has warned Iraqi President Saddam Hussein that his country could face a fresh assault if he does not keep his promise to reveal the where bouts of his strategic weapons capabilities.

Reuter adds: A Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) spokesman said on Saturday the Kurdish alliance and Iraqi government would meet today (Sunday) to investigate clashes between Kurds and the Iraqi

Kemal Kirkukit, an official from the KDP, said the cause

of fighting between Kurds and Iraqi troops had not yet been determined.



WASHINGTON: According to a Pentagon statement made July 18, Hanoi officials claim the Robertson, Maj Albro Lundy Jr. (C) and Lieut Larry Stevens (R).

man identified as Col John Robertson (L) is dead and his remains were given to the US in April 1990, but the Pentagon says this cannot be confirmed. The photo reportedly shows three US pilots shot down during the Vietnam war. The families have identified the men as -AFP/UNB photo