

# BRIEFLY

**Gorbachev's aide resigns:** Mikhail Gorbachev's chief strategist and confidante on democratic reforms announced his resignation Saturday, a month after helping to found a reform opposition movement, reports AP from Moscow.

Alexander Yakovlev, who in six years as a close Gorbachev aide was the architect of Gorbachev's glasnost policy, disclosed his plans on television on the eve of the summit meeting between Gorbachev and U.S. President Bush. He did not cite a reason.

The significance of the timing was not immediately clear. Yakovlev did not say when he is resigning, and it was not known whether or to what extent the move signaled dissatisfaction with recent reform attempts.

But Yakovlev, 67, who has been Gorbachev's chief strategist and confidante on democratic reforms since he took power in March 1985, helped found an opposition movement last month.

"I have given a letter of resignation," Yakovlev was shown saying on the Russian television news show "Vesti".

**Quake kills 20 in Iraq:** An earthquake struck northern Iraq, killing 20 people and injuring an undisclosed number of others, the Iraqi news agency reported Saturday night, reports AP from London.

The quake destroyed 100 houses in two villages in the Irbil governorate, said the report monitored in London.

The Iraqi news agency report did not say when the quake struck or give its magnitude.

**US-USSR arms treaty complete:** U.S. and Soviet negotiators on Saturday finally completed the last details of the strategic arms reduction treaty, just days before it is to be signed at a summit meeting in Moscow, Soviet television reported, AP reports from Moscow.

U.S. President George Bush and Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev are scheduled to sign the treaty on Wednesday in the Kremlin. It will reduce U.S. stockpiles of long-range nuclear missiles, bombers and submarines by about 28 per cent and Soviet strategic forces by about 35 per cent.

Actual nuclear warheads on ballistic missiles will be cut 39 per cent by the United States and 48 per cent by the Soviet Union, according to U.S. officials.

"This agreement will lower the level of confrontation for this country and for the whole world," said Yuri Nazarkin, head of the Soviet negotiating team.

"We are finishing a process which symbolizes the new relationship between our two countries, and I am very proud of it," said the chief U.S. negotiator Lynton Brooks. The agreement took nearly ten years to negotiate.

**West accused of hating Iraqis to death:** President Saddam Hussein on Saturday accused the west of hating the Iraqi people "to death," reports AFP from Baghdad. The west was "a thief" which is seeking "the disappearance of this population of 18 million by depriving it of basic necessities."

"It hates you to death," he said in the course of receiving a delegation of "families of martyrs," or Iraqis killed in combat.

The Iraqi leader, whose speech was broadcast on television, did not specify which western country he was accusing of "stealing the bread from the mouths of Iraqis".

Iraq has been subjected to an international embargo since its forces invaded Kuwait last summer.

**US slated for pressuring China, USSR:** Cuban President Fidel Castro denounced the United States on Friday for exerting pressures on China and the Soviet Union to abandon their cooperation with Cuba, Sinaua reports from Havana.

In a speech made on the occasion of the 38th anniversary of the attack against the Moncada barracks Castro said that Washington called on the Soviet Union to break its ties with Cuba as a condition to step up its economic aid to the USSR.

He said that the United States used the same method when Congress recently proposed the reduction of China's collaboration with Cuba.

**Muslims won't set up ties with Israel:** Iran on Saturday warned that the "Muslim people will not allow their governments to establish political and economic relations with Israel," reports AFP from Teheran.

The warning, issued by the Supreme Council of National Security, the country's highest governing body, came as momentum was gathering behind a US proposal for an Arab-Israeli peace conference.

In a statement attacking "capitulationist and dangerous moves concerning occupied Palestine", the council stressed that "any compromise on the city of Jerusalem will provoke the wrath of the world of Islam."

Israel has said it will not accept participation in the conference by Palestinians from east Jerusalem. Israel annexed east Jerusalem in the 1967 war.

**Lebanese President leaves Syria:** Lebanese President Elias Hrawi left Damascus late Saturday after talks with his Syrian counterpart Hafez al-Assad on the Middle East peace process, the official SANA news agency said, AFP reports from Damascus.

The two leaders to extend its authority in Lebanon and the Beirut government's attempt to extend its authority throughout the country, SANA and correspondent said.

Hrawi, who arrived here early Saturday, held more than six hours of talks with Assad, officials said.

The meeting came after both countries agreed to participate in a Middle East peace conference being promoted by the United States but officials provided no details on the tenor of the talks.

## Ishaq approves bill to curb crimes

ISLAMABAD, July 28: Pakistan President Ghulam Ishaq Khan Saturday gave his assent to the 12th Constitutional Amendment Bill authorising the federal government to establish as many special courts as it deems proper to curb heinous crimes in the country, according to official sources here today, reports Xinhua.

The 12th Amendment Bill, passed by the National Assembly on July 18 and the Senate on July 20, has now become an act of Parliament after the President's approval and small remain in force for next three years.

The sources said official gazette notification of the 12th Constitutional Amendment Act will be issued within next few days.

As the 12th Amendment became part of the constitution, the sources said, the federal government would establish crimes like terrorism, sabotage, a lawlessness and crimes gruesome and brutal in character or shocking to public morality.

The number of special courts to be established in the country has not been decided, the sources said adding a handsome number is likely to be set up to arrest the growing trend of these crimes.

According to the amendment cases referred to these special courts, shall be decided within 30 days and appeals against decisions of the special courts shall also be heard and decided within 30 days too by special appellate courts to be established by the federal government.

The amendment prohibits any other court including High, Supreme or Shariah (Islamic) Courts to exercise its jurisdiction on such cases or decisions or orders of the special courts, special appellate courts established by the federal government.

The opposition which protested against the way the government bulldozed the bill through the National Assembly without any debate alleged the amendment would act as an instrument to victimize political opponents.

The opposition has already chalked out plans to launch protest campaign throughout the country to mobilize public opinions in their support against what they called black law. Opposition leaders will observe a 12-hour token hunger strike throughout the country on August 4 as part of the protest campaign.

## Chinese bid to suppress dissidents in Mongolia

WASHINGTON, July 28: China's government has launched initiatives to suppress dissident activities in Inner Mongolia, the human rights group Asia Watch charged in a report released today, reports AFP.

A secret Chinese Communist Party directive dated May 11, 1991 called for the dissolution of two "illegal" groups, the Ih Ju League National Culture Society and the Bayannur League National Modernisation Society, estab-

lished last year to promote Mongolian culture and ethnic identity, the report said.

While the region's neighbouring Mongolian republic gained independence from China in 1921, China held onto the ethnic-Mongol region to the south known as Inner Mongolia.

Two leaders of the Ih Ju League were arrested and 26 others were left under surveillance, the report said, adding that the fate of the Bayannur League's members was unknown.

Asia watch called on Beijing to release Hunchun and Wang Manglai, the two men arrested May 15, 1991. It also asked China to permit the two Mongol cultural groups which grew out of a decade-old protest movement against ethnic domination to operate unhindered.

The New York based human rights group also reported a third organisation in the Chinese region, the Inner Mongolian League for the defence of human rights, was calling for international support.

"Under the present circumstances, any voice of concern and any form of practical assistance from the democratic countries and the various human rights organisations will inspire and encourage the people here," the group said in an appeal included in Asia watch's report.

Asia watch was established in 1985 to assess and promote respect for internationally recognised human rights in Asia.

**Soviets reluctant to join West**

WASHINGTON, July 28: Soviet citizens are reluctant to join the capitalist west despite Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's plans to move his country towards a market economy, according to a newly-published poll, reports Reuters.

Gorbachev meets George Bush in Moscow next week eager to convince the US President that he has widespread backing for his reforms and that he wields the political control necessary to win western backing for them.

But the poll, conducted in May and released on Saturday, showed that nearly half of those questioned would prefer to keep state-run industries and limit profits under a democratic socialist system rather than shift to US-style capitalism.



KATHMANDU: Four factions of the Nepal Communist Party hold a joint demonstration July 27 in support of agitating civil servants and landless people. The young boy holds placard reading "dismiss the black law of the Panchayat period." —AFP/UNB Photo

## Labour regains lost ground in Britain

LONDON, July 28: Britain's opposition Labour Party, whose lead over the Conservatives had been shrinking, has regained lost ground and is now five points ahead of the ruling party, an opinion poll shows, reports Reuters.

The results of the Mori Survey to be published in the Sunday Times indicated Labour might be on the verge of reversing the voting trend after three successive conservative general election victories.

Conservative Prime Minister John Major who con-

tinues to enjoy a higher rating over his Labour rival Neil Kinnock, must call a general election by mid-1992.

The opinion poll showed Labour winning 43 per cent of the vote and the Conservatives 38 per cent if a ballot were held now.

An equivalent poll a month ago gave Labour only a two point lead.

A New Mori Survey in Scotland showed the Labour Party boosting its overwhelming lead over the Conservatives to 53 per cent with Major's Party trailing at 23 per cent.

## Y'slav planes bomb Croatian town: 10 killed in overnight assault

BELGRADE, JULY 28: Federal warplanes launched an hour-long bombing raid on targets near the Croatian town of Ilok, 100 kilometres (60 miles) north of Belgrade, the Yugoslav Army General Staff announced Saturday, reports AFP.

The raids, starting at 11.13 am (0913 GMT), were launched in reprisal for attacks by "unidentified forces" on aircraft carrying out "training missions" in the region, the army statement said.

The firing was said to have

come from buildings at an agro-industrial complex.

The General Staff said its warplanes would respond in the same way to any other attacks of this kind in Yugoslav air space.

Croatian television said the aircraft dropped four bombs, one of them a fire-bomb. It denied there had been any provocation for the attacks.

The inhabitants of Ilok were unarmed and were fleeing the town, it said.

Ilok is a town of mixed Croatian, Serbian, Slovak and

Hungarian population on the river Danube in the mainly Serbian region of Slavonia, in eastern Croatia.

Federal forces on the opposite bank of the Danube, in the neighbouring republic of Serbia, fired several shells and other projectiles at the town, the television said.

AP adds: Federal troops and tanks flushed Croatian police Saturday from a village shattered by some of Yugoslavia's fiercest ethnic fighting.

Croatia said 10 people were killed in an overnight assault by about 200 soldiers and 11 tanks on the town of Glina, south of the republic's capital, Zagreb.

The battle followed fighting Friday in Glina and neighbouring villages between Croat police and ethnic Serbs.

Croatian officials reported continued fighting in their republic Saturday morning. The Yugoslav Air Force said one of its planes had fired rockets at Croatian forces near Ilok in eastern Croatia after they shot at the plane, which was patrolling. No casualties were reported.

By evening Croatia was reported to be mostly quiet.

About 50 people have been killed in three days of fighting involving Croatian police, ethnic Serb militias and the federal army. More than 200 people have lost their lives in Croatia and Slovenia since the republics declared independence on June 25.

The Yugoslav state news agency Tanjug said at least 24 people died in Friday's fighting. The 10 reported killed in the overnight assault on Glina apparently were in addition to the 24.

Also Saturday, Italian Foreign Minister Gianni De Michelis told reporters in Dubrovnik that the European Community, meeting Monday in Brussels, likely will decide to send a three-member group back to Yugoslavia.

That could signal the beginning of diplomatic effort to end the fighting in Croatia, similar to that which led to a ceasefire in Slovenia.

## 83 rebels surrender in Burma

RANGOON, July 28: A total of 83 Myanmar insurgents surrendered to local authorities during the month of June this year, according to an official report, reports Xinhua.

The 83 insurgents are respectively from Kachin Independence Army (KIA), All-Burma Students Democratic Front (ABSDF), Karen National Union (KNU), Shan United Army (SUA) and Shan United Revolutionary Army (SURA).

The insurgents brought with them seven Ak-47 automatic rifles, six M-16 automatic rifles, three M-21 automatic rifles, one M-22 automatic rifle and some ammunition.

According to official statistics, altogether 107 insurgents surrendered to Myanmar authorities in the month of May this year. A total of 589 insurgents surrendered to Myanmar authorities last year.

## 30,000 Lankans to get jobs in Kuwait

COLOMBO, July 28: Sri Lanka will be benefited from Kuwait which is opening its doors to foreign employees, local daily 'The Sunday Observer' reported today, says Xinhua.

Over 30,000 Sri Lankan domestic employees like housemaids, drivers and cooks will leave Sri Lanka for Kuwait within the next few months. The paper quoted Sri Lankan Foreign Employment Bureau Chairman D. Soysa as saying,

Soysa also noted thousands of Kuwaitis who returned to their country during the war are also willing to take back their former employees from Sri Lanka.

As a result of Gulf war about 73,000 personnel of 100,000 Sri Lankan workers in Kuwait returned home, and now about 2,000 have gone back to Kuwait.

## 16,000 criminal cases filed in China last year

HONG KONG, July 28: Of the 16,000 criminal cases filed last year in China's most populous city, Shanghai, only 30 were acquitted and less than half had the luxury of a defense lawyer, an Australian human rights delegation said Sunday, reports AP.

"This gives you an idea of the problems the Chinese people face," said David Connolly, part of the first human rights delegation allowed in China. "They've got a long way to go."

The team also said doctors performed 600,000 abortions in China's most populous province of Sichuan last year compared with 2 million births.

The nine-member team of politicians and China experts painted a grim picture of human rights in China two years after the government crackdown on a pro-democracy movement in Beijing.

The group visited Beijing, Shanghai, Chengdu and Lhasa, the capital of the troubled province of Tibet, on their 13-day journey.

## Rao seeks ceasefire between Karnataka, Tamil Nadu

NEW DELHI, July 27: Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao, wrestling with an economic crisis and three separatist insurgencies, has had to turn his attention to an ancient water war that could cost him a much-needed ally, reports Reuters.

He met legal experts, politicians and officials on Friday, and called a meeting of senior Cabinet Ministers today to discuss the Cauvery River battle between the neighbouring southern states of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

## New mission to inspect Iraqi N-programme

BAGHDAD, July 28: The fourth United Nations team inspecting Iraq's nuclear programme began working Saturday, keeping its efforts secret to retain the element of surprise, members said, reports AP.

An earlier team said Baghdad may still be hiding weapons production sites the allies have threatened to strike.

Iraq's Foreign Ministry, in an unprecedented disclosure, said the team would be trying to figure out how to extract nuclear materials from laboratories and a reactor at the bomb-damaged nuclear facilities at Tammuz, north of Baghdad.

## Off the Record

### McCartney buys forest to give deer a sanctuary

LONDON: Former Beatle Paul McCartney announced Saturday that he had bought a 30-hectare (75-acre) lot of forest in southwestern England in order to give deer a sanctuary from hunters, reports AFP.

He said the purchase had been suggested by the league against cruel sports.

Mr McCartney paid a 100,000 pounds (170,000 dollars) for the lot, located near Skilgate, in Somerset.

### And now oral insulin

NEW DELHI: Insulin which is given to diabetics through injections will soon be available in the form of tablets to be taken orally, according to biochemist Dr Ushpa Khanna who was the first to extract an insulin-like substance from bitter gourd (momordica charantia) known locally as karela, reports PTI.

Karela, which is used by Indian housewives in vegetable preparation is mentioned in ancient ayurvedic literature for its blood sugar lowering effect. Prof Khanna who recently retired from the university of Rajasthan in Jaipur isolated an active principle from Karela ten years ago and called it polypeptide-p.

It contains 17 amino acids including methionine which is not present in animal or human insulin.

Prof. Khanna said the plant insulin from karela had been tested on several patients suffering from maturity onset diabetes attending clinics in Jaipur it was found to significantly lower blood sugar levels and the effect was long lasting, she said.



HONG KONG: Gong Li, one of China's most famous actresses, puts on a new hat and sing a pop song for the "Blood is Thicker Than Water" benefit for mainland flood victims at the Happy Valley Racecourse July 27. Ms Gong starred in the critically acclaimed film Red Sorghum and the Oscar-nominated "Judou". —AFP/UNB photo

### Dynasty actor charged for possessing cocaine

VANCOUVER (British Columbia): Actor James Farentino, featured in the US television series "Dynasty," has been charged with possession of cocaine by Canadian police, reports Reuters.

Farentino, 53, was in Vancouver, to film a television movie titled "Miles from nowhere" when 3.2 grammes of cocaine found in an envelope was linked to the Hollywood actor in his hotel room, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police said.

The RCMP said on Saturday Farentino is free on 400 dollar bail.

"He just has to appear in court, that's all," said RCMP constable Yves Leblanc.

Farentino is known for his roles in films such as Jesus of "Nazareth" and "Kluge Story," and his television work in the series "The Bold Ones" and "Dynasty."

### Safe sex, ancient way

MOSCOW: The black market of Krasnoyarsk (Siberia) is offering expensive condoms made of mutton bowels. Lost since the time of ancient Rome, the secret of their making has been rediscovered by Russian craftsmen, says the Interfax News Agency, reports IAN.

Italian doctors qualify plumbers among HIV-exposed population groups, alongside with prostitutes and homosexuals. Twelve are ineligible as blood donors in Verona alone.

The danger lies not in polluted water. As heart-to-heart talks between plumbers and doctors reveal, voluptuous housewives eagerly start affairs with the young men who appear at their homes to fix water taps, and promiscuity leads to venereal diseases.

### Brothers indeed

NAGAON, July 28: Two brothers risked their own lives and fought valiantly with a tiger to save a third brother from its clutches at a place near Salma in Nagaon district last Monday a delayed report said, reports PTI.

When the tiger from an adjoining forest attacked one of the brothers the two others immediately rushed to his aid by jumping on the animal's back and throwing it on the ground to loosen its grip on the victim.

After the victim managed to escape, they repeatedly stabbed the tiger with a dagger until it was killed the report said, adding the seriously injured youths were admitted to hospital.

Rao had called off a visit to Tamil Nadu, planned for today, a government spokesman said.

He could not be seen to be taking sides, political sources said.

The postponement could further offend Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Jayalalitha, whose all India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) party has 11 members of Parliament who vote with Rao.

Jayalalitha is a former movie heroine whom Tamils usually greet by throwing themselves flat at her feet.



VINKOVCI, Yugoslavia: A Croatian Territorial Defence soldier examines the debris from a Yugoslav airforce bomb (foreground) which penetrated but failed to explode in this vineyard farm house during an air attack July 27. —AFP/UNB photo