BANGKOK, Aug 30 Burmese military authorities have arrested 13 men and charged them with having links with ethnic Karen rebels and an anti-government student organisation, Radio Rangoon said Thursday, reports AFP.

The suspects, including four members of Burma's main opposition political party, the National League for Democracy (NLD), and a member of another opposition party, the Democracy Party, were separately arrested by military intelligence agents between August 5 and 25, the official radio said in a dispatch monitored here.

Three of the suspects belonged to the anti-government militant student organisation of the all Burma Students' Democratic Front, the radio said, adding that they were sent to Rangoon and other ci-

ties by ethnic Karen National Union insurgents for purposes of terrorism.

Ten others were accused of being supporters of the three men and authorities had also seized explosives and equipment as well as illegal pamphlets, the report added.

All the arrested are still being held and intelligence agents are looking for people connected with them, the Radio said.

About one dozen ethnic insurgency groups have been fighting against the centra government in Rangoon for regional autonomy since Burma gained independence from Britain in 1948.

The NLD won a majority of seats in the general elections held in May of last year, but the ruling Burmese military junta has refused to hand over Athulathmudali told reporters.

India launches another satellite: India's ambitious space programme received a boost Thursday with the successful launch of its second remote-sensing satellite from a Soviet space station, the Press Trust of India

(PTI) reported. A Soviet Vostok blasted off from the Baikonur cosmodrome at 12:30 p.m, lifting the IRS-1B into space, the news agency quoted Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) sources in southern India as saying.

The spacecraft control centre in the city of Bangalore, adquarters of ISRO which designed and built the IRS-1B, arted monitoring signals from the 980-kilogramme (2,160ound) satellite soon afterwards, PTI said.

It will be in orbit 904 kilometres (561 miles) above the irth, taking 12 to 14 days to complete one cycle of the idian subcontinent.

Serbia claims killing 25 Croatians : Twenty-five Croatian National Guardsmen were killed during clashes in the Croatian town of Topusko on Thursday, the Yugolsav news agency TANJUG quoted Serbian fighters as say-

The agency, monitored by the British Broadcasting Corporation, said seven Croatian guardsmen had been captured, four Serbs wounded and five reported missing, according to the Serbian side.

It said fighting had resumed around Topusko, in an area populated by Serbs close to Croatia's border with Serbia, after a brief lull.

Reported casualty figures in the fighting between Croatian forces and Serbian guerillas and Yugoslav troops vary widely and the report could not be independently confirmed.

Prague to host CSCE meeting: Czechoslovakia will host a meeting of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) on Tuesday to discuss the situation in Yugoslavia, Czechoslovak radio said on Thursday, reports Reuter from Prague.

The meeting, the third in the last two months, was requested by Germany, which currently chairs the 35-nation

The CSCE Secretariat in Prague said the meeting would be at the level of senior officials. The two previous emergency meetings were in early July

and early August.

Seoul to buy 120 F-16 fighter planes South Korea signed a memorandum on understanding with the United States Friday to buy more than five billion dollars worth of fighter planes, Seoul's Defence Ministry said, reports

Reuter from Seoul Defence Minister Lee Jong-Koo signed the agreement, witnessed by US Ambassador Donald Gregg, to purchase 120 F-16 Falcon fighters produced by General Dynamics, a Ministry spokesman said the accord has already been signed by the United States.

South Korea is expected to buy 12 of the F-16 Falcons directly from the United States in 1994-95, 36 would be assembled locally from imported General Dynamics parts in 1995-97 and another 72 would be produced in South Korea under licence in 1997-99.

South Korea's Air Force currently has 36 F-16 planes.

Kerr named acting chief of CIA: Richard Kerr, Deputy Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), has been named to take over as Acting Director when William Webster retires next week, the agency said Thursday, reports AFP from Washington.

Kerr, 55, will step into the post September 2 and will remain until a permanent CIA Director is confirmed by the

Webster planned to retire in July but agreed to stay on until the beginning of September after the Senate postponed confirmation hearings for President George Bush's nominee for the job, Robert Gates.

The Senate Intelligence Committee delayed the hearings after information arose about Gates' ties to the Iran-Contra Scandal.

Sikh militants injure police chief: Suspected Sikh militants seriously wounded the police chief of Chandigarh, the Punjab capital, on Thursday in a bomb attack which killed one of his guards and his driver, police

said, reports Reuter from Chandigarh. Indian news agencies said at least 15 other people had been killed since Wednesday night in separatist violence in Punjab.

Police have reported more than 3,800 deaths so far this year in the decade-old campaign for a separate Sikh homeland in the agriculturally rich north Indian state, bordering Pakistan.

Police said the bomb, planted in a parked car and detonated by remote control, also injured 14 passers-by when it exploded as police chief Sumedh Singhsaint was being driven to his office.

Bodo militants kill 2 guards: Bodo militants shot dead two security officers of a political leader in Kokrajhar district in Assam on Wednesday, reports PTI from Guwahati. An official spokesman told newsmen that six armed rebels shot at the two security officers attached to a plains tribal council of Assam leader, Biraj Mohan Basumatary,

near Salakati under Basugaon Police Station. They succumbed to their injuries at the Kokrajhar Civil

The assailants took away two sten guns before escaping.

Romania recognises Moldavia: Romania on Tuesday recognised the Independence of Moldavian republic and agreed to establish diplomatic ties, according to Rompress in Bucharest.

A Romanian government spokesman commenting on declaration of independence by Moldavia said the proclamation of an independent state on territories annexed by force further to secret understanding through Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, represented a decisive step towards removal in a peaceful manner of its ill-fated consequences, bad against

the rights and interests of the Romanian people. Romania hoped other countries participating in Conference for European Cooperation and Security will grant their total support to the newly-independent state.

Three Members of Parliament retract signatures

Two ministers backing Premadasa's impeachment résign

COLOMBO, Aug 30: Two senior cabinet ministers back ing an opposition-sponsored impeachment motion against president Ranasinghe Premadasa resigned Thursday, reports AFP and Reuter.

Education Minister Lalith Athulathmudali and Labour Minister GM Premachandra told a joint news conference here that they had tendered their resignations to Premadasa, adding they would struggle to "change the executive presidency and strengthen parliamentary democracy."

"We associate ourselves with the impeachment motion. have sent a letter to the President offering to resign the cabinet, from

Some government MPs who signed a motion to impeach Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa had

been misled into believing the petition was something different, press reports said today.

The state-run Daily News said at least three MPs from the ruling United National Party (UNP) had written to the Speaker retracting their signatures from the impeachment motion that has triggered a constitutional crisis in Sri Lanka.

The Daily News said three MPs - Dharmadeva Jayasinghe from central Kegalle, V G Jinadasa from central Matale and Vincent Jayewardnece from southern Galle - were retracting their signatures. The newspaper quoted the

Speaker Mohammad Hanissa Mohammad that their signatures were obtained "by a misrepresentation of fact" on the

contents of the motion. They were not informed

MPs as saying in a letter to

nor were they aware that the resolution was an impeachment motion against Premadasa, the newspaper quoted the MPs as saying in the letter.

It was not clear whether the Constitution allows for signatures to be withdrawn from a motion once it has been received by the Speaker. Some 46 government MPs

were reported to have signed

the motion along with opposi-

tion MPs but their names have still not been released. The main opposition Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) said they petitioned the Speaker with the signatures of more than 113 MPs, the number constitutionally re-

quired to debate the im-

peachment motion. The entire strength of the opposition in the 25-member assembly is only 100.

Premadasa told an emergency meeting of government MPs and senior civil servants late Thursday that some UNP MPs had informed him they had signed "a certain document but were told that it was one asking that parliament not be dissolved."

"When some of them signed the documents, the signatures were covered by a certain person with his hand. They had signed trusting the person who had asked them to do so.

"The Prime Minister and Leader of the House will look into this matter on behalf of the party," Premadasa said.

Meanwhile, the newspaper quoted a leading Buddhist priest, Kithalagama Sri Seelalankara Thera, calling the impeachment motion "an act of treachery" and "political sabotage."

Bessmertnykh ordered Pankin to back coup

Russia to be heart of new system of equal, independent states: Yeltsin

MOSCOW, Aug 30 : Boris Yeltsin, seeking to allay fears of Russian expansionism, says his vast republic would be the heart of a new system of equal independent states that would leave limited power for Mikhail Gorbachev, reports AP.

Yeltsin's remarks on Russian Radio Thursday came after demonstrators across Kazakhstan — Russia's southern neighbour - charged that the emboldened Russian Federation President may try to seize some of their territory, officials there said.

Gorbachev, seeking to restore his authority after last week's failed coup, said he sent a delegation to Kazakhstan to keep things from "snowballing," while Russian Vice President Alexander Rutskoi hurried to the Kazakh capital, Alma Ata, to ease fears. Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbaye is asking for a clear cut enunciation of

Russian territorial claims. Yeltsin and Gorbachev have been cooperating in a vague power-sharing pact. Gorbachev lost another central pillar of his power — one that betrayed him in the coup - when the national legislature on Thursday suspended the Soviet Communist Party's activities nationwide and froze its bank accounts. The suspension was a death knell for the once mighty organisation whose tentacles for seven decades reached into nearly every aspect of life in the country that stretches from Poland to the Bering Straits.

Those borders are being questioned. Seven of the 15 republics - the Ukraine, Byelorussia, Georgia, Moldavia and the three Baltic states of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia have declared independence.

The Baltics, which have secured their borders with Russia in bilateral treaties. basked in international attention as the foreign ministers of France and Sweden arrived Thursday to re-establish ties with Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia that were broken by 50 years of Soviet rule.

The Ukraine, which has declared independence, on Thursday forestalled a potentially dangerous rift with Russia by signing a landmark military and economic alliance that bypassed the Kremlin. But Ukrainian leaders planned to

create their own army anyway and discussed it Thursday with Soviet military leaders in the

Even people in Yeltsfn's own backyard were raising questions. In the small town of Podolsk, Mayor "Alexei Umansky on Thursday warned that the people "won't accept" a continued flood of Yeltsin

But Yeltsin sought to calm those concerns and outline his vision of a new Soviet Union in an address on Radio Rossiya, controlled by his government.

"I want to state firmly that the collapse of the centre is not tantamount to a collapse of Yeltsin said. The striving to create a new, really free, really volun-

the country, let alone Russia,"

tary Union of sovereign and, I stress, equal states remains strong," he said. "We should not be frightened by the fact that a number of republics have declared their independence. Full-blooded states and not phantoms will be united in the Union."

Russia would act as a kind of protector of a new system, he said, implying it would eoordinate talks with the old centre of power.

Yeltsin said that the central government should be "sharply



MOSCOW: The wife (R) and relatives of Marshal Sergei Akhromeyev grieve over his coffin at his burial in Moscow August 29.Akhromeyev, who was President Gorbachev's personal military advisor, committed suicide last Saturday following the coup. - AFP/UNB photo

reduced" to an administrative centre with limited powers to coordinate economic reforms, the military, Soviet nuclear weapons, and other "most important" areas.

New Foreign Minister Boris D Pankin revealed Friday that while still ambassador to Czechoslovakia he was ordered by his predecessor, Alexander Bessmertnykh, to back the coup against Mikhail Gorbachev.

Pankin said in a Soviet television interview broadcast early Friday that he received in Prague at least one document signed by Bessmertnykh ordering him to obey the eight-man committee that led the coup.

Yuli Kvitsinsky, he said.

Pankin said his goal is to steer the country "into the world of civilised states."

Diplomats in Moscow predicted the central government will be forced to give the emerging republics some of its initiative in shaping Soviet foreign policy, diminishing Pankin's role.

policy could become apparent on Sunday, when British Prime Minister John Major becomes the first Western government leader to visit Moscow since the coup. Major also plans talks with Yeltsin.

publication today

MOSCOW, Aug 30: The Soviet Union's best-known riewspaper, Pravda, will resume publishing Saturday, but as an independent publication rather than the mouthpiece of the Communist Party, the Soviet news agency Tass reported, reports AP

Gorbachev.

to gain access. Pelice said they

knew of only two dead, both

than 3,600 deaths since the

JKLF began the revolt against

firmed claims by Hezb-ul-

Mujahideen that it had cap-

tured a paramilitary police-

Jackson placed

under police

protection

Two-time US presidential

contender Jesse Jackson has

been placed under 24-hour

police protection after being

targeted by a third recent

death threat, an aide said

spokesman for the civil rights

Frank Watkins, a

Thursday, reports AFP.

WASHINGTON, Aug 30

Police have reported more

On Thursday police con

militants

Indian rule.

Off the Record

First Lady tumbles into charity scandal

BRASILIA: Brazil's 28-year-old First Lady Rosane Collor, has tumbled into a major scandal amid allegations that she misappropriated funds in her position as president of the nation's largest charity organization, reports AFP.

The Brazilian press showed her drowning in humiliation and her own tears. Wednesday, during a 49th anniversary mass for the Brazilian Assistance Legion (LBA).

No body showed up. No government officials or society figures came. Not even her 42-year-old husband, President Ferenando Collor de Mello, with whom she is rumoured to have had a falling out.

The First Lady is expected to resign from the group's presidency in coming days.

The front-page of the conservative Rio de Janeiro newspaper Globo featured a snap shot of a weeping Mrs Collor, but the newspaper's cartoonist put the young blond in a striped prison suit with a lapel number, LBA 1991.

Collor de Mello and his wife were married seven years ago, after he divorced his first wife Lilibeth Monteiro de Carvalho, with whom he had two children.

Lenon, Presley's love letters fetch thousands of dollars

LONDON: Love letters written by John Lennon and Elvis Presley fetched thousands of dollars each when they were auctioned off at Christie's in London on Thursday as part of a sale of pop star memorabilia, reports AFP.

The slain Beatle's first letter to the woman who was to become his first wife, Cynthia Powell, fetched 8,800 pounds (13,500 dollars). A Japanese collector bought the eight-page letter and Christmas card. In it, Lennon, then 18, said he loved her with the same passion he felt for guitars.

Recently, she decided to sell the letters, after consulting with John's son Julian, to make what she called a final break with the past. That and other Lennon memorabilia including golden disks and drawings brought in a total of more than 50,000 pounds (85,000 Dollars).

A Swedish Collector paid 4,400 pounds (7,500 dollars) for a letter written by the late Elvis Presley to Hollywood starlet Anita Wood, dated October 28, 1958, when he was doing military service in Germany. The singer wrote that he had never loved anyone as much as her and never would.

Heart transplant mix-up

PORTLAND: A man given a mismatched transplant heart walked out of the hospital Thursday in fine spirits just 11 days after a second operation to correct the mistake, reports

Grey Hamilton wore a T-shirt that said: "Heart Transplant 158 and 159."

"I'm doing very well, I feel real good", said Grey Hamilton, 41, a landscaper from Oregon City.

"I want to go sit in my big chair that I always sit in at home and get my twin set next to me and just sit there," he said at a news conference before leaving Oregon Health Sciences University. He has Type O blood, received a Type A heart on August 14. Heart tissue must be type-matched, or the recipient's body is likely to reject the new organ.

The mistake was traced to a nurse at St Alphonsus Regional Medical Centre in Boise, Indaho, who misidentified the donor's blood type when she notified University that a heart was available.

Lab personnel at the Oregon hospital discovered the mixup while examining a tissue sample hours into the transplant

It was the first such mix-up at University Hospital, a regional transplant centre whose heart replacement tally was touted on Hamilton's shirt. Eight similar cases are known worldwide. University Hospital has enacted stricter procedures to prevent a recurrence.

Afterward, Hamilton was placed at the top of the regional list for the next available heart. The mismatched heart was removed August 18 and replaced.

"I really didn't expect it to come that soon," Hamilton said. "I was really excited just to get it done, get it over with, get it right and get on the road to recovery." Dr Adnan Cobanoglu, the heart transplant director at

University Hospital, said there was no sign Hamilton's body had begun rejecting the mismatched heart, a life-threatening possibility.

Broccoli squee to turn Bush's head

WASHINGTON: American vegetable lovers are hoping broccoli lemon sauce will be the dish to turn the head of President George Bush, America's no. 1 broccoli-hater.

The sauce captured first prize on Wednesday in a US-wide contest titled 'llow to Get President to Eat broccoli.' More than 3,000 cooks schemed to create a broccolf dish that would tempt the president's palate.

Winner Priscilla Yee, an accountant in Concord, California, said her love of the vegetable inspired her to try to develop a recipe that even the President would like.

Bush made known his extreme distaste for the vegetable two years ago, banning it from his plane, Air Force One. "I do not like broccoli. I haven't liked it since I was a little

kid and my mother made me cat it. And I'm President of the

United States and I'm not going to eat it any more," Bush declared. Yee's sauce combines cream of broccoli soup, mayonnaise,

green onion and lemon juice. "I hope he'll at last try it," she said at a news conference. "I

think he'll like it if he does try it." Yee said she hoped First Lady Barbara Bush might be able to persuade her husband to try the new dish. Mrs Bush is a proclaimed broccoli fan.

'Human garbage' game dehumanises women

TOKYO: Feminists are enraged over what they say is the latest sexist affront in Japan - a game called "Human Garbage" in which women are depicted as sex objects to be bought and sold, reports AP.

In a letter this month to international human rights and media watchdog groups, the Sakai City Women's Organisation said the game, made by Takara, Co. Ltd, insults and degrades women. The group is demanding a public apology from the company president and a recall of the games from toy stores.

"We cannot forgive a giant Japanese company like this which has so little sense of human rights, which claims to be creating dreams for children and yet which dares to go out and make money by selling prejudice," the Osaka-based group, which claims 34,000 members, said in the letter.

Takara manufactured 90,000 sets of "Human Garbage," which was first marketed in 1989. Production stopped last year and several Tokyo area stores contacted by telephone Thursday said they no longer had the game in stock. Each game consists of a deck of cards, most bearing a

photograph of a young woman with her name, occupation. blood type, astrological sign and number of past sexual partners. In the most recent edition, the women are scantily dressed and in provocative poses. The most valuable eards are those depicting virgins from upper class families: The worst draw is a "dekichatta" ("Uh-

oh, I made a boo-boo") card, in which a player loses a turn to recover from the shock of getting a woman pregnant. Among the objects of the game is to sell cards of "ugly women" to Hong Kong agents. The preamble to the instructions says that men could once

ignore women's feelings, fooling around with several at a time and dumping them at whim. Takara, a large company with international hits such as the popular "Transformer" robots and dancing "Flower Rock"

toys, is not unfamiliar with controversy. Two years ago it decided to stop selling a black inflatable plastic doll with big round eyes and a grass skirt that critics said was racist.

10 killed in Srinagar gunbattle clothes and posed as militants Jammu and Kashmir Liberation

SRINAGAR, Aug 30 : At least 10 people were killed in a gunbattle on Thursday when Indian security forces posed as Muslim guerillas to raid a Kashmiri separatist hideout, villagers and militants said,

reports Reuter. Elsewhere in Kashmir, two Germany, Poland to strengthen

border

GOERLITZ, Germany, Aug 30: The interior Ministers of Poland and Germany agreed Thursday to step up policing of their joint border in an effort to prevent illegal emigrants from heading westwards into Germany, reports AFP.

The agreement, involving the hire of an additional 300 police on the German side of the border and a programme to make Polish administration more efficient, was reached by Wolfgang Schaeuble of Germany and Henryk Majewski

The two countries signed a treaty of "good neighbourliness" last year that enshrined the post-1945 border on the Odernelsse rivers as their permanent frontier.

thirds of which is controlled by India, militants kidnapped a paramilitary policemen a town went on strike after security forces shot dead two unarmed men, and a militant.

Villagers in Mughal Pora near the ski resort of Gulmarg. said four gunmen in plain clothes came there on Thursday claiming to belong to the Hezb-ul-Muahideen. Villagers said the gunman

asked to enter a hideout of the

Front (JKLF), which is fighting for independence they said they wanted to talk to the A JKLF spokesman said the men came into the house

spraying gunfire. In the ensuing battle, six JKLF members and all four gunmen were

killed, he said. Police said the men were security force members who might have gone in plain

Another suspect of Rajiv killing held

NEW DELHI, Aug 30: Detectives probing the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi have arrested another wanted Sri Lankan Tamil rebel from the southern Indian city of Madras in connection with the former Prime Minister's murder, reports AFP. Officers from a special in-

cornered a Liberation Tigers of

Tamil Eclam (LTTE) rebel

known as Rangan on Thursday

in the city's posh Adiyar dis-

trict and took him alive out-

side a toy shop, officials said

team (SIT)

vestigating

They said Rangan was spotted and tailed by SIT men for some time and was eaught when he sensed trouble and smashed through a glass wall and tried to escape from the shop filled with children.

heavily-built man and took from him a pistol and a cyanide capsule as he tried to take the poison, they said by telephone from Madras.

a senior LTTE rebel

Officers overpowered the

Columbia "Shadow Senator", confirmed that Jackson had received two recent death threats, in addition to one Wednesday, warning him not to tour a public housing pro-Police identified Rangan as ject here.

leader and current District of

Other orders were signed by Deputy Foreign Minister

Then on the day the threeday coup collapsed, "we started getting documents instructions telling us to obey completely different documents and to act in an absolutely opposite way," Pankin said, adding the new orders were signed by Kvitsinsky.

In statements Thursday,

Any shift in Soviet foreign

Pravda resumes

The newspaper was suspended by Russian President Boris Yeltsin and has not appeared since August 23. Yeltsin accused Pravda of backing an attempted coup by hard-line Communists against Mikhail