

## BRIEFLY

## Quit Palestine: Gaddafi : Libya

Leader Muammar Gaddafi has said the United Nations should be ready to use force to make Israel cede land for a Palestinian state, reports Reuter.

Welcoming North African leaders on Sunday night in the Libyan town of Ras Lanuf, Gaddafi called on the UN to be as tough with Israel as it was with Iraq.

"We now challenge those committed to international legality to begin implementing Resolution 181 of 1947," Gaddafi said, referring to an aborted UN plan which would have divided Palestine, then under British rule, into Jewish and Arab states.

## Egyptian troops to stay in Gulf :

The Egyptian soldiers who helped Allied troops force Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait will stay in the Gulf region to form the core of a joint Arab peacekeeping force, military sources said Sunday, reports AP.

The majority of the 38,500 Egyptian troops are presently in Kuwait, many in Kuwait City, where they are continuing their search for Iraqi stragglers. They are also based along the Kuwaiti-Saudi border.

The joint Arab force will replace US and other Western Allied forces presently monitoring the Gulf region.

The Egyptian soldiers will remain in Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, said the sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

## 11 US missing soldiers :

Eleven US soldiers, members of the elite Green Berets which specialize in scouting and sabotage missions, are Missing in Action (MIA) in Iraq but not officially listed as such a newsworthy reports, says AFP.

Newsweek magazine says in its upcoming edition that the 11 soldiers were part of special operations forces that infiltrated Iraq to locate missile launchers, identify air targets and steal enemy equipment.

The Pentagon has reported 24 MIA's including 14 believed to have died in a plane crash, newsweek says the 11 Green Berets are not included in the 24.

## Red Cross convoy for Iraq :

An 18-ton Red Cross convoy of food, medicine and water treatment machinery left for Iraq Sunday as fears mounted of widespread disease and hunger in the war-ravaged nation, reports Reuter.

Relief officials said shortages had forced Iraqi hospitals to halve the amount of food served to thousands of Gulf war patients.

Werner Kaspar, head of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) mission in Jordan, said he feared an outbreak of epidemics caused by Allied bomb damage to Iraq's sewage and water facilities.

The ICRC continues to be very concerned about the health situation, the sanitary conditions and a growing lack of food among the most vulnerable groups in Iraq, "Kaspar told Reuters.

## Rocard for new partnership :

French Prime Minister Michel Rocard said on Sunday the Gulf war had strengthened ties between the United States and France and called for a new partnership between the two nations, reports Reuter.

"Doubtless ... we have different priorities, concerns and commitments, but now here in the world can I see any real conflict between our respective interests," Rocard said in a speech prepared for the Franco-American foundation.

"I believe that Franco-American relations in the coming decade should be based on the idea of a new partnership," he said.

## Dalai Lama for new union :

The Dalai Lama urged Asian leaders to help to create a new union of democratic states in the continent — including China and his homeland, Tibet, reports Reuter.

The Tibetan Buddhist leader made the appeal in a statement marking the 32nd anniversary of the abortive uprising against Chinese rule that forced him to flee into exile in India.

Alleging continued Chinese repression of human rights in the Himalayan territory, the 1989 Nobel peace Laureate said he had faith that China would one day follow eastern Europe in moving toward parliamentary democracy.

## Sharon resigns from committee :

Israeli Housing Minister Ariel Sharon resigned from the Immigration Cabinet Committee on Sunday and accused the government of mishandling the massive influx of Soviet Jews to Israel, reports AP.

Sharon said he would retain his Cabinet position as Housing Minister, making his resignation a largely symbolic move. Sharon criticized a lag in housing construction for the immigrants and a recent cut in living stipends for the newcomers, the reports added.

## Zardari allowed to cast vote

## Sharif's bid to mend fences with MQM

KARACHI, Mar 11: Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif met the leader of the Mohajir Quami Movement (MQM) Sunday in a bid to preserve the coalition government in Sindh province, reports APP.

Emerging from nearly four hours of talks with Altaf Hussain, Sharif said: "The talks centred on bridging the Gulf between government and the MQM on all issues".

But Hussain, whose group speaks for Urdu-speaking settlers from India, stressed "Success of the deliberations would depend on the implementation of understanding by the Prime Minister."

Both leaders indicated that a serious rift had developed between the MQM and the Islamic Democratic Alliance (IDA).

Meanwhile Reuter reports: A Pakistani court ruled Sunday that opposition leader Benazir Bhutto's jailed husband could vote in elections on Thursday to the Senate, or upper house of Parliament.

Police said Asif Ali Zardari would be taken from a Karachi jail to Islamabad to attend an election meeting of the National Assembly, or lower house, to which he was elected while in prison.

Zardari, a businessman, was arrested in October, two months after President Ghulam Ishaq Khan sacked Benazir as Prime Minister on charges of abuse of power.

He faces charges including extortion and conspiracy to murder which carry a possible death sentence.



## International

## Kurds threaten to storm Kirkuk

## Rebels control 29 cities: Iran 500,000 Iraqi troops defect

NICOSIA(Cyprus). Mar 11: Kurdish guerrillas said Saddam Hussein's regime is crumbling as thousands of Iraqi soldiers join rebels forces which are threatening to storm the capital of oil-rich Kirkuk province in the north, reports AP.

"As many as 50,000 Iraqi soldiers have defected to the Kurdish side in the area of Ilamjanar to Khalifan," in northeastern Iraq, said Barham Saleh, a senior official of the opposition Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK).

Heavy fighting was reported in the Kurdish north and in southern Iraq where loyalist troops are battling Shi'ite militants and army deserters. Opposition sources said thousands of people have been killed over the last week in fighting between Republican Guard loyalists and rebels.

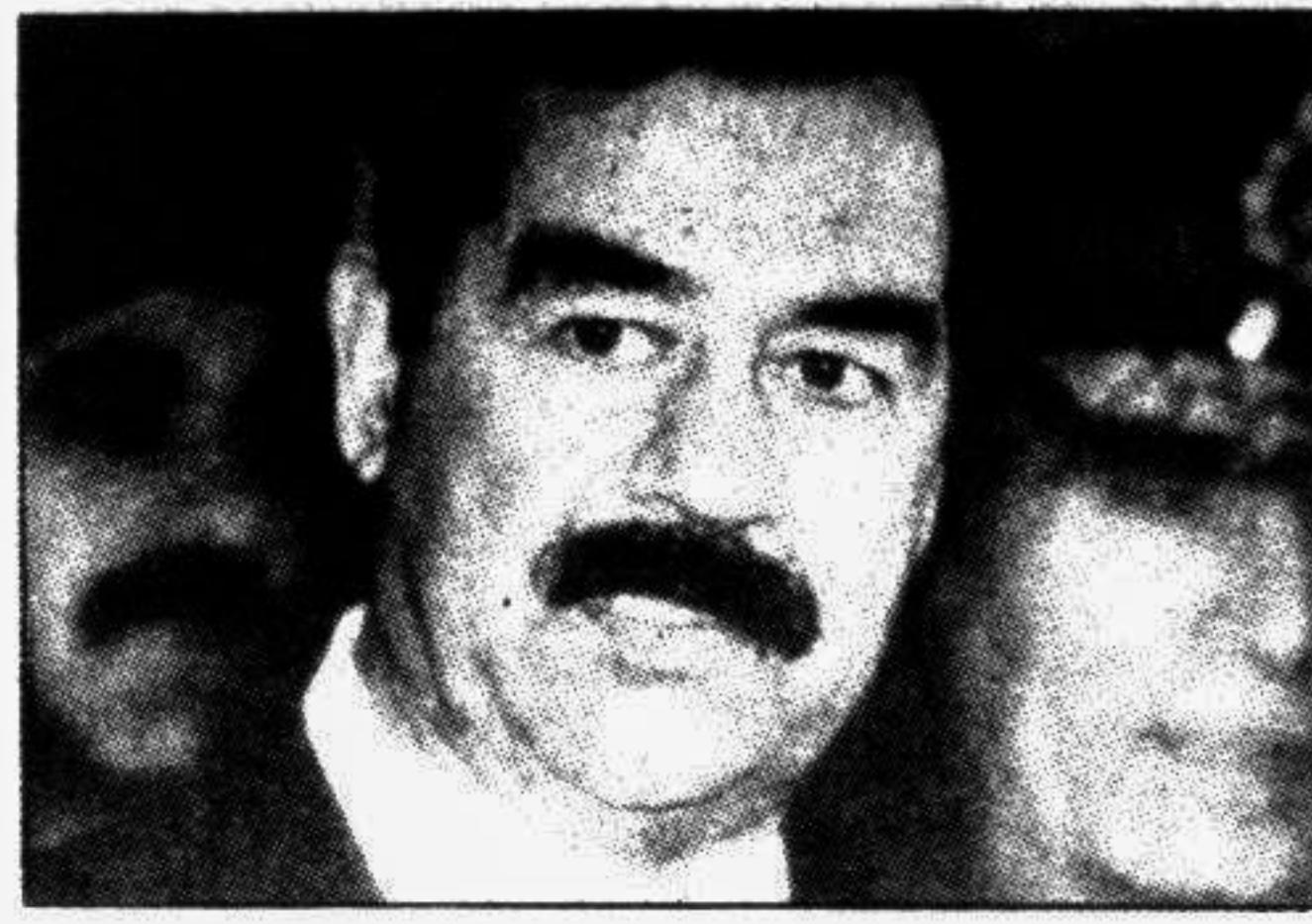
Meanwhile, the official Islamic Republic News Agency said Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani expressed concern Sunday that Iraq might deteriorate into civil war.

"We think it is necessary for the government and all domestic groups in Iraq to cooperate in order to prevent the country from falling to pieces," the agency quoted Rafsanjani as saying.

He said 29 battalions of Iraq's civilian militia had joined the rebels.

Opposition sources also said the Basra naval base garrison had switched sides and joined the rebels. They claimed a Major General and a Brigadier General had defected to the rebels in separate incidents, bringing their men with them.

"The city of Kirkuk is on the brink of fall," said PUK spokesman Beker Fattah in an interview.



President Saddam Hussein : Uncertain days ahead

spokesman Beker Fattah in an interview.

Opposed to Saddam, had an estimated 40,000-50,000 guerrillas before they launched their campaign in the mountains north after the Shi'ite revolt in the south erupted March 1.

For decades, they have led the struggle for an autonomous homeland for Iraq's 3.5 million Kurds, who make up about 20 per cent of the country's 17 million population.

Another report adds: Kurdish guerrillas reported substantial gains in their rebellion against Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, claiming thousands of his troops had joined their ranks and large portions of northern Iraq were under their control.

Fighting also reportedly flared in southern Iraq between Shi'ite militants and government loyalists.

The Kurdish guerrillas reported little resistance Sunday and said they were advancing on the key oil center of Kirkuk.

The two Egyptian men said their two families escaped from Basra in southern Iraq to Safwan in Kuwait and then to Cairo. They arrived Saturday night.

"Iraqi treatment of Egyptians has changed completely after they learned of the role Egyptian forces took in the battle for the liberation of Kuwait," Mo'taz Helmy Hamed told the government-run Middle East News Agency.

"Egyptians there are experiencing atrocities and terrible things," he said.

## 1 lakh Iranians to perform Haj this yr

MANAMA, Mar 11: Iran will participate in this summer's pilgrimage to Makkah, sending up to 100,000 pilgrims. Iranian Ambassador to Bahrain Javad Abadi, said in an interview published here, reports AFP.

The Bahraini weekly Al-Mawqif quoted Abadi as saying: Iran's relations with the countries in the region, including Saudi Arabia, have been improving, especially after the Geneva meeting in the first half of February between Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud al-Faisal and his Iranian counterpart Ali Akbar Velayati.

That meeting had been forecast shortly before by the daily Tehran Times. The two countries have not had relations since 1988.

The Ambassador said an approaching normalisation of relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia meant that Tehran might send some 100,000 Iranian pilgrims Makkah this year.

## Off the Record

## Asia ignorant?

NEW DELHI : Former Professor and author John Money, who at 69 wears the title of the father of sexology, says prudery is making a comeback in the west in a backlash against the Sexual Revolution of the 1960s and '70s, reports AFP.

The Professor Emeritus from Maryland's John Hopkins University said he was saddened by the trend which he said started in the 1980s.

He cited examples of medical students in the US State of North Carolina having to break the law to study the nude in anatomy classes, and a teacher in Arizona being charged with 102 counts of obscenity for showing his 102 pupils an AIDS prevention film depicting explicit sex.

"It seems natural that for every reformation, there is a counter-reformation," Prof. Money said in an interview after presenting keynote paper on orgasmology — a word he hopes will give the science the respectability it needs to be studied without the witch hunts that plagued his predecessors.

The Sexual Revolution in the 1960s followed the discovery in 1940 that penicillin could cure gonorrhoea and syphilis and the introduction of oral contraception in 1960, Prof. Money said.

Then came herpes a cold-sore like virus, and AIDS. Conservatives grabbed these as weapons and spearheaded the trend towards moving sex back into a taboo subject, or that Prof. Money called "anti-sexualism".

Prof. Money has plenty of reasons to worry. He said sex research has not been too bad for him, but reels off a list of Professors who were dismissed from prestigious colleges, including his own John Hopkins University.

The German scientist Wilhelm Reich, a refugee from Hitler's Germany, died in a US jail for his attempts to research sex and the orgasm, he recalled.

"There is no question about it, persecution in the West is growing more loud-mouthed," he said, adding that he did not know enough about Asia to speak about research in the region.

## Communist gamblers

HONG KONG : More than 1,500 people have been arrested in some 5,000 cases of illegal gambling in Beijing since February, a semi-official Chinese news agency reported here Saturday, reports AFP.

The Hong Kong China News Service quoted police in the Chinese capital as saying that since the anti-gambling campaign started in February 1, the authorities had seized more than 180,000 yuan (54,800 dollars) in over 5,138 cases.

Authorities smashed 337 gambling syndicates, with most of those arrested being workers, farmers, unemployed, private entrepreneurs and retired people, who accounted for more than 50 per cent.

Nearly 560 of those detained were under 17 years old, the agency said, adding that more than 14,250 people had voluntarily registered themselves with the authorities, who had promised to treat them leniently.

Gambling is illegal in China, where offenders can be sentenced to imprisonment with hard labour.

## It's a disease: Stefanie Powers

NASHVILLE (Tennessee) : Actress Stefanie Powers says the extinction of wildlife is a sign of the wastefulness of modern life, reports AP.

"The destruction of an animal species is the symptom of a disease that is killing us all," she said Friday during an appearance to benefit the William Holden Wildlife Foundation in Kenya.

"There is a malignancy of neglect that is destroying the infrastructure of our lives," she said. "In this country, we are the greatest consumers and the largest producers of garbage in the world, and we are more wasteful than any society that ever existed in the history of the world."

Powers is in Nashville appearing with actor Robert Wagner in the play "Love Letters." In the late '70s and early '80s, the two appeared in the television series "Hart to Hart". Powers also starred in the television series as "The Girl from U. N. C. E." in the 1960s.

## It's a message to Baker'

## 4 Israelis killed in Gaza Strip

from entering Jerusalem until further notice.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir denounced the murders as "an ignoble act committed by blood thirsty dogs that exceed in savagery all the norms of terrorism."

A plain clothes detective pursued the attacker, shooting and then arresting him, police said adding that he had a second knife taped inside his jacket and a change of clothes hidden nearby for his escape.

The women had been waiting at a bus stop on Antke street in the Kiryat Yovel

working class district of west Jerusalem when they were set upon.

Three of the victims, Rosa Eltasfour, 32, Mercedes Banita, 57 and a third woman in her 60's who was not identified were pronounced dead on arrival at Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem.

A fourth, 20-year-old Myrian Britton died while undergoing surgery.

The killer was also in hospital and being questioned there by police.

Science Minister Yuval Neeman, of the ultra-national

ist Tchiyah Party, said on the eve of Mr Baker's visit ... Arab terrorism has raised its ugly head.

Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek described the killings as a "vicious and wanton orgy of blood and urged Arabs and their leaders to understand that neither violence nor Sadam Hussein-style terrorism will lead them closer to any of their goals."

Palestinian moderate Elias Freij, Mayor of Bethlehem condemned the murders, saying the killing of these women is against Arab morality."