BRAFFIN

UN envoys talk Kurdish issue:

US, British and French Ambassador to the UN met Monday evening with Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar to discuss protection for Kurdish refugees in northern Iraq. officials said in New York, reports AFP.

There are no differences between the French and the British delegations in this humanitarian problem, said Sir David Hannay, Britain's Ambassador to the United Nations.

He said a UN police force could make a serious contribution to the protection of the Kurds and added that it was up to the Secretary General to organize any such multinational force.

Riyadh to support PLO:

King Fahd said Monday that Saudi Arabia would support any decision of the Palestinian people in the framework of efforts to solve the Middle East conflict, the official SPA news agency reported in Riyadh, says AFP.

But the monarch did not spell out the form of support he would provide now did he mention the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

Saudi Arabia supports any decision that the Palestinians take in the interest of their cause and to achieve their legitimate demands based on resolutions 242 and 338, of the UN security council, the King told a weekly cabinet meeting.

Cholera killed 100 in Peru in a week: Peru's three month old cholera epidemic killed more than 100 people in Peru in a week on the rate of infection continues to rise in the Amazon region, health ministry officials said on Monday in Lima. Reuter reports.

A Ministry spokeswoman said that as of April 26, 171, 925 cases of cholera had been reported nationwide 1,249 of which had resulted in death and 64,925 of which had remained in hospital.

This marked an increase of 109 deaths and almost 14,000 cases from the previous week

6 shot dead in India: Sikh militants ambushed an army convoy and injured two soldiers as 22 people, including six shot dead by militants in a raid on a village, died in violence elsewhere in the the northern States. the Press Trust of India (PTI) said Monday in New Delhi. reports AFP.

Also among the dead was a hard-core militant wanted for about 150 killings, the news agency said.

Gorbachev, Yeltsin side by side on May I: Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev will appear side by side with Boris Yeltsin at the May Day celebration on Moscow's Red Square Wednesday, a leader of the official Moscow Trade Unions said on Television, AFP reports from Moscow.

Gorbachev and the Radical President of the Russian Federation will appear on the tribune on top of Lenin's Mausolem along with other notables including the Soviet Vice-President Anatoly Lukyanov and Moscow Mayor Gavriil Popov, the Union official said.

Ex-French Minister in politics:

Former Defence Minister Jean-Pierre Chevenement, seeking a return to politics, said on Monday France's 'tilt towards America' had left the country's independent foreign policy dead and buried, Reuter reports from Paris.

Chevenement, who resigned in January over French involvement in the Gulf war, also condemned U.S. President George Bush's proposed 'New World Order'.

Following the end of the cold war. Bush last year called for a New World Order of collective security to replace 40 years of East-West hostility.

2 Japanese released: Two Japanese students held captive for 44 days in Pakistan were released Tuesday, Tokyo's Foreign Ministry said in Tokyo, reports

Reuter. Pakistani police said the two. Takayasu Hattori, 20, and Takuya Sato, 19, were released at 6 a.m. and were being

taken to Karachi, the ministry said. The students were abducted by Bandits on March 17 while rafting on the Indus river, Japan's Kyodo news agency said.

Pakistan press reports said the Bandits demanded 40 million rupees (1.7 million dollars) and the release of imprisoned comrades. Police had not confirmed the reports.

Retired Defence official. wife killed in Delhi

NEW DELHI, Apr 29 Unknown assailants murdered a retired Defence official and his wife in the third slaving of an elderly couple in the Indian capital this month, raising fears that the attacks are the work of serial killers, reports

Dayal Singh, 70 and his wife. Dulari Devi, were found battered a death in their home in an affluent city suburb Sunday, but police reported nothing missing, giving rise to speculation that serial killers had struck for the fifth time since April 10.

The two other murders. also in April were of elderly women living alone.

several killers, Police Commissioner Arun Bhagat said, adding that evidence pointed to them having been killed by a servant. Dayal's three-storied home

murders were committed by

in Safdarjang enclave was bolted from the inside and cash and gold ornaments were found intact by neighbours who broke in through a window after the aged couple had not been seen for 24 hours, witnesses said.

*Both seemed to have put up a fight," said witness Manmohan Dayal amid reports that the couple had been killed in the same way as the earlier murder victims.

Election not for politicians' fun: Reddy

Polls in trouble-torn Indian states to be put off

NEW DELHI, Apr 30 India's election chief threat ened on Monday to cancel next month's general elections in states that failed to provide adequate security to voters. candidates and poll officials, reports Reuter.

T N Seshan told a news conference he would "Not hesitate to blow the long whistle" if states did not fulfil prescribed security requirements. The elections have drawn a

record 30,000 candidates, according to Indian news agencies. Violence is expected during the polls as politicians explott caste and religious tensions to get votes.

The deadline for withdrawal of nominations ended on Monday, and campaigning was expected to begin in earnest this week.

President Ramaswamy Venkataraman called elections for a new parliament last month when Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar resigned after less than six months in

Most contests will be threeway fights between former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's Congress Party, Former Prime Minister V P Singh's Janata Dal and the Hindu Chauvinist Bharattya Janata Party.

Polls indicate no clear end. Seshan said he had heard reports that large-scale rigging was planned.

"I believe contracts to hire musclemen are to be signed in the next few weeks," he said, quoting what he described as "Not unreliable sources." The Indian Home (Interior)

Ministry said on Friday that 300 constituencies out of 537 that go to the polls in May and June were regarded as sensitive and in need of extra secu-Seshan said he was particu-

larly concerned about the states of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and parts of Andhra Pradesh, Haryana and Gujarat where his officials were "Continuously assessing" the law and order situation.

"We are monitoring these states on several parameters to

assess the pre-poll atmosphere," Seshan said. "We have a reasonably good machinery which can help us decide on a daily basis if we need to take

PTI from Bangalore adds Former President, Dr Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy, disapproved the holding of elections often in the country and said people would lose faith in democracy if elections were held 'just for the fun of politicians'.

Talking to newsmen in Bangalore one Monday, he said no political party would secure a clear majority in the coming

A coalition government was

in the best interest of the country, he said.

All political parties in the country had similar ideologies and programmes and there was only personal difference among some leaders, he said. adding that the political parties should learn to live together.

When asked whether he would play any role to bring together the political parties in the formation of a coalition government after the election, he replied in the negative.

On the reservation issue, Dr Reddy said reservations were not at all desirable in the first



KHARTOUM: A Sudanese mother tries to feed her malnourished child in this undated, hand-out photo. Britain's Princess Anne launched appeal in London April 29 for funds to help some 27 million people in Africa at risk from famine. -AFP photo.

Iraq asks Security Council to unfreeze \$ 1 billion

UNITED NATIONS, Apr 30: Iraq has asked the Security Council's Sanctions Committee on Monday said he opposed to unfreeze about a billion dollars of its assets held in the United States, Britain, Switzerland and Japan, diplomats said on Monday, Reuter

An Iraqi letter, delivered to Austria's Ambassador Peter Hohenfellner. President of the committee, said the funds, frozen since trade sanctions were imposed last August, were urgently needed for foodstuffs and medical supplies.

The committee Tuesday intends to review behind closed doors Iraq's April 14 request to base sanctions on the sale of nearly a billion dollars in oil needed to raise money for food and other civillian necessities.

But in face of opposition from the United States, the committee may not reach a decision on any of Iraq's requests.

"No answer is also an an-

US President George Bush Iraq's request to sell the oil until Baghdad moved "forward

on a lot of fronts". He said the world was not going to allow the Iraqi people to starve but that the United

States opposed "normalised

trade as long as Saddam Hussein is in power". A UN mission visiting Iraq last month reported that the country had been bombed back to the pre-industrial age during the Gulf War and needed large quantities of staple foods,

fuel and other emergency

items to avert starvation and disease. Under a harsh Security

Council Resolution adopted on April 3, all Iraqi exports are prohibited and the overseas assets remain frozen until after its weapons of mass destruction are scrapped.

An exception can be made by the sanctions committee if Iraq needs funds to purchase

food and other essential civilian needs. The country has been largely dependent on its own limited food stocks and relief supplies since the trade embargo was imposed on August 6.

Reuter adds from Vienna: Iraq has handed a detailed list of its nuclear facilities to the International Atomic Energy Agency in response to a demand by the United Nations Security Council.

"This morning (Monday) Iraq handed in a new letter which had a quite comprehensive list of facilities and nuclear materials as requested by Resolution 687 of the UN Security Council," IAEA spokesman Hans Mayer said on Monday.

Mayer decline to disclose details of the list, which he said the Vienna-based agency had passed immediately to a special commission of the UN Security Council in New York.

An April 3 Security Council Resolution that formed the basis of a Gulf War ceasefire required Baghdad to accept destruction or removal of its chemical and biological weapons and to inform the IAEA of its nuclear capacity.

The agency said it was not satisfied with a letter it received from Iraq on April 18 and asked the following day for more specific information as soon as possible.

An IAEA official said the agency particularly needed to know precise details of the iocation and fate of fissionable nuclear material used in Iraq's atomic energy programme. A copy of the first letter

from Iraq, obtained by Reuters, said Iraq had no nuclear weapons or weapons-making capacity and that its atomic energy research facilities were all destroyed in Gulf War air raids.

The IAEA has a security council mandate to verify Iraq's evidence through on-site inspections under the terms of the Resolution, which has to be implemented by July 2. Iraq has four atomic re-

search facilities subject to IAEA safeguards including two small reactors.

One reactor, the Frenchbuilt Tammuz-2 facility, has an estimated 12.5 kg (27.5 pounds) of enriched uranium and a second Soviet-supplied reactor has a smaller quantity.

Past routine inspections by the IAEA found no evidence that material was being diverted to military programmes.

abandon the system after reaching a certain level. However, he favoured the continuance of the reservation policy for the benefit of scheduled castes and schedule

The 'Mandal issue' would not be attractive in southern India, where the states had reservation exceeding 50 per cent, he said.

Commenting on the polls scenario. Dr Reddy said the fight would be between the Congress-I and the BJP, particularly in the northern belt. He said he felt that the BJP would make inroads in the south for the first time during this election. The Janata Dal had broken into at least three factions - Dal. SJP and Janmorcha, he added.

Referring to his home state, Andhra Pradesh, Dr Reddy said the Telugu Desam party would certainly improve its performance this time compared to 1989 when it won only two out of 42 seats.

TEHERAN, Apr 30 : Former Iranian Oil Minister Javad Tondguyan is still alive in an lraqi prison years after his capture during the Iran-Iraq war, the Iranian news agency

IRNA reported, reports AFP. Kuwaiti prisoners who were recently released by Iraqi authorities told the Iranian embassy in Kuwait that they had seen Tondguyan, the official agency said late Sunday.

He is reported to be in Ba' Qubah prison north of Beghdad.

"Denote Irag's claims that tt holds no more Iranian prisoners of war, several of those listed as missing in action came home last month thanks to the mass uprising in Iraq. IRNA said. It was referring to the

Muslim Shi'ite uprising in the south and Kurdish revolt in the north, both put down by Iraqi troops at the end of March. President Saddam Hussein's August 15 acceptance of all Iranian conditions for peace in

ternational borders and a prisoner exchange. Out of an estimated 100,000 (70,000 Iragis and 30,000 Iranians), some 80,000 Iraqi and Iranian prisoners of

the Iran-Iraq War was follow-

ing by a withdrawal from in-

war have been repatriated.

Captured Iranian Oil

Minister still alive

Teheran continues to ask for several thousand soldiers who were reported missing during the 1980-1988 war. while a international committee of the Red Cross delegate said recently in Baghdad that more than 20,000 Iraqi prisoners of war were still in Iran.

Voice Of America to be recast

WASHINGTON, Apr 30: US President George Bush on Monday named an 11-member panel to review US Government international broadeasting and recommend ways to restructure and consolidate such operations as the Voice Of America and Radio Free Europe, reports Reuter.

The task force will examine the future of government broadcasting 'in light of dramatic political developments worldwide, including the dramatic political developments in Eastern Europe, the end of the cold war, and events in the Persian Gulf and Middle East," a White House statement said.

Former Afghan DPM, detained in India, seeks asylum

prison for so long and it would

be inhuman to deport me to

Afghanistan. If India does not

give me asylum, I would think

of another country," Said

Sarwari, who is also a former

Afghan ambassador to Mongolia

the Tees Hazari city court in

Tamils kill

45 troops

in Lanka

COLOMBO, Apr 30 : At least

45 soldiers died when heavily

armed Tamil Tiger Guerillas

attacked a military patrol in

northwest Sri Lanka Monday.

a military spokesman con-

firmed here Tuesday, reports

Tamil Eelam (LTTE) over-

whelmed two army platoons in

the Nannathan area of coastal

ing out the entire patrol, the

spokesman said. Only six sol-

diers managed to escape and

return to camp.

Mannar district, virtually wip-

The Liberation Tigers of

Sarwari, who was brought to

and Yemen.

NEW DELHI, Apr 30 : A former deputy premier of Afghanistan, detained in India for the past 11 months. pleaded for political asylum Monday and asked New Delhi not to succumb to "pressures" from Kabul by holding him in jail like a criminal, reports Assadullah Sarwari, who

also blamed his incarceration a "Conspiracy" between New Delht and Kabul, broke down in a courtroom here where a final sentence awaits him for staying in Indian without valid papers.

"I seek political asylum in India as it would be easy for me to remain in contact with my family," Sarwari said. adding that he could not return to Afghanistan because a

Pakistan denies setting up of special cell in Kashmir

ISLAMABAD, Apr 30: The Pakistan President, Ghulam Ishaq Khan, has denied Indian press reports that his government had set up a "special cell" on Kashmir in the President's secretariat, reports PII.

Talking to journalists at Rawalpindi, he expressed his hope that there would be no military confrontation between India and Pakistan on the Kashmir issue and that this would be resolved amicably through accommodation and understanding.

Ishaq Khan repeated his government's stand that the Kashmir issue should be resolved in line with the guidelines provided in the UN Security Council resolutions. India has dismissed

Pakistan's demand for the plebiscite in J and K on the ground that the north Indian state is an integral part of India and has insisted that Pakistan should not interfere in her internal affairs.

Another report from New Delhi says: The Jammu and Kashmir authorities are investigating the possibility of complicity of some local officials in militant activities, according to an official spokesman here.

New ethnic feud in USSR: 5 killed MOSCOW, Apr 30 : Five

people were killed and 14 injured in fighting between Cossacks and Ingushi tribesmen in a new ethnic feud in the Soviet Caucasus, TASS said on Monday, reports Reuter.

The trouble started with a Saturday night street brawl in the Chechen-Ingush autonomous republic, the news agency reported. Shooting broke out on Sunday evening after rioters rampaged through the streets of Troitsky village. breaking windows and setting fire to a car.

The five dead included a policeman. Interior ministry troops were called in to keep order.

The Chechen-Ingush republic lies on the northern slopes of the Caucasus, a region made up of a complex patchwork of ethnic groups and age-old feuds and rivalries.

South of the mountains, two people were killed in south Ossetia over the past few days in continuing clashes between Georgains and Ossetians, TASS

death sentence awaited him Chains, also denied involvement in a March 1990 attempt "It is inhuman to hold me in saying he planned to fight the regime through 'democratic processes."

> "When the coup attempt took place I was physically present in New Delhi. Also, wanted to overthrow Natibullah in the party congress," he said in an interview in the courtroom, closely watched by Indian and Afghan embassy in-

telligence officials. I was a politburo member of the (ruling) PDPA (People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan -- now Watan Party) and I wanted to overthrow Najibullah through democratic processes and not through coups," he said,

"It is a political conspiracy between Kabul and Delhi to keep me in prison one should not to bow to pressures," Sarwari said, referring to the close diplomatic ties between India and Afghanistan.

Magistrate R. Mahla adjourned proceedings until May 3 due to the absence of Arwari's defence counsel LL Kapoor, but ruled that there would be "No further adjournments" before the final verdict is handed down.

Off the Record

Imelda didn't want all 3,000 pairs of shoes

NEW YORK: Now it can be told Imeida Marcos did not want those 3,000 pairs of shoes she had stashed away in the presidential palace in Manila and not only that, most of the shoes were the wrong size.

Such is the stuff of revelation as delivered on Tuesday by Mrs. Marcos's attorney, Gerry Spence, "The Philippines are a great shoe-making country. The people who make the shoes gave her scores of them

hoping she would wear them. Most of them didn't fit," he

Spence added, 'She was shown as this greedy person who couldn't be satisfied with a few pairs of shoes."

Spence also tried to explain why Mrs. Marcos would spend hours dressing up before she would visit a Manila slum. "It was Mr. Marcos's desire that his beloved wife become a symbol for her people. This poor girl drank water out of foxholes during the war," he said.

The former Philippines first lady who fled Manila when her late husband, Ferdinand, was ousted as president in 1986 has often been described in the press as greedy.

Disco owners defend right to dance

ROME: A government clampdown on the right of Italian youngsters to bop until they drop - whether at dawn or even later - has caused uproar among disco-goers and owners, reports Reuter. A controversial government decree, which took effect this

month, says discos and night clubs must close at 2 a.m. Those in tourist areas are allowed to stay open until 4 a.m. in peak summer months. Ministers say they are trying to stem a spate of Saturday

night car accidents in which youngers, exhausted and sometimes worse the wear for drink, have been killed on the long drive back from discotheques.

But thousands of disco owners have refused to obey the curfew, saying it would force many night spots to close and will fail to cut road deaths. The death count in road accidents between midnight on

Saturdays and 5 a.m. on Sundays is nearly six times worse than other days of the week, official figures show. Italian youngsters think nothing of driving 60 kilometres (100 miles) or more to a fashionable night club and then re-

turning home again at dawn. The worst toll was on a February weekend. Twentythree people were killed in the early hours of Saturday and Sunday. most of them students in their early 20s driving home after an evening's dancing.

Behind the decree is "The Mamma Lobby"- 90,000 cru-

sading, self-styled "antirock mothers" throughout Italy who signed a petition protesting at the number of accidents and calling for the early closure of discos. But youngsters bopping to house music at one of Rome's trendiest discos, the select Alien, reject the decree handed

down by what they see as a nanny-state. The ministers are wrong. It costs an arm and a leg to get drunk in a discotheque - it's expensive enough already just to get in, said Isabella Di Lauro, a 20-year-old economics

student.

"We don't think Sunday's Perez won't accept another term

UNITED NATIONS, Apr 30: UN Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar indicated Monday that he won't accept another term as the world's top diplomat, reports AP.

"I think this is a democratic organization," Javier Perez de Cuellar told reporters when asked if he ruled out a third 5year term or part of a term. "Ten years for a head of the organization, don't you think,

is enough ?" Perez de Cuellar, 70, already has served two, five-year terms and in January he said this would be his last term.

There has been speculation. however, that he might be persuaded to stay on for another year or two, while some UN reforms are completed and a new secretary-general is chosen.

UN diplomats have listed more than 30 possible candidates for the job which pays 183,000 dollars a year. The secretary-general administers a 1-billion-dollar annual budget, oversees coordination among numerous UN agencies and runs a staff of 14,000.

The next secretary-general is expected to be chosen sometime in October, diplomats said, approved by the

General Assembly and the

Security Council. On Friday, British Ambassador Sir David Hannay told reporters that the Security Council was planning to draft a letter to all 159 UN member states asking them to" put forward candidates for the

Still, there have been differences over selecting a suc-

Diplomats said African states, determined to see the first African secretary-general, were reluctant to widen the field which already includes a half-dozen Africans.

Speculation was widespread that the five permanent members, or at least the United States, Britain and France already had agreed to ask Perez de Cuellar to stay for a while. Others felt the five would

settle on Prince Sadruddin Aga

Khan, who is in charge of refugee relief in northern Iraq and who holds both Iranian and Pakistani passports. The secretary-general is chosen by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Security Council,

where any of the five perma-

nent members can veto a can-

didate.