Interpol to identify Rajiv's

assassin

NEW DELHI, June 8: Investigators probing Rajiv Gandhi's assassination have sought the help of interpol in identifying the woman suicide bomber believed to have killed him, the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported Friday, reports

Photographs of the woman as well as a mystery man believed to be her accomplice have been sent to the agency, which is based in Loyons, France, PTI said.

Indian investigators believe interpol could help them find out "If there was any foreign based conspiracy to kill Gandhi," the news agency said.

The former Indian Premier was killed May 21 in a bomb blast set off by the unidentified woman when he was in the midest of an election campaign in the obscure southern town of Sriperumpudur.

Initial suspicion focused on Sri Lankan Tamil guerillas, who for more than two years fought Indian troops Gandhi despatched to the island nation in mid-1987 to try to end their separatist campaign.

PTI outed unnamed informed sources as saying here Friday the woman in suspected to have visited "One or more countries for specialised training and might figure in intelligence records."

The special investigation team probing the assassination believed the dark-skinned woman would have been "highly motivated by a particular cause," and the assassination was not an individual act, the press agency said.

No militant organisation, including the highly suspect Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam from Sri Lanka, was beyond doubt, it said.

said, AFP reports from Geneva.

be done before we can conclude."

on Libyans living in Sweden.

thousands of new documents.

AFP reports from Libreville.

and installed a pro-U S government."

government of wide national consensus.

prayers by the Islamic fundamentalists.

six months.

Washington.

Washington says.

Ministry said on Friday, reports Reuter.

US military officials in merely an estimate.

numbers could be 50 per cent higher or lower.

Punjab tense: 'It's a battle between bullet, ballot'

Hundreds of Indian poll candidates go into hiding fearing death

CHANDIGARH, June 8: Hundreds of candidates have gone into hiding two weeks before elections in Punjab. Others are in protective custody. Nineteen are dead, victims of Sikh militants trying to stop the voting, AP reports.

Punjab votes on June 22, a week after the rest of India, so security forces can concentrate on trying to prevent violence in the state.

Politics is a high-risk occupation in Punjab, a northern state where Sikh extremists are fighting to separate from

Candidates still campaigning get at least two armed bodyguards, or up to six if they are deemed highly vulnerable.

On Friday, terrorism claimed two more politicians. Gunmen killed Amolak Singh, a Communist candidate for state legislature; his two police guards and four civilians riding in his car in Panj Garain, 200 kilometers (120 miles) west of Chandigarh. Independent candidate Joga Singh was later shot dead in the Sangrur dis-.

Even candidates who espouse separatism fear for their lives.

"It is a fight between the power of bullet and the power of ballot," said incumbent Bimal Khalsa, who is vying with her brother-in-law Shamsher Singh for a parliament seat.

Mrs. Khalsa is popular with

Baker ends Moscow talks : us

Secretary of State James Baker and Soviet Foreign Minister

Alexander Bessmertnykh lest Geneva for their respective

capitals late on Friday, following talks on arms control

negotiations and a possible US-Soviet summit, airport officials

two men had exchanged "several new ideas" on disarmament

but Baker later said there was "still a fair amount of work to

Sweden expels Libyan diplomats:

Sweden has expelled three diplomats and one other

employee at the Libyan Embassy in Stockholm the Foreign

ible with Swedish law and have therefore been declared per-

comment on Swedish news reports that they had been spying

347 Allied troops killed in Gulf:

Iraq had 500 times more soldiers killed during the seven-

week Gulf War than the US led coalition, the Pentagon

reported, putting the Iraqi war toll at roughly 100,000 and

the Allies at 347-144 of them Americans, AFP from

will probably never he known. The 100,000 often cited by top

similar estimate of Iraqi war casualties, putting them at

100,000 dead and 300,000 wounded and cautioning that the

Noriega's trial postponed: A US judge

Friday postponed the trial of ousted Panamanian strongman

Manuel Antonio Noriega from July 22 to September 3, acting

on a request from defense attorneys, AFP reports from Miami.

Hoeveler Wednesday to postpone the trial until late

September so that they could have more time to sift through

arraigned January 4 last year following his surrender to US

troops who invaded Panama in December 1989, ousted him

Gabonese govt resigns : Gabonese

President Omar Bongo on Friday announced the resignation of

the government headed by Casimir Oye Mba, in order to bring

in a broad -based team to run his oil-rich West African state,

premier to take account of all political sensitivities and form a

the Gabonese" and social tensions, "systematically politicising

strikes" Bongo said he would not fall into the trap of dictator-

Algerian govt denies peace accord:

Algeria's ruling party denied on Friday it had reached any

agreement with Muslim militants although the new Prime

Minister held talks earlier in the day with their leaders, the

Liberation Front (FLN), denied the pact announced at Friday

told supporters a pact had been concluded, his deputy added

that general and presidential elections would be held within

VOA chief named : President George Bush

said Friday he was nominating his white House personnel

director, Charles Graves Untermeyer, to head the

government's Voice of America radio station, AP reports from

of the US Information Agency for broadcasting and director of

the Voice of America, would replace Richard W Carlson.

bassador to the Indian Ocean island state of Seychelles.

Both positions must be confirmed by the Senate.

Untermeyer, whose exact title would be associate director

Bush also announced he was appointing Carlson as his am-

Untermeyer has served as White House personnel director

since 1989. Before that he was Assistant Secretary of the Navy

for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. He served as an aide to

Bush when he was vice president from 1980-83 and before

that was a member of the Texas House of Representatives.

APS said Ahdelhamid Mehri, leader of the ruling National

Abassi Madani, head of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS),

Algerian news agency APS said, Reuter from Algiers reports.

Bongo said in a national broadcast that he would ask a new

Denouncing opportunists' who stirred up "hatred among

Noriega's lawyers had asked US District Judge William

September 3 is the fourth trial date set since Noriega was

The exact number of Iraqi soldiers killed during the war

The Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) Thursday issued a

sonal non grata in Sweden, a spokeswoman added.

They have been engaged in activities which are incompat-

She said the four had already left Sweden, but declined to

After the two-hour-long meeting, Bessmertnykh said the



MADRAS (India): Jayalalita Jayaram, 43, leader of a Tamil political party tipped to win the June 15 elections in Tamil Nadu state, has called off her poll campaigning Thursday saying there were threats to - AFP/UNB photo

since militants intensified their independence struggle in 1983. In 1984, Mrs. Gandhi ordered the army to invade the Golden Temple in Amritsar, the holiest shrine of the 500year-old Sikh religion, after militants turned the compound into a fortress. She was

Organizations less extreme than Sohan Singh's committee are running in the elections. They say it will be the first step toward creating the independent state of Khalistan.

killed in revenge.

Violence has ripped Punjab which is Punjabi for Land of the Pure.

> Mrs. Khalsa is cautious about campaigning and refuses to make any statement critical of the militants. She blames police for the deaths of the candidates.

> "These police officers who have brutally tortured Sikh boys all these years now do not want these boys to rule them through the ballot," she said in an interview. The killings were intended to scuttle the elections, she said.

Another candidate, speak-

ing on condition of anonymity. said he regretted entering the race. He has announced his withdrawal, but said he remains under threat of death.

The families of four other candidates contacted by the Associated Press said they had no idea where their relatives

AFP adds from New Delhi: The Indian government has ordered a sweeping review of its security rules and beefed up protection to senior politicians and bureaucrats following the shocks assassination of Rajiv Gandhi.

The first casualty of the shakeup has been election meetings, where armed police, both in uniform and plain clothes, now enforce a safe distance between speaker and

If the politicians complain, the cops do not budget not anymore.

Gandhi died instantly when an unidentified woman detonated a powerful plastic explosive wired on her body while pretending to touch the feet of the former Premier at an election rally in southern India on May 21.

The death of 46-year-old Raity Gandhi has changed everything.

The government has said it will make a thorough review of the blue book, the bible for security agencies, and study what else can be done to make protection of VIP's foolproof.

As an immediate step, the one-way road outside the Prime Minister's house here has been closed to traffic. Visitors now must park their own cars outside and be driven in by official vehicles.

Gorbachev resents effort to change name of Leningrad

MOSCOW, June 8: President Mikhail Gorbachev on Friday denounced an effort to restore the name St Petersburg to the city of Leningrad, saying such a change had no moral or politi-

Gorbachev in a statement read on central television, said the decision to name the country's second city after state founder Vladimir Lenin. approved by the Congress of Soviets after his death in

"I am deeply convinced that there is no moral or political basis for changing it," he said.

"A great city bears the name said, noting the name remained dear to the many who

Politicians have been barred from accepting garlands and bouquets, and strangers are kept away from top politicians.

At times, some overzealous, security officials refuse to acknowledge even federal home ministry identity cards.

"I feel hampered by the security given, but I do not want to make an issue of it, " Lal Krishna Advani, a leader of the powerful Hindu-revivalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) said this week.

In Bombay, when Advant addressed and election meeting, policemen promptly took up positions on top of all nearby building.

Added Saifuddin Soz, a Kashmiri politician whose daughter was abducted by Muslim guerillas in February: "Security has been increased everywhere. We have been told to be careful."

Minister of State for Home Affairs Subodh Kant Sahay told parliament last week security was being strengthened for 254 Indian politicians classified as "high security risks."

cials in Washington, the Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) said. Mr. Sajjad, accompanied by Secretary General of the

> and two other diplomats, will reach Washington on Sunday after a stop in Karachi, the official news agency said. The six-days talks are to

start Tuesday in Washington and continue in New York.

Foreign Ministry Akram Zaki

Pak team off

to US to

mend fences

Pakistan Senate Chairman

Wasim Sajjad left here Friday

for talks with senior US offi-

ISLAMABAD, June 8:

Mr. Sajjad is expected to meet with US Vice President Dan Quayle and Secretary of State James Baker as well as prominent US legislators, officials said.

"The sole purpose of the visit is to "re-establish channels of communications" between Pakistan and the United States, Mr Sajjad told journalists before his departure.

The talks are to be the first high-level contact between the two countries since Nawaz Sharif became Prime Minister in November.

Relations have been strained since Washington suspended military and economic assistance to Islamabad eight months ago on suspicion that Pakistan was manufacturing nuclear arms.

Off the Record

Bush's nephew a medic

NEW HAVEN (Connecticut): A 21-year-old nephew of President George Bush has enlisted as a medic in the Army Reserves in hope of serving in the Gulf War. But training will keep him in the United States for at least 1-2 months, reports AP.

Jonathan J. Bush Jr., a junior at Wesleyan University in Connecticut, said he signed up after getting permission to take the semester off.

"I just felt that if even one more soldier died because there is one less medic over there, I would not feel good about myself," Bush said Tuesday in a telephone interview from New York City, where he is working at his father's investment

The President sent him a note saying he "supports my decision and is proud of me," said Bush, a trained emergency medical technician.

President Bush was shot down as a Navy flier during World War II.

Prices topple Minister in Brazilian sex scandal

RIO DE JENIRO: Brazil's Economy Minister, Senhorita Zelia Cardoso de Mello, who survived a scandal last year over her affair with a married fellow minister, has resigned, conceding defeat in the fight against raging inflation. Senhorita Cardoso, 37.

made many enemics through her aggressive style. and her freezing of bank accounts on her first day in office 14 months ago. At first inflation fell, but began to creep back up, and is now running at several hundred per cent.

Last autumn, newspapers reported her affair with Senhor Bernardo Cabral. 58. Justice Minister and father of three. He was forced out of the Cabinet, but she hung on.

"I tried everything could to control inflation." Senhorita Cardoso wrote in her resignation letter. President Fernando Collor de Mello picked Senhor Marcilio Marques Moreira. ambassador to Washington and a respected economist, to replace her.

Officials hope Senhor

Moreira's conservative outlook will restore the confidence of foreign creditors, owed £70 billion by Brazil, who have attacked Senhorita Cardoso's hit-and-miss approach. Her resignation was followed by those of Brazil's central

bank president, Senhor Ibrahim Eris, and several advisers. Paying the price: Senhorita Cardoso, who resigned saying she had jost the fight against inflation

He's expecting the unexpected

TULSA (Oklahoma): Capt. Bob Fisher, a firefighter for 23 years, has learned to expect the unexpected. That means the expecting, too, reports AP.

Fisher helped Karen Young deliver a baby girl early Monday when the mother was on her way to the hospital and realized she wouldn't make it.

Her boyfriend banged on the door of the fire station they were passing and awoke Fisher. The firefighters set up portable lights in the driveway, and Krystal Elizabeth Donna Michelle Young was born about five minutes later at 6:35 am. Fisher said the delivery, a first for him, was "by-the-book

and normal. "Whether it's you first day on the department or your last, you never know what's going to happen," Fisher said.

USSR selling space technology

MOSCOW: The market for commercial space technology is booming: one country needs to launch a communications satellite, another wants pictures from space of the continental shelf, yet another requires onboard installations for producing semiconductors or drugs. The Soviet Union offers other countries, and international organizations and companies a wide range of services on highly-competitive terms. Work in this sphere is coordinated by a special state organization - the Soviet Space Agency (Glavkosmos), which can launch objects using Soviet booster rockets as well as lease out various satellites or parts of the Mir space station under contract to foreign clients, reports IAN.

The Soviet Union possesses a wide range of booster rockets of various capacities: Soyuz, Tsiklon, Zenit and Proton. In particular, Soyuz boosters are used for delivering crews to orbit during international commercial manned space missions. The Soviet Union has in the past carried out 15 such missions free of charge now commercial terms apply. The cost of an 8-10 day flight by a foreign cosmonaut, including, naturally, work aboard the Mir space complex, is estimated at 12-16 million dollars. This is the average price: it can vary in either direction according to the specific contract. The Soviet Space Agency not always requires hard currency. Foreign partners can pay by, say, delivering electronic or other equipment equivalent in value.

Bhutanese officials seeking asylum stole cars'

NEW DELHI, June 8: Some of the southern Bhutanese officials who sought asylum in Nepal this month alleging government discrimination had large outstanding government loans and stole cars, the Bhutanese embassy said here

hard-line Sikhs. She is the

widow of Beant Singh, one of two Sikh bodyguards who as-

sassinated Prime Minister

Indira Gandhi in 1984. He died

in a barrage of gunfire fired by

Khalsa is under a death threat

by the Panthic Committee, the

shadowy body of the most ex-

treme under ground Sikh

commanders. The committee,

which has sworn to disrupt the

election, is based aeross the

border in Pakistan and is led

by a former director of Punjab

health services, Dr. Sohan

Singh. The committee seeks to

create a Sikh homeland by

Singh, which means lion in the

officials as saying at least 400

candidates have fled for safety

and cannot be traced. An addi-

tional 100 have taken refuge at

are contesting the 13 parlia-

mentary seats and 117 seats in

the state legislature. Security

men travel with them, and

campaigning is restricted to

assembly will be the first since

1985, when a moderate Sikh

party was voted to power. That

legislature was dismissed in

1987. Since then, federally

appointed officials have gov-

despite opposition from sev-

eral political parties, who say

intimidation and terrorism

would make a fair election im-

pledged to boycott the elec-

Chandra Shekhar said voting

would encourage Punjab state

to return to democracy and

mainstream politics.

The Congress Party has

But federal Prime Minister

Elections are being held

The election for the state

Two thousand candidates

government safe houses.

Pubjabi language.

daylight hours.

erned Punjab.

possible.

All male Sikhs use the name

Punjab newspapers quote

But like all others, Mrs.

Mrs. Gandhi's other guards.

yesterday, reports AFP. An embassy statement confirmed that all ten were government officials and said the fact that they were was a "confirmation" of the government's policy of bringing southern Bhutanese into the mainstream of society.

Reports from Kathmandu on June 2 and June 3 said a total of 11 Bhutanese government officials of Nepalese origin had sought asylum there charging that they had been forced to flee because of discrimination against them.

They said the Bhutanese government's attempts to impose Drukpa culture on the peoples of the south, who are largely of Nepalese origin, had resulted in a crisis.

"It has now been confirmed that 10 southern Bhutanese officials, led by Bhim Subba of the power department, and Ran Bahadur Basnet of the State Trading Corporation of Bhutan have absconded from the country," the embassy statement said.

The statement went on to say that five were related and the five others subordinates of Basnet and Subba, both of whom allegedly stole cars in which they made their getaway

the two had left when a state amounting to 1.2 million ru-

Subba, interviewed by telephone in Kathmandu, denied the charges, saying that the cars were owned by the former officials and that they had asked loans to be paid off from funds deposited with the gov-

"We....brought the cars with us as they belonged to us individually. But in some cases the government's loans for the cars had yet to be fully reimbursed," he said.

to neighbouring Nepal. It went on to charge that

audit team was in the process of unearthing "prima facie evidence of defalcation of funds" and that Basnet had, at the time he left, outstanding loans

ernment.

cal basis, reports Reuter.

1924, was proper one.

of a great man," Gorbachev suffered there during the heroic 900-day siege by Hitler's forces.

UK Army to retain 4,000 Gurkhas British Desence Ministry of re-

KATHAMUNDU, June 8: A highly-placed Nepalese Foreign Ministry source said Britain has guaranteed that the British Army would retain at least 4,000 of Nepal's famed Gurkha soldiers, contrary to earlier press reports, says AFP.

The British press reports this week said most of the estimated 7,000 Gurkhas in the British Army could be jobless by 1997 as part of overall cuts in army spending. But both the British

Embassy here and the Nepalese Foreign Ministry denied the reports. "We have been fully assured

by the highest authority of the

taining at least 4,000 Gurkha soldiers even after the handing over of Hong Kong to China, the Foreign Ministry source said, adding that a gradual reduction would come as no sur-"It was decided a couple of

years ago that the present strength of the 7,500 Gurkha soldiers deployed in Hong Kong, Brueni (and other phases."

places) would be brought to the size of 4,000 in different A British Embassy official said the British government wanted "to use the Gurkhas somewhere else outside Hong

Kong."

said Amantai Asylbekov, head of the centre and a member of the Organising Committee of

news that the Soviet Union's top brass intend to resume nuclear test explosions at the Semiplatinsk test range is drawing bitter protests from the public of Kazakhstan inhabited by members of many nations and nationalities. A public centre was set up in Alma Ata capital of Kazakhsan with a view to averting the resumption of nuclear blasts, reports

dents of the Semipalatinsk region will get a solid amount of money in compensation for every test explosion conducted there. This cannot satisfy us"

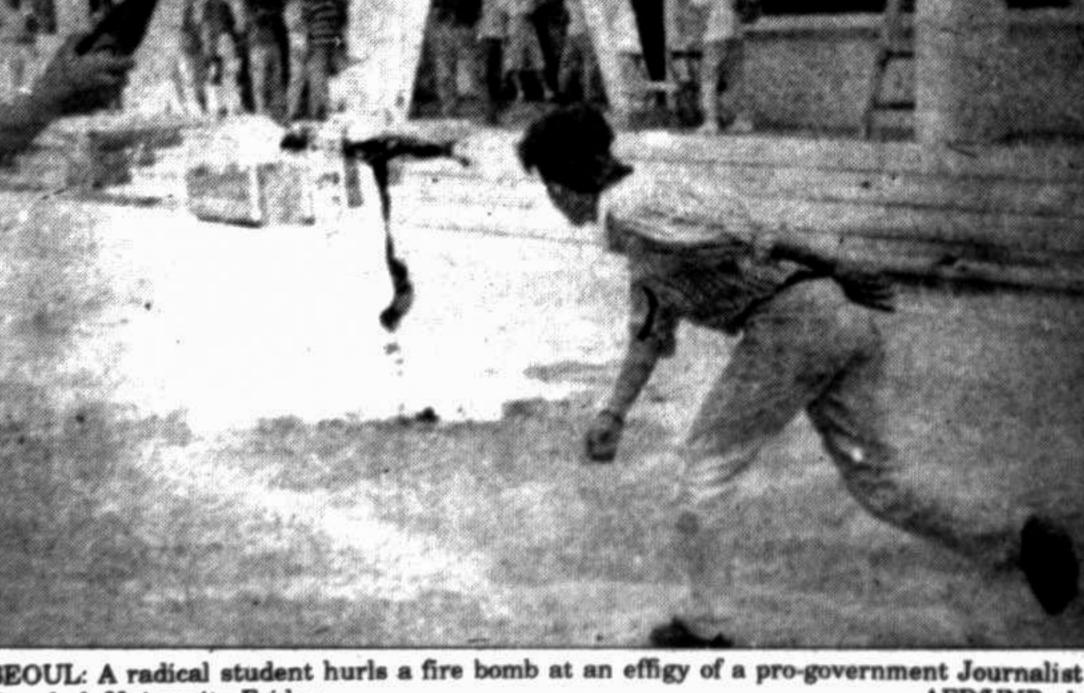
the Nevada-Semipalatinsk public campaign " We cannot, nor do we want, to follow the sad example of residents of Nevada in the US here nuclear test explosions are conducted or residents of Iwakuni in Japan the city where war planes armed with nuclear weapons take off from the local airfield. Even if they are paid handsomely for tolerating that, if the military decide to go ahead and stage a nuclear explosion we suggest that the day be proclaimed a day of national mourning.

It is planned to organise a three-month march in protest against nuclear test explosions. at Semipalainsk (every member of the public can take part in it) so as to close the Semipalatinisk test range for good on August 29, the 42nd anniversary of the first nuclear,

Taxi Driver set fire himself in S Korea

SEOUL, June 8: A taxi driver set fire to himself Saturday to protest alleged anti-labour practices by his company, news reports said, reports AP.

Kang dae-shik, a 34-yearold union leader, was in critical condition at a local hospital after setting himself on fire in the southern port city of Yosu, reports by radio and the national news agency Yenhap



SEOUL: A radical student hurls a fire bomb at an effigy of a pro-government Journalist at Dongkuk University Friday. - AFP/UNB photo

Nuclear tests being protested in USSR

ALMA ATA, June 8: The

"The military say that resi-