

Federal army sieges all border posts, goes on shooting spree

100 killed as troops, secessionists fight in Slovenia: 6 choppers downed

LJUBLJANA, Yugoslavia, June 28: Fighting between federal troops and forces of secessionist Slovenia claimed about 100 casualties Thursday, Slovenia's defense minister said. At least six people were known to have died, reports AP.

Defense Minister Janez Jansa also said in a televised statement that his troops shot down at least six federal helicopters, as firefighters spread to at least 20 different areas in the northern republic two days after it and Croatia declared independence.

By nightfall, fighting also was taking place in Ljubljana, the Slovene capital.

It was not immediately clear whether the army was moving to take control in Croatia as well.

Croatian television showed federal armored vehicles rolling through the Croatian city of Osijek, driving panic-stricken inhabitants before them. But TV reporters theorized it was only a show of force.

The fighting occurred after months of negotiations between the two republics and the central government. When that failed to win the looser confederation they wanted, Slovenia and Croatia seceded from the Yugoslav federation, despite warnings from the government and other nations that a civil war could result.

Croatia and Slovenia are Western-oriented economically and their differences with other Yugoslav republics have been aggravated by strong nationalist sentiment and ethnic

tension. In Slovenia, most of Thursday's clashes occurred at or near border stations, the main target of the Federal army, which is seeking to reestablish Yugoslavia's original borders.

The army tanks were obstructed by countless street barricades, but they met little resistance as they advanced toward Slovenia's border with Austria, Italy and Hungary.

Adm. Stane Brovet, the federal deputy defense minister, said in Belgrade that early evening all border posts in Slovenia had been taken over by the army.

Among the fatalities were two federal army troopers who burned to death after their tank caught fire following a shootout with Slovenian forces at Trzin, 10 kilometers (six miles) northeast of Ljubljana.

Associated Press photographer Sarjan Illic, who saw the fight, suffered head injuries when a shell exploded.

Slovenian forces killed a Yugoslav army officer after engaging army units moving toward the Hungarian border at Ormoz, officials said.

And Slovene radio reported that two soldiers and a civilian were killed when the Slovenes shot down an army helicopter over the center of Ljubljana.

The army also took control of Highway No. 1 between Ljubljana and Zagreb, the capital of Croatia, strengthening its grip on the small, mountainous republic.

Most border crossings were

closed. Col. Janez Slapar, the Slovenian territorial defense commander reported earlier in the day.

Earlier, the army fired grenades at a border post held by Slovenian unit at Jezersko on the Austrian border and about 80 kilometers (50 miles) northeast of Ljubljana, before taking control.

The quick success of the army had been predicted by Western military experts. The federal forces, apart from their numerical superiority, are much better armed, equipped and trained.

But much of Yugoslavia's 180,000-man federal military is made up of conscripts from the federation's various ethnic groups, and it was not known how soldiers would respond if the battles escalated.

The takeover of the border posts came hours after Slovenian President Milan Kucan vowed his troops would respond with "all methods" to the "act of aggression" against Slovenia.

He urged army members to desert and said Slovenia was withdrawing from all federal bodies.

The federal government,

based in Belgrade, has called for renewed efforts to reach a "democratic agreement" with the federation's future. Slovenia and Croatia have previously said they might return if hard-line Marxist Serbia, the largest and most populous republic, drops its opposition to transforming Yugoslavia into a loose confederation of sovereign states.

The federal government also has demanded that a three-month moratorium be declared on all "unconstitutional acts" undertaken in various parts of the country.

During that time all acts of secession and declarations of autonomy would be annulled. State armies set up in Croatia and Slovenia and ethnic Serb paramilitary groups would be disbanded.

After months of abortive efforts to align their needs with that of the rest of the country, neither breakaway republic was likely to agree to the proposal. Their commitment to independence was likely to be strengthened by the army attacks.

The collective federal presidency, normally the senior government power which controls the army, met Thursday but the session was unlikely to solve the crisis because it was boycotted by Croatia, Serbia and Macedonia.



YUGOSLAVIA: Yugoslav army private Peter Bjelica is given a birthday kiss and cake by locals on Thursday. His tank unit has been welcomed into this Serbian enclave in Croatia after Croatian Special Forces attacked the town leaving one person dead and several injured. — AFP/UNB photo.

Burmese rebels kill 38 soldiers

MAE SOT, Thailand, June 28: Burmese rebels killed 38 soldiers in an ambush in eastern Karen state in their biggest attack for months, Thai army and guerrilla officers said today.

More than 300 guerrillas of the Democratic Alliance of Burma (DAB) attacked about 700 soldiers near the town of Kaw Kareik before dawn on June 22, a Burmese student fighter fresh from the front told Reuters.

They killed 38 troops and wounded 68. Four ethnic Karen fighters were killed and six wounded, a guerrilla officer said.

China supplies missiles to Pakistan

WASHINGTON, June 28: China's ambassador Thursday said his government has provided Pakistan "a tiny number of short-range tactical missiles," but has supplied no missiles to Syria and has "never helped any country to build nuclear weapons," reports AP.

Ambassador Zhu Otzhen also said China would consider entering into talks with members of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MCTR), a group of major industrialized countries trying to hold the line against the spread of missile delivery systems.

The envoy was responding to criticism of Chinese arms exports raised in congressional debate over President George Bush's decision to continue trading privileges for China.

6 Japanese barred from entering Philippines

MANILA, June 28: Six Japanese men with missing fingers were barred from entering the Philippines today on suspicion of being members of a Yakuza criminal gang, airport officials said, reports AFP.

The six had just arrived aboard a Japan Airlines flight when an immigration inspector, Marlene Pedrealba, noticed that they lacked a finger on the left hand. They were told to fly back to Narita airport.

Members of the Yakuza, Japan's version of the Mafia, traditionally get fingers chopped off as punishment for misbehavior.

Strife in Sind deepens, troops being called out

ISLAMABAD, June 28: The Pakistan army is being called in to assist the civil administration in some districts of the troubled province of Sind for restoring peace and to curb terrorism. Local daily the nation reported today, reports Xinna.

Reliable sources were quoted as saying the districts where army is likely to be deployed are Sanghar, Dadu, Kashmir and Jacobabad in the province where the law and

order situation was at its lowest ebb.

It is in keeping with the constitution that the army is being called in the sources said. The Article 245 of the constitution allows the calling in of the army in civil matters in prescribed conditions.

While meeting foreign journalists based in Islamabad on Thursday, Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif confirmed that the armed forces could be used in aid of civil

administration in Sind if the situation requires.

Sources said as many as five ordinances to curb lawlessness particularly in Sind will be promulgated next week and be put into effect immediately.

The Prime Minister Thursday presided over a top level meeting to prune the ordinances which will be finally approved for promulgation at another meeting today, the sources said.

Stir for separate Jharkhand state in India soon

JAMSHEDPUR, June 28: Krishna Mardi, the newly elected MP of the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha from the Singhbhum constituency, has said that his party would raise the issue of a separate Jharkhand state, in the coming session of parliament, reports PTI.

The future course of action on the issue would be discussed at the party's central committee meeting at Ranchi within a week, Mardi told PTI here yesterday.

Ruling out the possibility of his party supporting the Congress (I), he said that the JMM preferred to sit in the opposition.

To a question, he said that though the JMM was a constituent of the National Front, the party did not get any constructive support from the latter. Denying that the NF had

helped in his victory, Mardi said, if the claim is true, why didn't the Janata Dal candidate from Singhbhum withdraw his nomination.

Mardi and Vijay Singh Roy, MLA and Congress (I) candidate for the Singhbhum constituency, were arrested and sent to jail after their supporters fought with guns at Chaibasa on April 25, soon after the two filed their nominations.

R Mardi, who was released yesterday, was arrested outside the jail by JMM workers who took out a procession in the city with their leader.

Referring to allegations that his party activists had let loose a reign of terror, he said that the allegations were baseless and part of a conspiracy of some politicians to malign the party's image.

Thatcher won't seek re-election

LONDON, June 28: Former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher announced Friday that she will not seek re-election to the House of Commons, ending a 32-year career in elected office, reports AP.

"I shall remain active in the House of Commons until the next election, and thereafter in the political life of the nation, albeit in a different capacity," she said in a statement released by her office.

Britain must have national elections by the middle of next year.

The announcement, released through the Conservative Party's Central Office, did not elaborate on Mrs Thatcher's future plans. She has been raising funds to the Thatcher Foundation to promote her political ideas.

"I shall maintain a very great interest in economic affairs and international affairs which have such a great effect on the well-being of people everywhere," she said.



CZECHOSLOVAKIA: A Czech general raises his arms celebrating as the plane, carrying the Commander in chief of all Soviet troops in Czechoslovakia, General Eduard Vorobjev, takes off for the last time on Thursday. — AFP/UNB photo.

Off the Record

Offer to buy Bush beer and snacks

TORONTO: A Toronto city councilman on Thursday promised to buy US President George Bush beer and snacks if he stays in Washington instead of making his planned visit here for baseball's all-star game next month, reports Reuters.

"I'm willing to kick in and buy a case of beer and some chips for the President to enhance his enjoyment of the game on TV," councilman Howard Moscoe said.

"Or if he wants to sneak into town wearing a fake nose and moustache with glasses, I'll be thrilled to buy him a hot dog and beer and give him the protection anonymity buys."

Moscoe said the costs of protecting Bush during his planned visit to the July 9 game at Toronto's Skydome Stadium could be better spent on Toronto's citizens.

"In view of the fact that we have day-care centres that are on the verge of closing, people sleeping in the streets because we cannot afford enough hostels, food banks that are rationing already meager supplies of food to the poor because they are insufficiently funded, I am writing to ask you to enjoy the game on television," Moscoe wrote in a letter sent to Bush on Wednesday.



Yeltsin beats Gorbachev in take-home salary

MOSCOW: The Russian Parliament Thursday voted a 4,000 ruble (2,400 dollar) monthly salary for Russian President Boris Yeltsin, who is to earn almost twice as much as Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, reports AFP.

The salary, to be taken from the republic's budget, was set in the wake of Mr Yeltsin's election as President in a direct vote.

The Soviet Parliament doubled Mr Gorbachev's salary in May last year to 2,300 rubles (about 1,400 dollar) per month. The average Soviet salary is 300 rubles per month.

Murdani to play golf, not politics

JAKARTA: Indonesia's powerful Defence Minister has turned down a nomination for Vice President saying he would rather play golf, the daily Surar Karya reported, reports Reuters.

It quoted Marzuki Darusman of the ruling party Golkar as suggesting General Benny Murdani, once described as Indonesia's kingmaker, be nominated as Vice President.

"No I want to play golf," Murdani told reporters after a Parliamentary session on Wednesday.

Darusman's suggestion came after a representative of the Indonesian Democratic Party nominated Interior Minister Rudini to be the next President.

Indonesia will hold general elections in 1992. Presidential elections will be held in 1993 and President Suharto, who has held power uncontested for quarter of a century, is widely expected to stand again.

Koirala asks donors not to attach too many strings

KATHMANDU (Nepal), June 28: Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala said Friday he expects donor nations not to attach too many strings to their foreign aid to help stabilize Nepal's new-found democracy and contain the communist opposition, reports AP.

Nepal, a Himalayan nation that is one of the world's poorest, cannot survive without foreign help, Koirala said in his first interview with foreign reporters since his election. "I'm not shy to ask donor countries for aid for improving our economy."

Koirala's centrist Nepali Congress Party won Nepal's first multiparty election in 32 years, held on May 12, but a coalition of leftist and communist parties finished a close second.

Koirala said the World Bank and other donors understand they cannot press the new government to drop subsidies or to introduce other economic reforms that could undermine its appeal.

"They know the feelings and sentiments of the Nepalese people, and they understand the political situation," said Koirala, speaking in the sparsely furnished reception room of his official residence.

Foreign donors pledge about 450 million dollars a year to Nepal's development, about 200 million dollars more than it can absorb. Dozens of projects are stuck in the pipeline because the government cannot provide the local currency needed to carry them out, according to diplomats who are interviewed on condition of anonymity.

Koirala said that after decades of absolute monarchy, the public expects more from their new government than anyone can deliver. "But if we can do simple things, if we can give relief to the people, if we can give fertilizer to the farmers, and if we can give efficient administration, that will meet some of the aspirations of the people," he said.

The average annual income in Nepal is 170 dollars.

Students attack US centre in Seoul to protest Roh's visit to Washington

SEOUL, June 28: Hundreds of students wielding steel pipes and firebombs attacked the US Cultural Centre in Kwangju on Friday to protest President Roh Tae-woo's upcoming trip to Washington, reports AP.

National Police Headquarters said it had intelligence reports that militant students would attack other US and government facilities over the weekend and police were placed on heightened alert.

About 500 students yelling anti-American and anti-government slogans attacked the three-storey building where the center is located shortly after dawn, according to reports and witnesses. Kwangju is 262 kilometers (163 miles) southwest of Seoul.

Police fired more than 20 blank shots from M-16 automatic rifles and handguns and used tear gas to repel the students after a 20-minute battle, the national news agency Yonhap reported.

A police motorcycle was destroyed by firebombs and a signboard on a nearby police substation was burned, the agency said.

Five students were arrested, police said. A US Embassy statement said 10 riot policemen assigned to guard the center were hospitalized with injuries, some serious.

The US statement said no center employees were in the building when the attack occurred and the third-floor facilities were not damaged.

Walls of the building were blackened by firebombs and an outside sleeping area for riot police was burned, witnesses said.

"Yankee go home. Drive out U.S.A.," shouted protesters. "Stop Roh's humiliating visit," they shouted.

Five students, each draped with the white South Korean national flag, climbed to the top of the building with bullhorns and shouted slogans, jabbing the air with their fists, witnesses said. Roh departs Saturday for San Francisco and Washington, where he is to hold talks on July 2 with US President George Bush.

Militant students have demanded Roh cancel his trip, claiming that the Seoul government is a puppet of Washington and the presence of US troops in the country hinders talks with North Korea on national unification.

Anti-American views are not uncommon among students, but most students and South Korean citizens do not support the violence espoused by radicals.

The fatal beating of a student protester by police on April 29 triggered seven weeks of violent protest, but mass protests have waned and Roh's government won overwhelming support in recent nationwide local elections.

BRIEFLY

Schwarzkopf retires on Aug 31: US General Norman Schwarzkopf, Joint Commander of Coalition forces in the Gulf War, will retire on August 31 after 34 years in the military, the US Defense Department said on Thursday, reports Reuters from Washington.

Schwarzkopf, 56, has announced no retirement plans but will reportedly receive 5 million dollars to write his autobiography.

The defence department said he will turn command of the US Central Command over to marine Lieutenant-General Joseph Hoar on August 9 but retirements always take effect at the end of the month.

Schwarzkopf commanded US and European forces in the Gulf War. Saudi Arabian Lieutenant-General Khalid Bin Sultan commanded Arab forces in the coalition.

Cambodian rebels to meet for talks: Cambodia's rival leaders are to meet next month in Beijing for talks on a United Nations peace plan to end the war in their country, sources close to the peace efforts said here today, reports AFP from Bangkok.

The meeting, set for July 16-17, will mark the first visit by Phnom Penh's pro-Vietnamese Prime Minister Hun Sen to China, a country which backs his arch-rivals, the Khmer Rouge.

Vietnamese FM to quit Politburo: Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach said today he was stepping down from the Politburo of the ruling Communist Party, reports AFP from Hanoi.

Mr Thach 68, and number six in the politburo, told reporters he was retiring from the top party body to edit a book on Vietnamese diplomacy, suggesting he would also leave the Foreign Ministry.

Vietnamese sources said the new party central committee elected Wednesday by 1,176 delegates to the seventh party congress here, has named a new 13-member politburo including eight new members.

Among those leaving the Politburo, the sources said, are party Secretary General Nguyen Van Linh, 76 — to be replaced by Prime Minister Do Muoi 74 — Interior Minister Mai Chi Tho 69, Et Nguyen Duc Tam, 71, head of party organization.

An official announcement of the new party leadership — the central committee politburo and secretary general was expected Thursday afternoon after closing ceremonies for the congress.

14 killed in Sri Lanka: Tamil separatist guerrillas detonated a bomb beneath a bus in eastern Sri Lanka and killed at least 14 passengers, police said today, reports Reuters from Colombo.

Eight people were injured in the attack on Thursday night. The rebels shot at passengers and set fire to the bus after the blast.

"The casualties could be more," a police officer said. No further details were immediately available of the attack, which took place at Lahugala in Ampara district.

The Tigers were blamed for a suicide bomb attack on a military headquarters in Colombo last Friday.

Six airlines fined in Denmark: The Danish Supreme Court on Wednesday fined six foreign airlines a total of 452,000 kroner (64,570 dollars) for bringing illegal refugees to Denmark without visas or identity documents reports AFP from Copenhagen.

The decision in the case against European operators, Sabena, KLM and Interflug, plus Iraqi Airways and Singapore Airlines, had been eagerly awaited by the some 50 airlines flying into Denmark.

The companies had argued that it was not their responsibility to do the police work when checking in Denmark-bound passengers nor could they be expected to tell the difference between genuine and false visas and passports, or prevent passengers from tearing up their passports once on board the plane, as often happened.

The Supreme Court was unconvinced by their arguments, and ordered the airlines to pay a fine of 8,000 kroner per passenger illegally brought to Denmark.

65 rebels killed in Peru: The military Wednesday said government troops backed by helicopters ambushed a Maoist guerrilla column, killing 65 rebels as they entered a town in the coca-producing Huallaga valley of northeastern Peru, reports AFP from Lima.

Only two soldiers were reported killed Monday in the ambush, which army Colonel Augusto Salaverria Pereira described as "the most severe blow to the subversives in recent years."