

Cracks found in Japanese N-reactor

TOKYO, Aug 3: Hokkaido Electric Power Co. Ltd. said Friday an emergency inspection found cracks on turbine blades in its No. 2 reactor at the Tomari Nuclear Power Plant in Hokkaido, northern Japan, but there was no possibility of a radioactive leak, reports AFP.

Company officials said they have not yet identified the number of cracks in a low-pressure turbine on the reactor at the plant, located 50 kilometers (30 miles) northeast of Sapporo.

They said experts detected the cracks immediately after they started an inspection early Friday. Inspection of the No. 2 reactor was originally scheduled for late October.

The No. 2 reactor, which began operating in April, has the same structure as the No. 1 reactor which stopped operating after as many as 617 cracks in 309 out of 448 stationary blades were found between April and May.

The turbine, powered by steam from the reactor, turns the generator to make electricity.

The company apologised for the new problem, but said it did not threaten the safety of the reactors.

UN experts in Baghdad to inspect biological arms sites
Senate okays new military strike against Iraq's N-capability

WASHINGTON, Aug 3: The US Senate overwhelmingly voted support on Friday for "use of all necessary means" by President George Bush to eliminate Iraq's ability to produce nuclear, chemical or biological weapons, reports Reuters.

The Senate approved the non-binding "sense of Congress" resolution 97-2.

It was proposed by Senate Republican leader Bob Dole who said it was intended to signal Iraqi President Saddam Hussein that Congress supports new military force if Saddam tries to keep the weapons programmes.

"You are out of wiggle room. You are out of bluffs. You are out of time," Dole said.

"Unless you, Saddam Hussein, act now to acknowledge and eliminate your chemical, biological and nuclear weapons programmes, we, the United States, the President and the Congress working together will do the job for you."

Defence Secretary Dick Cheney threatened renewed military action earlier if, he said, Saddam continues to hide nuclear bomb-making equipment.

"There's no doubt in my mind about our ability to use our military capability if we have to see to it that he complies with (UN) resolutions," Cheney said in a television interview. "And there shouldn't be any doubt in his mind about the fact that we are prepared to do that."

Saddam has said he has no nuclear bomb-making equipment left to disclose but Cheney said, "I don't think

he's come totally clean yet."

AFP adds: A delegation of 28 United Nations experts on bacteriological arms arrived in Baghdad on Friday to inspect Iraq's potential for making such weapons.

Delegation Chief David Kelly said the group's task would be to carry out full inspection of some sites which may be concerned with biological weapons.

He added that the duration of the mission had not yet been decided.

Earlier a UN source here had said that the mission would be concerned with chemical, rather than bacterio-

logical weapons.

However, the source later said that the mission on chemical weapons would come here at the end of this month.

Iraq used chemical weapons during its war with Iran, which ended in 1988. It has always denied making bacteriological weapons.

Mr. Kelly said he would be in charge of deciding which sites his delegation, which contained members from nine different nationalities, should visit.

He refused to make any comments on the mission, which he described as "very delicate."

Meanwhile Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar, in a statement on Friday marking the first anniversary of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, pledged continued UN support in helping the Emirate rebuild.

"The people of Kuwait may have confidence that the United Nations will maintain its full commitment to helping them repair the damage of war," he said.

"It is my heartfelt wish that lasting peace will be established in the region, leading to a new era of justice and harmony, based on the principles of the United Nations charter."

2,000 jailed activists will also take part
Benazir, other PDA workers to go on 12-hr hunger strike today

KARACHI, Aug 3: Thousands of opposition supporters, among them former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, will observe a 12-hour token hunger strike on Sunday in protest against arrest of their activists and laws they say are repressive, Senator Iqbal Haider said today, reports Reuters.

He said Bhutto planned to observe the strike outside parliament in the capital, Islamabad, where the government has imposed a ban on the assembly of more than four people.

Bhutto's jailed husband, Asif Ali Zardari, on trial before several courts on charges of corruption and conspiring to kill opponents, will observe the strike in Landhi Jail on the outskirts of Karachi, Haider told reporters.

The protest is against the 12th amendment, four ordi-



nances, black laws, massive political victimisation in Sind (Province) and the arrests and implications of opposition activists," said Haider, Information Secretary of the four-party People's Democratic Alliance (PDA).

The amendment and ordinances give wide powers to authorities to arrest and try people accused of keeping illegal

arms, kidnapping people for ransom, or indulging in terrorism and sabotage.

Haider said more than 2,000 jailed PDA workers and leaders in various prisons in Sind Province would observe the strike.

In June, police arrested more than 750 people in Karachi, mostly supporters of Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party (PPP), after the murder of a judge who was trying Zardari.

The hunger strike, two days before the anniversary of her dismissal as Prime Minister on August 6, 1990, would be observed by all who live in Bilawal House, Bhutto's Karachi residence, Haider said.

Haider said arrangements were being made for widespread observance of the strike in Sind, Bhutto's home province.

14,000 Iranians killed during war with Iraq

UNITED NATIONS, Aug 3: About 14,000 Iranian civilians were killed and 57,000 wounded during the eight-year Iran-Iraq war and more than 130,000 Iranian homes were destroyed according to Iranian government figures given to a UN survey mission that recently visited the country, reports Reuters.

The mission's report, handed to Security Council members this week marked the first stage in assessing the damage suffered by Iran in the conflict, halted by a 1988 ceasefire, and the status of reconstruction efforts.

Another UN mission is expected to visit Iran to conduct a more detailed study.

According to government estimates, 14,000 civilians were killed and 57,000 wounded of whom 37,000 are permanently disabled. In addition the authorities have to cope with the care and resettlement of nearly 1.25 million persons displaced by the war, the report said.

Iranian authorities estimated direct damage to the economic sectors at 31 trillion rials (440 billion dollars) and indirect damage at 35 trillion rials (500 billion dollars).

Chatichai returns home to explain \$ 2.8m graft charges

BANGKOK, Aug 3: Deposed Prime Minister Chatichai Choonhavan returned home Saturday from exile in London, hoping to clear himself of allegations of corruption while in office, reports AP.

A car took Chatichai directly from his plane to his house in Bangkok. A security officer at the house told reporters that the former leader would rest for the day and would not make any comments.

Chatichai's elected government was overthrown in a Feb. 23 coup by the four top armed forces commanders, who said they took action because the government was riddled with corruption.

Chatichai left the country about two weeks after the putsch and has spent most of his exile in an upscale neighborhood in London.

On July 26, an anti-graft committee appointed by the military junta to investigate former Chatichai ministers and aides stated that it found that Chatichai and a close adviser may be "unusually rich."

That meant they were suspected of having more money than they could have been expected to legally earn in public office.

On July 29, Chatichai sent a statement to reporters saying he was saddened by the announcement.

"I have always been more

than ready and willing to clarify any issues in doubt, that my assets have been honestly acquired, and more importantly, that they are assets inherited from my family," he stated.

He said his adviser, Pitak Intaravitayanon, earned his money in business.

The Thai newspaper The Nation reported Saturday that the anti-graft panel ruled that Chatichai would have to explain how he acquired 70 million baht (about 2.8 million dollars) in promissory notes, equities and land title deeds.

Neither the panel nor the junta have said what action would be taken against Chatichai if he could not clear himself.

The Nation quoted



Chatichai associates who spoke with him in London that Chatichai had intended to return home for only a few days to join in the celebration of Queen Sirikit's birthday Aug 12. The anti-graft panel's announcement prompted him to return earlier than planned, and "the former prime minister will stay until he has done everything he can to clear himself of the charges," one source was quoted as saying.

So far, most of the former Chatichai officials who have been investigated have been exonerated, and no action has been taken against the few found "unusually rich."

That newspapers said authorities were worried that Chatichai's supporters may take advantage of his return home to stage anti-junta activities.

The junta's public image has plummeted, most recently because of the widely criticized decision to retain in the new constitution a provision giving the junta dictatorial powers until a new elected parliament convenes.

The junta had scrapped the old constitution when it took power.

The generals appointed an interim government of mainly civilian technocrats led by Prime Minister Anand Panyarachun and said it would hold the parliamentary elections by early next year.

Bush helps Gorbachev tighten noose around military

MOSCOW, Aug 3: When President Bush entered the pompously decorous and most prestigious St. George Hall of the Kremlin for the first session with Mikhail Gorbachev, he sported a necktie of dazzlingly surrealistic pattern, as one wily reporter was quick to notice, while Gorbachev was all buttoned up and uptightly formal, reports IAN.

This tiny detail may conceal deep meaning. The US President has grounds for euphoria and demonstrating push apparel. The Soviet plight compels Gorbachev to emphasize moderation. The entire summit was marked by an uncanny blend of reality and surrealism.

While the royal suites of newsmen spared no bold strokes for painting "the new era" in US-Soviet relations, several Soviet analysts cast mildly sceptical glances at the extravaganza of the summit. Thus a renowned expert on disarmament, academician Georgi Arbatov, described the limitations on strategic arms as "inadequate" to the change in the world and US-Soviet relations. Essentially, the two

countries have retained a mighty overkill nuclear potential.

This scepticism reflects on the one hand, the urge for faster and deeper change, and the saddening crunch of the Soviet economy on the other. The market situation is growing increasingly worse. State-run shops can hardly offer any fruits or vegetables.

Concepts aren't good for the empty stomach, though, and the frustrated Soviets think more about food. Thus the observers are meticulously looking for the tangible grains of reason that may take root and bear fruit soon. There are these grains all right.

Moscow has been firmly promised an MFN trading status. George Bush is determined to lift all restrictions of credits that impede trade. A bilateral agreement on capital investments is also in the pipeline. In general terms, the economic relations are coming back to normalcy. This process started at the Malta summit. Finally, the heavy metal-plated doors of the IMF are cracking open before the USSR, not without American assistance. It

has not been decided so far, whether the Soviet membership should be full or associated at this first stage. Anyway, however serious and weighty, this list of breakthroughs opens up vistas, rather than guarantees success.

For the USSR, that has lived in autarky for almost 70 years and was virtually sealed off from the world economy in the cold war, there may be an overbearing wish to look at these agreements as breakthroughs and sheer success. At the G-7 summit in London, Gorbachev managed to start plugging the Soviet economy in to the world network. But there is no leapfrog approach to serious matters. Experience in cooperation with international monetary organizations, India's in particular, can not only be downright positive.

There are grounds to believe that expectations of the boon from the MFN status may be exaggerated. The US has granted this status to more than one hundred countries, and not all of them ascended to the economic paradise right away. Sceptics also note, and not without reason, that with

all privileges possible, the Soviet Union has little to proférer, tradewise. Soviet goodies just don't look worth buying, and they are not. As for trade credits, the heart-rending experience of the Brezhnev period, when credits were pouring on the USSR, shows that they are gobbled up fast with no visible or underlying effect on the economy. In the days of yore, the USSR bought up

Major to visit Beijing next month

LONDON, Aug 3: Britain Prime Minister John Major will travel to Beijing next month to sign an agreement on a new airport for Hong Kong, marking a new era of cooperation with China over the colony officials said on Friday, reports Reuters.

Major set to hold talks with Chinese Prime Minister Li Peng will be the first western leader to visit China since the bloody crackdown on pro-democracy demonstrations in June 1989.

Off the Record

Actress arrested for \$21 shop-lifting

CASSELBERRY (Florida): Austrian-born 1940s film great Heddy Lamarr was arrested Thursday for allegedly shop-lifting \$21 dollars worth of personal care items from a drug-store, authorities said, reports AFP.

Police said Lamarr cooperated with authorities after her arrest Thursday and was driven home in a police cruiser. A hearing was set for August 20 in Seminole county.

The 77-year-old Lamarr was charged in 1966 with stealing \$6 dollars in goods from a Los Angeles department store, but was later acquitted.

Lamarr became a major screen star after a nude appearance in the movie Ecstasy. In 1933, she was touted by many as the most beautiful woman in the world and starred in several MGM features, including the smash hit Sameson and Delilah.

Bush still on the run

WASHINGTON: President Bush on Friday delivered a spirited, campaign-style response to recent Democratic attacks and said only a serious health problem would keep him from seeking re-election next year — "and I don't have one right now", reports AP.

Still, Bush insisted he has not made a formal decision to run for a second term and would not do so until early next year. But he summoned some 30 political advisers to a Saturday meeting at the presidential retreat in Camp David, Md, for what he said would be an informal session to sound out 1992 campaign themes.

"The last thing I want to do is project a sense of arrogance or unconcern about the tough task that lies ahead — if I decide to be a candidate," he told a White House Rose Garden news conference.

"Right now I feel like a million bucks," said the 67-year-old Bush, whose health came into question earlier this year because of a thyroid disorder that requires him to take daily medication. "It wouldn't be fair to the American people to ask to be reelected knowing that you, in your heart of hearts, might feel you couldn't finish the job. But I don't feel that way."

The White House backed that up by announcing that Bush's physician, Dr. Burton Lee, had examined the president Friday morning and found him "in excellent health," with no changes needed in his medication.

Buffaloes' rage

LONDON: Buffaloes charged and badly damaged a family car at a safari park in southern England, a newspaper reported on Saturday, says Reuters.

The Daily Telegraph said Stuart Farquhar, his wife and their two children were watching monkeys at play when a falling branch spooked the Indian water buffaloes, which stampeded.

"There were signs warning about little monkeys climbing on to your car but no mention of charging water buffaloes as big as tanks," Farquhar said. "It was like being hit by an express train we were terrified."

Mujahideen capture 100 Afghan troops

PESHAWAR, Aug 3: The Mujahideen resistance captured more than 100 Afghan troops during the last 24 hours on the road between the eastern city of Jalalabad and the capital Kabul, according to opposition sources in Pakistan late on Friday, reports AFP.

The rebels took 13 government positions between the Darunta Barricade and the Sector of Sarobi, east of Kabul, the Director of the Afghan Information Centre here said.

The fighting left at least 17 Mujahideen dead and 20 wounded, the Director said, adding that the rebels had captured seven tanks and a large quantity of other arms.

The rebels have also blown up an arms depot in Sarobi and destroyed a government military plane.

Government forces mounted air raids during the day, and kept up artillery fire constantly in a bid to counter rebel pressure on their positions, according to travellers arriving in Pakistan.

Elsewhere, 10 decapitated bodies were found in the agricultural area of Ghaziabad, near Samarkhel and southeast of Jalalabad, the Director said.

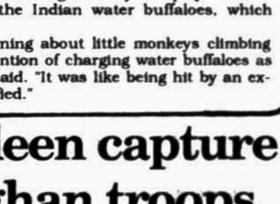
All Mujahideen groups have



Najibullah
vowed to oust Afghan President Najibullah

Moscow asks Israel to stop settlements in occupied areas

MOSCOW, Aug 3: The Soviet Union has asked Israel to stop building settlements in the occupied territories in view of a scheduled peace conference, the official news agency Tass reported Friday, reports AFP.



Moscow asks Israel to stop settlements in occupied areas

BRIEFLY

ANC military aide may give up post:

Chris Hani, a popular leader of the armed wing of the African National Congress, may give up that post to work fulltime for the Communist Party, the ANC said Friday, reports AP from Johannesburg.

The ANC gave no explanation for the surprising move, which came a part of an organizational reshuffle.

In announcing the new organization structure, the ANC also said Cheryl Carolus would head the health, welfare and human resources portfolio. That would put her in charge of social welfare director Winnie Mandela.

Mrs. Mandela, wife of ANC president Nelson Mandela, previously reported to the secretary-general, but under the new structure would work under Carolus, ANC spokeswoman Gill Marcus said.

The ANC statement said the Communist Party had asked that Hani be relieved of all ANC duties to concentrate on Communist Party activities.

Senate approves MIA panel: The US Senate has voted to create its own committee to investigate the fate of servicemen missing in action from the Vietnam and other wars. President Bush said anew there was "no hard evidence of prisoners being alive," reports AP from Washington.

The committee would have 12 members equally divided between the two parties and would go out of existence late next year unless renewed.

"We hope to be able to have the answers by then (next year) although we can't predict that," Sen. Robert Smith, the chief sponsor, said Friday.

Smith said "thousands of people... have written cards and letters and made phone calls" urging creation of the committee. Recent photographs alleged to be American prisoners from the Vietnam conflict, have led to "doubt and mistrust of our government," Smith added.

In the Rules Committee Sen. John Warner, R-Va., said his "main concern was that we not elevate unduly the hopes and aspirations of the families who've waited so many years. To do that would be a disservice."

13 German tourists kidnapped in Turkey:

Thirteen German tourists including three children were kidnapped by Kurdish guerrillas while camping at a lakeside in southeastern Turkey, the semi-official Anatolian news agency said Saturday, reports Reuters from Istanbul.

Three of the tourists managed to escape and alerted Turkish security forces, it said.

The news agency said armed guerrillas of the Marxist Kurdish workers party (PKK) raided the Germans' camping ground at around noon on Friday and took the group at gunpoint towards a mountainous area.

Bid for mutiny in Ivory Coast:

Troops shot and wounded two soldiers trying to mutiny Friday and the Presidential Guard blocked entrances to President Felix Houphouet-Boigny's residence and office, witnesses said, reports AP from Abidjan.

The shootings follow a government report Tuesday that a group of soldiers had plotted to revolt and had been arrested. Armed Forces Commander Gen. Robert Guie described the incident as a "purely military matter" and cautioned that it should not be regarded as an attempted coup.

There has never been a coup in the Ivory Coast. Houphouet-Boigny, a civilian, has ruled since independence from France in 1960.



DALJ, Yugoslavia: Two members of the Croatian National Guard killed by Serbians in clashes, here August 2, lay uncovered in the streets of Dalj in East Croatia as a resident of the Slavonian village looks on. About 50 people were killed in the clashes between Serbians and Croats in that village near the Croatian-Serbian border. —AFP/UNB photo