

## BRIEFLY

## Winter wind lashes Maryland:

Winter winds whipped off the Atlantic Ocean into resort towns in the states of Maryland and Delaware Saturday, lashing buildings and tearing down utility lines, officials said, AFP from Rehoboth Beach reports.

"It's a potentially very dangerous situation. The boardwalks are unsafe right now. There is storm and severe overflow," said Delaware governor Michael Castle. "The Bethany Beach boardwalk is gone."

At Rehoboth Beach, the winter storm damaged the boardwalk and some ocean front buildings. Officials there declared a state of emergency.

Sam Cooper, the mayor of Rehoboth Beach, said sightseers were barred from the town but that residents were allowed in.

In the Snug Harbor sub-division of west ocean city, Maryland resident awakened Saturday to find five feet (1.5 metres) of water surrounding their homes.

## Iraq sends N-experts to Algeria:

Iraq has sent scientific experts and material to Algeria where the two countries are collaborating to produce what they hope will be the first Islamic atomic bomb, the Sunday Times reported here, AFP from London reports.

The Iraqi authorities were able to ship more than 10 tonnes of natural uranium to Algeria last year before the arrival in Baghdad of a United Nations inspection team in May, the newspaper said, quoting sources close to the British government.

Quoting sources close to western intelligence services, it said the material was taken overland by lorry to Jordan and then shipped to Algeria.

Baghdad also sent a team of scientists to work on a nuclear reactor.

The Chinese-designed Algerian reactor is located at Ain Oussera in the Atlas mountains, 150 kilometres (90 miles) south of Algiers, and could start production of material for an atomic bomb next year, the Sunday Times said.

## Kashmiris kill 3 CRPF men:

Muslim militants ambushed a paramilitary patrol in Kashmir, killing an officer and two of his men, as attacks continued in the northern Indian state, reports said Saturday, AFP from Srinagar says.

The ambush of a Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) patrol party took place late Friday in the Bazarulla area of Srinagar, Kashmir's summer capital and urban hub of its bloody secessionist campaign.

Officials said a senior CRPF officer and two of his men were killed in the ambush.

Also late Friday, two Muslim militants were killed and three injured in a clash between to secessionist groups in the town of Anantnag, 50 kilometres (30 miles) south of Srinagar, the officials said.

## Croatia accused of violating truce:

Commanders of Yugoslav federal army forces in the Knin region of Croatia on Saturday accused Croatian forces there of ceasefire violations, and said their forces would abandon their policy of restraint if the violations continued, reports AFP from Belgrade.

Tanjung news agency quoted the army command in Knin, which is in the Dalmatian coastal region of the republic, as saying that Croatian forces had violated the ceasefire by attacking a military airport in Zemunik, near the coastal town of Zadar, and by actions in the Lika region.

However Croatian television said earlier that it was the Serbian-backed federal forces, and not the Croats, who broke the ceasefire in Zadar, firing automatic weapons and shells on the town's outskirts early on Saturday.

The ceasefire came into force at 6:00 p.m. (1700 GMT) on Friday, and with some exceptions such as the clashes in Zadar has generally been reported to be holding.

## Cuban helicopter hijacked:

A helicopter type Mi-8 (registered No.407 of the Cuban national airline CUBANA) was hijacked to the United States Friday, it was officially reported, Xinhua reports from Havana.

The aircraft was bound for the tourist resort of Vardero, about 140 kilometers east of Havana. It was hijacked by Pompa Gonzalez, reserve co-pilot of the aircraft's crew, the report said.

It added that Pompa Gonzalez and two men took control of the plane and landed it near the Vardero airport, where it was boarded by several others people, and then flew to the United States.

The Cuban authorities have requested the U.S. government to repatriate the helicopter and the hijackers.

## Major Sikh parties may boycott polls

NEW DELHI, Jan 5: Four major Sikh political parties are expected to boycott elections which the Indian government wants to hold in the troubled state of Punjab by February 15, the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported Saturday, says AFP.

A formal announcement of the boycott will be made only after the Election Commission notifies the dates of the polls to Punjab's 117-member legislative assembly and its 13 seats in the federal parliament, PTI said.

But the four parties and an influential faction of the All India Sikh Students' Federation whose leaders met Saturday were understood to have decided against fighting the elections, the news agency said.

The meeting was convened by Simranjit Singh Mann, a former police officer who heads the most influential Sikh political party, the Akali Dal (Mann).

The Sikh leaders said they had made a "unanimous" decision on the polls, reserving an announcement until the election commissions notification, and adding Saturday's meeting could pave the way toward Sikh political unity.

"Let the bridge come first and we will announce our decision," the militant-leaning Mann was quoted as saying.

Mann said earlier this week his party would fight the elections only if the United Nations supervises the Punjab polls, postponed from June 22 amid an upsurge of Sikh separatist violence.

He said the party's sole election platform would be the creation of a sovereign Sikh state.

Sikh militants are fighting violently for an independent homeland in Punjab, a rich agricultural state bordering Pakistan.

China to take positive steps to meet international concerns over its human rights record and conventional arms exports, Watanabe, the first member of Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa's new cabinet to visit China, made the plea to Foreign Minister Qian Qichen during a three-hour meeting at the state guest house, according to a Japanese Foreign Ministry official.

"Japan and the world community is interested in the human rights situation in China, he quoted Watanabe as saying.

"Japan hopes that China will make a positive response to these concerns of international



TBILISI, Children with toy guns play war games in the street in Tbilisi covering their faces with masks like many other opposition fighters who for the last two weeks have been trying to overthrow Georgia's President Zviad Gamsakhurdia. — AFP/UNB photo.

## Situation critical, says CIS commander

## Russia, Ukraine fight over military matters

MOSCOW, Jan 5: Tensions between Russia and Ukraine over military matters have burst into the open, with the acting commander-in-chief of the new Commonwealth of Independent States describing the situation as "critical," reports Reuters.

Tass news agency said the commander, Marshal Yevgeny Shaposhnikov, speaking to Russian journalists on Saturday, accused Ukraine of acting hastily in setting up its own armed forces.

Ukraine, second most powerful of the 11 member states, launched its own army on Friday when Defence Ministry staff in Kiev swore an oath of allegiance to the newly-independent state.

Ukrainian Defence Minister Konstantin Morozov said regular soldiers from the former Soviet forces on its territory would start taking the oath after January 12.

Ukraine has announced it is taking over all Soviet armed forces on its territory, including the Black Sea Fleet.

But the head of the Russian parliament, Russian Khasbulatov, said in a television interview that Russia had played the main role in creating the Soviet forces, so the fleets, for example, should be under Russian control.

"Attempts to bring them under certain flags, attempts to make them swear an oath to individual states... as head of the Russian parliament, I see these as totally illegitimate," he said.

"All our servicemen will be under our protection under the protection of the Russian state,"

Russia has rejected Ukraine's claim to the Black Sea Fleet, said by the Daily Izvestia to total about 300 vessels, and says it has a right to at least part of it.

The 11 commonwealth

leaders failed to agree last Monday on keeping the former Soviet armed forces together. Ukraine, Moldova and Azerbaijan opted to form their own separate armed forces, while Russia and other states chose a United force.

But Interfax news agency said only four of the other states—Kazakhstan, Armenia, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan—were planning to join a unified force.

The other three—Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Belarus—were considering creating their own military, it said.

No serious disagreement has emerged over nuclear weapons, now under the guardianship of Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

Ukraine, which has proclaimed a nuclear-free policy, has started sending its short-range tactical nuclear weapons to Russia for dismantling.

## Rao govt can no longer count on our tolerance : CPI (M)

NEW DELHI, Jan 5: India's most powerful communist party has served notice that the minority government of Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao can no longer count on its tolerance, newspapers reported today, says AFP.

The Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M), holding its 14th congress in the southern city of Madras, decided Saturday that its assumption that Indians were unprepared for another election in the near future was no longer valid.

The pioneer and other newspapers said the CPI (M), decide to delete a paragraph from a draft political resolution which read: "The people, after two quick successive elections, are not prepared to face another election."

The amendment was approved by the party's central committee and expected to be endorsed by the Madras congress.

It was seen as a significant change in the party's political line and as an indication that the CPI (M) was no longer willing to use the people's presumed abhorrence of elections as a pretext to tacitly prop up Rao's government.

In July, the CPI-M and its centrist allies walked out of parliament and helped Rao's Congress (I) Party government win a legislative confidence vote they did not oppose.

They justified the move on the ground that the nation, having made two trips to the hustings in less than two years, was not ready for another on

the heels of the May-June elections which produced Rao's minority government.

The change in the CPI-M's stand indicated it would no longer hesitate to vote against the government in parliament, creating the theoretical possibility of the Congress (I)'s ouster, newspaper said.

The Hindustan Times said other left parties and the centrist too may take up the line and think in terms of voting out the Congress (I), whose legislative strength falls short of the combined opposition.

The main opposition party is however the Hindu-Revivalist Bahratya Janata Party, a bitter opponent of the leftists.

On Friday, the CPI-M lashed out at the government's "anti-people" economic policies,

## Baltic Council discusses Soviet collapse

MOSCOW, Jan 5: The Baltic Council, grouping leaders of the former Soviet Baltic Republics met today to discuss the collapse of the Soviet Union and regional security, Tass News Agency said, reports AFP.

Attending the day-long meeting in the Latvian town of Jurmala were the president of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, respectively Arnold Ruutel, Anatoly Gorbunovs and Vytautas Landsbergis.

The Baltic News Service said they were discussing the "new reality created in the east" with the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

## Israeli deportation illegal : EC

BRUSSELS, Jan 5: The European Community on Saturday condemned as "illegal" the decision by Israel to deport 12 Palestinians from the occupied territories following the murder of a Jewish settler in the Gaza strip, reports AFP.

In a statement issued here, the EC expressed "grave concern" over the decision announced Thursday which it described as "illegal with regard to international law, in particular the Fourth Geneva Convention."

The EC and its 12 member states "strongly reiterate their demand for Israel to fully meet with its obligations towards

the residents of the occupied territories and to abide by the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention," the statement said.

They said they condemned violence "from whatever quarters it may come" and called upon the parties concerned "to refrain from taking any measure which would risk jeopardizing the peace process."

The Israeli deportation orders have cast uncertainty over the third round of bilateral peace talks scheduled for Washington on Tuesday between Israel and Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and a Palestinian delegation.

## Arafat, Mubarak talk faltering peace process

CAIRO, Jan 5: President Hosni Mubarak met Sunday with PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat to discuss the faltering Mideast peace process after Israel's decision to expel 12 Palestinians from the occupied territories, reports UNB.

The meeting took place as the Palestine Liberation Organisation was reportedly trying to decide whether to propose that the Palestinians boycott talks with Israel.

Such a boycott would be one of the most serious obstacles to confront the latest round of Mideast peace efforts, begun last year by US Secretary of State James A Baker III.

At the PLO's request, Palestinian negotiators on Saturday protested the Israeli expulsions by postponing their departure for Washington, where they were to resume talks with the Israelis on Tuesday.

Jordanian, Syrian and Lebanese delegates joined the Palestinians in delaying their departures.

## I'm being spoiled, says Teresa

LA JOLLA, California, Jan 5: Mother Teresa, determined to beat the heart and lung ailments that continue to threaten her life, has told her doctors she must get well in order to carry on the life's work of helping the poor, reports Reuters.

Doctors lauded her fighting spirit as the 81-year-old missionary, who was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1979, entered her ninth day in a hospital intensive care unit here on Saturday.

They noted an improvement in her condition but cautioned: "she is not out of the woods yet."

"So many prayers, so many doctors, so much attention. I am being spoiled," she told one of her cardiologists, doctor Patricia Auband.

Mother Teresa, suffering from ischaemic heart disease and bacterial pneumonia, said she was appreciative of efforts being made on her behalf, both inside and outside the hospital.

An irregular heartbeat that she developed on Friday was being controlled by drugs on Saturday, but it was not a life threatening condition, Auband said.

## Snowstorms claim 12 in Jordan

AMMAN, Jan 5: Snowstorms and freezing weather whipping through Jordan since Wednesday have caused 1,225 accidents in which 12 people have been killed and 614 injured, according to a new toll by the Civil Defence authorities, reports AFP.

An initial figure put the dead at five and injured at 142.

The Civil Defence statement said 27 people had been rescued by helicopter after being stranded by snow in the south of the country the hardest hit region where more than two meters of snow have fallen.

Most of the south still had no power on Sunday, the press said.

## China sets up ties with Ukraine, Kazakhstan

HONG KONG, Jan 5: China has established diplomatic relations with Ukraine and Kazakhstan, the state-run Xinhua news agency reported Saturday, reports AFP.

In a dispatch from the Kazakhstan capital Alma-Ata, Xinhua said the two countries — which share a common border in central Asia — agreed to set up relations at ambassadorial level as of last Friday.

From Kiev, Xinhua said China and Ukraine were establishing ties at a similar level from Saturday.

## 8 held as students, farmers protest Bush's visit to Seoul

SEOUL, Jan 5: Police arrested eight student demonstrators who tried to deliver a letter to the US embassy here today to protest President George Bush's visit, witnesses said, reports AFP.

The police immediately whisked away the eight students when they turned up outside the embassy, where some 500 police in full riot gear were deployed in anticipation of demonstrations by farmers and dissidents.

The letter, copies of which were scattered on the scene, said Bush's visit was aimed at prolonging "US imperialist rule" over South Korea.

The national Yonhap news agency said some 80 farmers joined by 20 students staged a street protest in the southwestern town of Inshil, driving eight farming vehicles loaded with sacks of locally produced rice.

"Bush go home," the protesters chanted as they marched two kilometres (1.5 mile) toward the township government office. They also shouted, "oppose imports of US rice" Yonhap said.

Some 30 dissident leaders earlier marched through the streets toward the US consulate in Pusan, the Pusan Daily said.

Late Saturday, police detained some 25 farmers and dissidents who turned up outside the US embassy to protest the visit and US pressure for

Seoul to open its rice market. Local press reports said some 8,000 police were mobilized to prevent any interruptions during Bush's visit. Bush arrived here in the mid-afternoon for a nearly two-day visit on the third leg of his Asian tour.

Police were ordered to turn back farmers trying to coverage on Seoul for a planned demonstration outside the national assembly, where Bush was to deliver a speech Monday, newspapers said.

## Bush won't address ROK parliament today

SEOUL, Jan 5: US President George Bush will not be addressing a full session of the South Korean National Assembly on Monday because of a procedural row between the ruling party and the opposition, reports AFP.

Opposition deputies threatened to boycott the session after president Roh Tae-Woo's ruling Democratic Liberal Party rejected their call for a special extended parliamentary session to hear Bush's address.

The DLP wanted the special session to be spread over only five days but the opposition wanted a 10-day gathering.

## Off the Record

## From Hitler diary faker to telephone card maker

BONN: Konrad Kujau, who was convicted of faking the Hitler diaries, has been commissioned to design telephone cards for the Post and Telecommunications Ministry, Bild Newspaper reported Saturday, says AFP.

Kujau is to be paid about 1,000 dollar to design five series of six cards each, copying works by Rembrandt, Miro, Duerer, as well as using Kujau's own original ideas.

The first 200 telephone cards will be signed by Kujau and are to go on sale this summer, Bild said.

Kujau was sentenced to four years and six months in prison after the publication in 1983 of the faked Hitler diaries in Stern Magazine.



ATLANTA, Miss South Africa Diana Tilden-Davis competes in the swim suit portion of the Miss World contest December 28. Tilden-Davis, 22, finished 2nd runner-up to winner Ninibeth Beatriz Leal Jimenez of Venezuela. — Photo AFP/UNB

## 'Lost and found' goes round 78 years

SMITH CENTER, Kan: A little girl's lost ball was returned as a Christmas present after 78 years, reports AP.

"When I opened the package — my cysight isn't very good — and I said 'oh, what is this?' said 86-year-old Mildred Lambert. "But then, I saw what it was, and I had to shed some tears."

Mildred was just 8 when her mother died and an aunt and uncle took her in. The couple was building an addition to their house, but before the two parts were connected, a space gaped in the floor between old and new.

One day, Mildred was playing with the red, blue and yellow baseball-sized toy when it bounced, irretrievable, into the crack.

"It's very vivid in my mind, even now," she said, recalling that day in 1913. "Playthings were so scarce at that time."

## Spirit speaks via mass medium

LONDON: Britain's biggest-selling tabloid is offering readers the chance to talk to the late Robert Maxwell, courtesy of a psychic, reports AP.

The Sun, owned by Rupert Murdoch and the rival of Maxwell's flagship tabloid, The Daily Mirror, told readers Friday: "You too can quiz Cap's Bob beyond the grave."

Maxwell died mysteriously at sea on Nov 5. In what the paper dubbed Maxwell's first and exclusive interview from beyond the grave, it quoted psychic Nella Jones as saying she talked to Maxwell over the course of two days.

Jones said that when she asked whether he committed suicide, Maxwell replied, "I am not a coward. Try again." He also said he did not fall overboard, and did not jump, Jones reported.

The story was accompanied by a photograph of Maxwell's head and shoulders, surrounded by an aura.

## Soviet collapse affects little, says Li Peng

BEIJING, Jan 5: Chinese Prime Minister Li Peng said on Saturday the Soviet Union's breakup had little effect on neighbouring China, and served to strengthen its resolve to remain socialist, reports Reuters.

He made the remarks to visiting Japanese Foreign Minister Michio Watanabe, the official New China News Agency said.

The disintegration of the Soviet Union has had little impact on China, on the contrary, it made the Chinese people more confident of building socialism with Chinese characteristics, Li was quoted as saying to Watanabe.

Watanabe earlier called on

China to take positive steps to meet international concerns over its human rights record and conventional arms exports.

Watanabe, the first member of Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa's new cabinet to visit China, made the plea to Foreign Minister Qian Qichen during a three-hour meeting at the state guest house, according to a Japanese Foreign Ministry official.

"Japan and the world community is interested in the human rights situation in China, he quoted Watanabe as saying.

"Japan hopes that China will make a positive response to these concerns of international

society on human rights, Watanabe was quoted as saying, Qian said China had its own human rights agenda.

He told Watanabe, according to the Japanese official, that China is taking positive steps in accordance with its stage of development but stressed the importance of the right to survival.

China's customary response to international criticism of its human rights record is that it is a poor nation where the right to survival is the primary human right.

Japan also asked China to conform with UN guidelines on conventional arms transfers, the Japanese officials said.

Japan hopes China will observe the guidelines of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council on conventional arms transfers, Watanabe was quoted as saying.

He expressed hope that China will soon participate in the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), a set of principles on arms transfers, but the Japanese official had no details on China's response.

Qian pressed Watanabe on a fresh energy development loan to China, requesting approximately 700 billion yen (\$64 billion US dollars) for 15 projects, the officials said.

Japan will make a response to the Chinese request fairly soon, he quoted Watanabe as

saying. China is keen that Japanese Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko pay a visit later in 1992, which marks the 20th year since the two countries normalised relations.

But Watanabe was non-committal, having this in mind, the Japanese government is seriously considering the possibility of the visit, the official quoted him as telling Qian.

It would be the first visit by a Japanese monarch to China, where unhappy memories linger of Japan's occupation of vast stretches of Chinese territory during the 1930s and 40s.

During the foreign ministers' talks, Japan invited

Chinese Communist Party Secretary Jiang Zemin to visit within the next six months, the Japanese official said.

It will be the first visit to a major industrialised nation by a Chinese Communist Party boss since Beijing ordered troops to crush pro-democracy demonstrators in June, 1989.

Jiang told Watanabe that Beijing anticipated improvement in ties with the United States, the officials news agency later reported.

Jiang said that common interests still exist between China and the US despite the fact that there is stagnation in bilateral relations, it said.

Jiang did not elaborate on his reasons for optimism.