

# BRIEFLY

**Violence claims 7 in S. Africa:** seven people were killed and 12 injured Wednesday in fierce fighting between rival black groups in a remote area of Natal province, police said Wednesday. AFP reports from S. Africa.

The violence flared when two strong groups clashed at Mahlekwane mountain in the Natal midlands early Wednesday, police here said.

Riot police were rushed to the scene to quell the violence. A number of shots were fired at police, although no officers were injured.

The ongoing war in Natal between rival tribal factions and political organisations has claimed over 1,000 lives in the past year alone, with thousands more killed since the explosion of violence in 1984.

**12 more executed in China:** Twelve men convicted of gang rape and robbery were executed here Wednesday, the Beijing evening news reported, AFP says from Beijing.

The 12, who prosecutors said belonged to the same gang, were handed death sentences by the Beijing People's Intermediate Court shortly before they were executed, the newspaper said.

The men were accused of armed robbery and of gang-raping some of their victims, it said, without giving their ages or occupations.

Thousands of common-law criminals are condemned to death every year in China and are generally executed immediately after sentencing with a bullet in the back of the neck.

**Four republics get UN membership:** The Security Council on Wednesday recommended to the General Assembly that it grant UN membership to the former Soviet republics of Armenia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. AP reports from United Nations.

When the 166-member General Assembly reconvenes in February, it must vote to accept the republics by a two-thirds majority.

There is no opposition to the membership of any of the republics, so their acceptance is assured.

Moldova and Kazakhstan have also applied to the Security Council for UN membership.

Last September, the Baltic republics of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia joined the United Nations.

Ukraine and Belarus, formerly known as Byelorussia, were already General Assembly members under a special agreement between the United States and Soviet Union when the UN Charter was drafted in 1945.

Russia has taken over the permanent Security Council seat held by the Soviet Union.

Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkmenistan are the only former Soviet republics which have not yet applied for UN membership.

**Tass formally changes name:** The state-run news agency Tass on Thursday will formally change its name to the Information Telegraph Agency of Russia under a reorganization order by President Boris N. Yeltsin, the agency said Wednesday. AP reports from Moscow.

Vladimir Baidashin, editor-in-chief of the agency's world service department, said in an announcement that Tass would be called "ITAR-Tass" on International and Russia dispatches starting at midnight (0900 GMT) Wednesday.

Reports coming from other states of the Commonwealth of Independent States will carry logos designating the source of the information from local agencies, such as Ukraine's "Ukrinform-Tass" and Kazakhstan's "Kaztag-Tass," Baidashin wrote.

Officials said the reorganization was proposed because the Russian government could no longer afford to maintain its Russian Information Agency along with Tass, which it inherited from the collapsed Soviet government.

Yeltsin signed the order on January 22, the news agency said.

**Azeri troops shell main city:** Azeri forces shelled the main city in the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh on Wednesday, killing two people and damaging several buildings, the Tass news agency said citing Nagorno-Karabakh officials, AP reports from Moscow.

Azerbaijan and Armenia are battling over the mostly Armenian territory that lies within Azerbaijan.

The deaths came a day after Armenians shot down a civilian helicopter and killed up to 40 passengers.

Police in Nagorno-Karabakh claimed the helicopter was carrying home-made weapons for Azeri fighters, the Interfax news agency said. Armenian radio said it also was carrying soldiers.

Azerbaijan has said the aircraft was carrying only civilians and accused Armenia of conducting "state terrorism" by shooting it down.

**Baker keeps Syria on terrorism list:** Despite improved US relations with Syria, Secretary of State James A. Baker won't remove it from the list of countries alleged to engage in state-sponsored terrorism, US officials say, reports AP from Washington.

At the conclusion of the State Department's annual review, Baker has decided that there was no justification for removing Syria or any of the other five countries from the list, the officials said Wednesday.

The other nations Iran, Iraq, Libya, Cuba and North Korea.

## Rights of Algerians ignored: Rafsanjani

TEHRAN, Jan 30: Islamic movements can confirm to "international regulations" and need not defy international law, Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani declared here Wednesday, reports AFP.

Rafsanjani was speaking at the inaugural session of the ninth Islamic Thought Conference.

"The Islamic movement does not need to rebel against the international order. We can work within the limits of international regulations," the President said in statements carried by the official IRNA news agency.

"The time is ripe for Islamic movements since imperialism is entrapped in contradictions and we must take advantage of it," he added.

IRNA reported that Rafsanjani also pledged that

Iran would "put its experience at the disposal of any liberation movement" as the Islamic revolution was not confined to Tehran.

He also charged that the rights of the Algerian people had been ignored and that the deployment of the army there had brought no improvement.

Iranian authorities and commentators sharply criticized a decision by Algerian authorities to cancel a second round of legislative elections this month that Muslim fundamentalists were widely expected to win.

## Yeltsin urged to withdraw troops from Baltic states

MOSCOW, Jan 30: Parliamentarians from the three Baltic states called on Russian President Boris Yeltsin on Sunday to withdraw all former Soviet troops from their territory as soon as possible, reports Reuters.

# Security Council holds one-day summit on disarmament today

NEW YORK, Jan 30: Leaders of the 15 member states of the UN Security Council will meet Friday for a historic first summit to discuss global disarmament and the council's future role in international peacekeeping, reports AP.

The summit meeting, called by Britain as rotating council President, will bring together leaders of the powerful per-

manent members — US President George Bush, Chinese prime minister Li Peng, Russian President Boris Yeltsin, French President Francois Mitterrand and Prime Minister John Major of Britain.

The leaders will attend a one-day special session on the Security Council, also attended by the heads of state or government of Austria, Belgium, Cape Verde, Ecuador, India,

Japan, Morocco, Venezuela, Zimbabwe and Hungary will be represented by their respective foreign ministers.

A final resolution providing a set of directives for the council is expected to be passed at the session's end.

The leaders will discuss the basic role of the Security Council in maintaining and defending international peace and security, the ability of the

council to work toward those ends within the limits established by the UN charter and the link between disarmament and global stability, UN officials said.

But analysts said the meeting was mostly symbolic and that little of any substance would be accomplished as several leaders plan to bring along individual agendas.

Japanese Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa will likely call for a permanent seat on the council for his country in view of its financial contribution to the United Nations — second only to that of the United States.

Yeltsin could well confirm his plans for drastic arms cuts and push for an international ban on chemical weapons, while Li may signal his country's determination to move toward increased democratic reform.

But despite the possibly cluttered agenda the summit will provide a rare opportunity for bilateral sessions. Bush has already scheduled 11 of these meetings, including sessions with Yeltsin and Li.

The summit will also allow Yeltsin to enhance his stature in the international community, which should boost his position among leaders of the former Soviet republics, grouped under the newly formed Commonwealth of Independent States.

For the Chinese leader, the meeting also provides a chance to spruce up his international image, tarnished by the June 1989 crackdown on pro-democracy activists on Beijing's Tiananmen Square.

Others such as Bush, Mitterrand and Major face elections in their countries this year and may well use the summit to shore up popularity at home.



WASHINGTON: President Bush waves as he walks down the Capitol steps. Bush met with House and Senate Republicans about his proposed fiscal 1993 budget. — AFP/UNB photo

## Myanmar Junta teaching patriotism to teachers

BANGKOK, Jan 30: Myanmar's military junta has ordered university and college teachers to take courses in enforcing discipline after renewed student protests last year, reports Reuters.

State radio broadcast his speech in Paungyi, a town north of Yangon, and a transcript was seen in Bangkok on Wednesday.

Khin Nyunt said the courses were for university and college, teacher throughout the country to teach them patriotism, support for the junta's policies and how to maintain good behaviour among students.

The course will stress management, man-control, discipline, leadership, morale, he said.

Students at Yangon University demonstrated for two days in early December calling for democracy and the release of Nobel Peace Prize-winner Aung San Suu Kyt.

The junta responded by

take preemptive action, military intelligence chief Major General Khin Nyunt said as he inaugurated the new courses on Monday.

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closing down colleges and universities throughout the country. They had reopened only seven months earlier following a closure of nearly three years because of a student-led pro-democracy uprising in 1988.

Khin Nyunt said the latest demonstrations were instigated by leftist and rightist politicians backed by imperialists abroad.

The courses would remind teachers of the oppression and servitude under imperialism and why the junta took power.

The military crushed the 1988 protests killing thousands it has since ignored international calls to cede power to Aung San Suu Kyt's national League for Democracy, which won the May 1990 general election by a landslide.

Khin Nyunt said the junta would never negotiate with the imperialists and their lackeys and minions and will never submit to them.

## Blast kills one in Delhi

NEW DELHI, Jan 30: One person was killed and 26 were injured, including five seriously, when a bomb exploded in a crowded bus in the old part of Delhi on Wednesday, the Press Trust of India (PTI) news agency reported, reports Reuters.

The bomb, with a timing device attached, was possibly planted by two young Sikh men who were seen boarding the bus and hurriedly getting off a few minutes later just before the explosion, PTI quoted Police Commissioner R S Sahay as saying.

## George Habash suffers stroke

NICOSIA, Jan 30: George Habash, the radical Palestinian leader whose followers blew up planes and carried out dramatic terrorist attacks, was flown to Paris Wednesday after suffering a stroke, senior Palestinian officials said, reports AP.

Habash, 67, felt strong pains in his head and collapsed to the floor in his home in Tunis late Monday afternoon, the officials said on condition of anonymity. He was rushed to Al-Tawfic Hospital in Tunis, where doctors said he had suffered a stroke.

Habash, a physician turned guerrilla leader who was born in Ramle, now part of Israel, gained notoriety in the early 1970s by masterminding the first hijacking of airliners to dramatize the Palestinian cause.

Habash, a Christian Palestinian refugee of the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, heads the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the second-largest guerrilla group in the Palestine Liberation Organization.

The officials said PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat chartered a French ambulance plane that flew from France to Tunis to carry Habash to Paris.

## China to free 9 more dissidents

HONG KONG, Jan 30: China will release another nine dissidents before next week's Chinese New Year, the South China Morning Post reported here today, citing diplomatic sources, says AFP.

The newspaper said the dissidents, names were being kept secret, but that the release was intended to coincide with Chinese Prime Minister Li Peng's meeting at the United Nations with US President George Bush.

The Post, however, quoted one diplomatic source as saying it was unlikely that Wang Dan, the most prominent student leader, would be among those freed, despite earlier reports saying he would be allowed to return home before the Chinese holiday.



KARACHI: Ms Ayesha Rabi Naveed, Pakistan's first female jet pilot sits at the controls of a PIA Boeing 737 prior to take-off on her first flight. Ms Naveed joined PIA in 89 after completing training and flew her first flight in F-27 in July '90. — AFP/UNB photo

## 10 former Soviet republics join CSCE

PRAGUE, Jan 30: Ten former Soviet republics were admitted today to the conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), reports AFP.

Slovenia and Croatia, which quit the Yugoslav Federation last June, were given observer status after the Yugoslav representative vetoed their membership request.

Admission of the members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the successor of the Soviet Union, brought the rollcall of the CSCE, the only Pan-European forum, to 48 countries.

# Probe body blames Lankan troops for killing 67 Tamils

COLOMBO, Jan 30: A presidential inquiry commission accused soldiers of killing 67 Tamils in eastern Sri Lanka last year but said they were provoked by the deaths of two comrades, the government said Thursday, reports AP.

It was the first time the government blamed the military for killing civilians since the troops began fighting Tamil separatists in the northern and eastern provinces eight years ago.

The June 12, 1991 shooting in Kokkadicholai in Batticaloa district strengthened

endured persistent accusations by human rights groups that Sinhalese troops have massacred thousands of Tamil civilians while trying to crush the Tamil uprising.

President Ranasinghe Premadasa said in a statement Thursday that a three-member inquiry commission submitted an interim report on the incident.

The statement, released at the weekly Cabinet meeting, said army soldiers stationed in Kokkadicholai were responsible for the deaths of the civilians.

The commission did not identify the soldiers responsible, military sources speaking on condition of anonymity, said one lieutenant and from soldiers were in military custody.

Army spokesman Col. Sprath Munasinghe said a summary of evidence will be recorded and "a court martial will follow".

The interim report must be presented in Parliament before it is made public.

According to extracts obtained by The Associated Press, the report said the massacre was a "deliberate retaliatory action by some members of the armed forces as a result of the death of their colleagues" in a rebel land mine blast.

## South Korea sets up ties with Uzbekistan

SEOUL, Jan 30: South Korea has established diplomatic relations with Uzbekistan, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said today, reports Reuters.

He said a protocol was signed in Moscow on Wednesday by South Korea's Ambassador to Russia, Gong Ro-Myung, and an official from Uzbekistan.

South Korea has recognised the Commonwealth of Independent States formed after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

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# Off the Record

**Six-year old doc**

SYDNEY: Just call me "Doc" says six-year-old Kenneth Clark after helping deliver his baby sister on a remote Australian sheep farm, reports Reuters.

With his father away at a wedding, Kenneth had no choice but to stand by his mother and catch baby sister Sarah when she arrived three days early on Australia day, January 26.

Kenneth who now calls himself "Doc", said the birth was "very exciting, but a bit messy."

"When the baby was going to be born, mum told me I had to catch it," Kenneth told reporters from his dabblo property in western New South Wales on Wednesday.

"It's head came out, then it just slipped out and I gave it to mum and she wrapped it in a towel," he said.

But the drama wasn't over.

As his mother Raynor wrapped her new daughter in a blanket the ambulance rang — they could not find the property.

"You can't see the house from the road so Kenneth told them what the gate looked like and what colour letterbox he had," his grandmother Diana Jones told Reuters.

"We're very proud of him".

## Aquino resists temptation to buy shoes

SINGAPORE: Philippines President Corason Aquino tried out three pairs of shoes in a Singapore store on Wednesday. But unlike her rival and world-famous shopper Imelda Marcos, she resisted the temptation to buy, says Reuters.

Accompanied by her daughter Aurora Pinkie, Aquino tried on the shoes but settled instead for a grey crystal necklace at 120 Singapore dollars (74 US) and some chocolate bars.

While Aquino took time of from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Summit, former first lady Marcos — notorious for her 1,200 pairs of shoes — was being arrested in Manila on charges she illegally had three Swiss Bank accounts.



## Winds delay round the world venture

AKRON, Ohio: The Earthwinds helium balloon is all blown up with nowhere to go, its crew's quest for the first non-stop, round-the-world flight put on hold by unfavorable winds, reports AP.

Earthwinds was inflated Tuesday. The three-member crew had hoped to set out this weekend, but winds blowing at the wrong angle are forecast for the next five days, said crew chief Larry Newman.

The journey is expected to take 12 to 22 days. The crew also plans to carry out experiments on wind, fluorocarbons and the ozone layer.

Earthwinds' crew will ride in a cabin suspended between a 55-meter, jellybean-shaped balloon filled with helium and a 30-meter round balloon filled with compressed air. The air ball will serve as ballast.

The excursion's sponsors include the U.S.-based cable sports channel ESPN, Hilton Hotels and Virgin Atlantic Airways.

## Adidas boss sued for calling Le Pen 'bastard'

PARIS: Right-wing extremist Jean-Marie Le Pen sued flamboyant French tycoon Bernard Tapie on Wednesday for calling him a "bastard", reports AP.

The outspoken Le Pen, target of several defamation suits himself, accused Tapie, who owns the Adidas athletic-wear company, of political bungling.

Tapie is running a maverick Socialist Party campaign for the presidency of the Provence-Alpes-Cote d'Azur assembly in regional March elections.

Southeastern France, with its dying industries and heavy population of North Africans, is a stronghold of Le Pen's National Front, which advocates expelling immigrants from France.

Launching his campaign Tuesday in Marseille, Tapie challenged Le Pen and his backers, saying: "If Le Pen is a bastard, the people who vote for him are bastards."

"Le Pen told a news conference Wednesday he filed suit on his own and his party's behalf. He did not say what damages he expects, but they are usually a symbolic fine of one franc in cases involving politicians."

Le Pen has been the target of several defamation suits for his remarks against Jews, notably calling the Holocaust a "detail of history."

# US sees no chance of democracy in Cuba

WASHINGTON, Jan 30: Many international adversaries seem to be resolving old differences, but antagonism between Cuba and the United States shows no sign of changing anytime soon, reports Reuters.

US officials and analysts say Havana's decision to execute a Cuban exile from Miami and a new wave of Communist government repression on the island suggest President Fidel Castro is as committed as ever to his totalitarian ways.

Said a senior US official: "The best formula for peaceful change in Cuba, and the best means of improving US rela-

tions with Cuba, is for Cuba to carry out free and fair democratic elections under international supervision, just as Nicaragua has done."

But what are the chances? "I don't frankly see any signs that the Cuban government intends to do that," the official said. "They've actually been cracking down quite viciously on human rights leaders."

US-Cuban relations plummeted after Castro seized power in 1959. Two years later Washington broke diplomatic ties and the installation of Soviet missiles on the island in 1962 caused a confrontation only defused when Moscow

withdrew.

A chasm of ideology still divides the two countries separated by a mere 90 miles of ocean, illustrated by a recent and rare conversation between Cuban Foreign Minister Isidoro Malmerca and US Secretary of State James Baker.

In Mexico City for the January 16 signing of peace accords ending El Salvador's civil war Malmerca and Baker discussed elections briefly when former Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega raised the subject of Cuba at lunch.

Baker told reporters: "I simply made the point that the United States would support

and fair elections in Cuba, that we did not represent a threat to Cuba."

In response Malmerca said Cuba had elections, even if a little different than those in the United States.

"He said that the elections in the United States were not much to brag about since the majority of our people didn't vote," baker related. "I said the difference is that in the United States everyone is free to vote if they want to and nobody is forced to vote against their will."

At a recent conference in Havana, US, Soviet and Cuban historians discussed the Cuban

missile crisis, and reports emerged to suggest Castro had ended support for leftist revolutionary movements around the world, which by US count once saw Cuban troops in at least 17 countries.

US officials say they are not impressed by the turnaround. They say it is expedient and not a basic change in political philosophy, since the signing of the Salvadoran peace accords meant there were no major insurgencies left.

"He (Castro) doesn't have any money, he doesn't have Soviet support," noted one US official.