JOHANNESBURG, Apr 9 More than two million people in drought-stricken South Africa need emergency food aid and some children are already dying of hunger, a relief agency said Wednesday, reports Reuter.

Mpho Mashinini, Deputy Director of Operation Hunger said the agency was feeding about two million people now but was receiving up to 5,000 new applications a week for

June we expect to be feeding 2.25 million," he told a news conference.

> Somalia renews crisis call

AP from Natrobt says: Somalia's interim president again has appealed for massive food aid for his nations' starving people, saying the air and sea ports in the devastated capital could now be used.

Alt Mahdt Mohamed made the appeal during a meeting with officials from the UN World Food Programme and the humanitarian agency CARE, a pro-Ali Mahdi radio broadcast reported Tuesday The broadcast was monitored in Natrobi.

> 400000 in Kenya face starvation

Xinhua adds: More than 400,000 refugees camped in Kenya will face starvation unless they receive an aid of 1.5 billion Kenyan shilling (about 50 million US dollar) from the international community, said a UN official.

Dr Stivester Awuye, Representative of the Unite Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to Kenya, told a gathering here on Tuesday that with the increasing number of refugees coming to Kenya from Somalia and Ethiopia, the situation in refugee camps in Kenya had been deteriorating.

> Talks open to solve problem

AP from Addis Ababa reports: Four heads of government from the Horn of Africa opened a two-day meeting Wednesday to discuss the plight of an estimated 23 million refugees, displaced people and drought victims in the re-The refugees and displaced

are the victims of civil wars and ethnic violence that have plagued the region for decades. Observers saw little hope the summit would bring an end to their suffering.

Bonn blasts EC plan to restrict banana import

BONN, Apr 9: Germany reacted angrily Wednesday to European Community (EC) proposals to set restrictive quotas on imports of Latin American bananas and also hit them with a 20 per cent tariff, reports AFP.

We reject this ... it is a blow to consumers and the developing countries alike," a spokesman for the Minister of Agriculture and Food said in Bonn. "It will make bananas far more expensive and hurt the revenues of producers." Germany, he warned, will

fight in the council of ministers, which will decide on the proposals agree Tuesday by the European Commission, the EC

Last year Germans ate 1.3 milifon tonnes of bananas, about a third of EC consumption and 10 per cent of the world banana trade.

Almost all the fruit is imported duty-free into Germany from Central America Colombia and Ecuador, marketed by big US multinationals that supply 60 per cent.

American importers protect their traditional suppliers: former British and French colonies in the Caribbean and Africa, plus Spain's Canary islands and Portugal's Madeira.

NEW DELHI, Apr 9: India has approved eight of 15 prorected economy which, for 40 posals for some 7.7 billion dolyears since independence, relar of private investment in the garded foreign companies as

years, a senior official said. Commerce Minister P S Rajagopal, senior civil Chidambaram, one of the arservant in the Power Ministry. chitects of reforms under told Reuter in an interview which foreign investment is that foreign companies from eagerly wooed instead of disfour countries would particicouraged, has said the power pate in the plans to meet sector was a high priority in India's energy deficit. the search for private invest-Other officials said the

likely to be approved soon. past month that nearly eight Rajagopal said the 15 probillion dollar of investment posals, if all carried out, would was about to be approved, but be 'generating 8.162.5 had consistently refused to megawatts in five years time." give details. India announced last year it

power sector over the next five

seven remaining projects were

Indian consumers are ac would open up the power seccustomed to power cuts, especially in the dry season. tor to private companies as

Rajagopal said that in off-peak periods. India was about nine per cent short of electrical demand and in peak periods 19 per cent.

"Availability of power is essential for economic development, more so if we wish to invite foreign participation." Rajagopal said.

According to a list of the 15 projects, two American firms, Southern Electric International Inc and North Eastern Services Inc have signed Memoranda Of Understandings (MOUs) for power plants in the eastern state of Orissa.

Sweden's Asea Brown Boveri, with an Indian company, signed an MOU in February for a gas-based plant, but no location was given.

Stemens of Germany will be involved in a lignite-based plant in the southern state of Tamti Nadu

One of the projects awaiting approval was a lignite-based project in the northern state of Raisthan proposed by an Australian consortium. Coleman and Associates, the

Rajagopal also said that in addition to the 15 proposals. British Gas was considering a proposal for setting up a 8000 megawatt gas project near Delhi, as well as another 800 plant megawatt Maharashtra.

Mission Energy a California based company, had

shown interest in a 1,000 megawatt thermal power plant in the southern state of Andhra Pradesh. Possibly in partnership with an Indian firm, he

General electric of the United States was considering a 400 megawatt gas -based unit in Andhra Pradesh, he added.

> \$2.8b jewellery. gems exported

Xinhua reports:India ex ported gems and jewellery worth 71.82 billion rupee (2.8 billion US dollar) during the last financial year ending March 31, 1992 against an export target of 70 billion rupee set by the Commerce Ministry

The total exports during 1990 91 were to the tune of

53.1 billion rupees (2 billion US dollar).

According to Indian sources, the maximum share of these exports during 1991-92 was diamonds (6).6 billion rupeel which recorded a 30 per cent increase while gold ornaments accounted for 7.2 btilion rupee - 100 per cent increase over the previous financial year

Gems and jewellery sector has emerged as the single largest export sector in India accounting for over 20 per cent of the country's exports.

However, trade circles felt that India's gem and gold jewellery exports this year would be hit by recession in the world market, especially in the United States.

Lumpur stock exchange com-

postte index shed 12.85 points

Equities closed lower

Wednesday in a market still

struggling for direction ahead

of UK general election, dealers

been down as much as 30

points during the morning

session following the dive on

Wall Street Wednesday and

sharp losses in Tokyo. But

scant buying emerged here as

the markdown in London

failed to attract any real sell-

shrugged off another early bout

11 points lower at 2.393.2.

having hit 2.374.1 earlier in

of selling on Wall Street.

the session

The market largely

The FTSE 100 index closed

The FTSE 100 index had

Reuter adds from London:

to close at 573.61.

G-7 begins meet on aid to CIS today

TOKYO, Apr 9 : Deputy flnance ministers from the Group of Seven (G-7) industrialised countries will meet Friday and Saturday in Paris to coordinate their positions on aid to Russia, Japanese officials announced, reports AFP.

The G-7 officials - Britain Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States will be joined Saturday by colleagues from Belgium, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland, the finance ministry said Thursday

A fund to stabilise the Russian currency will dominate their talks, which are also intended to pave the way for meetings of international monetary authorities in Washington at the end of the

US wheat for Kabul

ISLAMABAD, Apr 9: The United States has donated 10,000 tonnes of wheat to Afghanistan to help to meet food shortages, the US embassy in Islamabad said on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

An embassy statement said United Nations officials in the Afghan capital Kabul would receive the wheat and supervise its distribution to needy Afghan citizens. Pakistan said last week it

would also donate 10,000 tonnes in response to a UN appeal for food aid to The US government has

firm assurances that this food will not be distributed through the Kabul regime, and that the UN will adequately monitor its distribution," the statement

Shares across Asia-Pacific region take a plunge mentary budget for public 21.36 points to close at largely for technical reasons. 1929 with the current slide in Singapore stocks fell 1.5 per TOKYO, Apr 9: Share prices 1.364.37 a 14-month low. 'It doesn't seem the market is works later in the year. Arai Tokyo. in Malaysia, the Kuala

plunged across the Asia-Pacific region depressed by Wall Street's steepest fall in five months and further losses in Tokyo where the Nikkei stock average slipped below 17,000 points, reports AFP.

"It's a crash scenario, a big panic," said Joel Jewel. President of the Tokyo branch of Credit Lyonnais Securities (Switzerland) AG. "The selling was feeding on itself. There was no support."

Japanese stock prices. which have hit a series of five -year lows in recent weeks. regained some of their losses towards the close but still ended 3.5 per cent down from Tuesday's finish.

Australian share prices closed 1.9 per cent lower, South Korean stocks dropped 1.1 per cent while the Taiwan market lost 1.3 per cent. Hong Kong share prices lost more than two per cent while

In Tokyo where the Nikkei average ended 616.02 down at 17,175.53 after sinking below 17,000 points at one stage. traders said prices were depressed by margin sales and futures selling in local and offshore markets. Shares in banks, which have fallen sharply in the past week, were particularly hard hit. This is another met down.

He has been saying for the

Everybody's saying it," said an analyst at a British securities

Denis Atonine, General Manager of the local branch of Banque Paribas, noted that the pressure was coming the selling of bank from

"It's a totalfreefall," he said "There's no floor in , sight. Toranobu Sugai, a Vice President at Lehman Brothers Japan Inc." said the partial recovery towards the close was

scheduled visit to Japan on

newspaper Izvestia said the

Prosecutor's Office wanted

to know what the Soviet

Communist Party had done

with "55 to 180 billion dol-

tions of former leaders of

the Politburo, the policy-

making body of the Soviet

Communist Party, have al-

Mikhail Solomentsev, Vitaly

Slynkov, Grigori Romanon,

Lev Zaikov, Viktor Nikonov,

Yuri Maslyukov, Vadim

Medvedev, former Prime

Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov

and Yegor Ligachev, the

former leader of the party's

The prosecutors were due to

hear testimony this week

from Alexander Yakovlev.

Gorbahcev's closest aide

and Eduard Shevardnadze.

the former Soviet Foreign

Minister who is now leader

of independent Georgia.

conservative faction.

Nikolai

Izvestia said "several genera-

ready been questioned."

They include Viktor Grishin.

lar" in party funds.

Vorotnikov.

In a report on Tuesday, the

GORBACHEV: Irony of fate

Gorby in dock to testify

about party billions

Saturday

MOSCOW, Apr 9: Former

Soviet President Mikhail

Gorbachev testified for two

hours here Wednesday be-

fore Russian prosecutors

probing the financial deal-

ings of the former Soviet

Communist Party, reports

tussian television broadcast a

short excerpt Wednesday

evening from a videotape of

Gorbachev's appearance in

the office of Magistrate

am interested in shedding

any light that I can on this

affair." said a relaxed-look-

ing Gorbachev, who agreed

Gorbachev turned up on the

llexander Zviagentsev.

spokesman for the Russian

Public Prosecutor's Office.

declined to comment on

Gorbachev's testimony but

he said the former

President might be ques-

he ltar-Tass news agency said

Gorbachev remained free to

travel and would leave for a

dock at 10:00 am at

to testify as a witness.

Karasev's office.

tioned again.

Vladimir Karasev.

bottoming out yet," he said.

Isao Takahashi, a General Manager at James Capel Pacific Ltd. was similarly pessimistic about the market's immediate "Bank issues were sold

heavily. I don't feel they've reached a bottom," he said Maruso Securities Co Ltd Director Takaji Arai said he saw some late buying "probably by life insurance companies"

but also remained bearish A report that Japanese investors were exposed to troubled Canadian real estate company Olympia and Your Developments Ltd. which is in default on an 800 million dollar Eurobond, also sent the litters through the Tokyo mar-

So too did an article in Wednesday's edition of the Nihon Kezai Shimbun comparing the New York crash of

The article, which compared New York stock prices between 1921 and 1935 with Japanese stock prices since 1981, suggested that the Nikket would have to tumble to around 5.000 points before

staging a strong recovery. "The course of the two indexes are surprisingly similar." the newspaper noted, drawing additional parallels with problems in the real-estate industry and financial institutions in both countries during the two

Some market participants also remain pessimistic about the prospect for further fiscal measures to stimulate the economy following the market's dismal response to a fiscal and monetary package announced last week "We are not assured that the

government will prop up the market by providing a supple-

Further gloom came from Finance Minister Tautomu Hata. The government has no intention to take short-term measures to prop up the mar ket," he told reporters, retterating comment made on Friday of last week.

Everything depends on the market itself

In Sydney, the all ordinaries index closed 29.4 points lower at 1,554.3 in moderate turnover although prices ended off their lows.

"This is being imported from overseas," said Bain and Co partner Ron Cabel. "Our market has been quite strong." he said. "But it can't withstand what's happening." In Hong Kong, they key

Hang Seng index closed at 4.827.58, down 98.85 points.

In Singapore, the Straits times industrial index plunged

Commission asks Pindi to sack 600000 the ouster of such a huge number of employees in one go would create a lot of problems

sourceless.

IPEC to attend OPEC meet

Caracas asked to defy OPEC output quota CARACAS, Apr 9 The pres-

ident of the Venezuelan Senate's energy and mines committee said Tuesday that the country should abandon OPEC production quotas in the face of a national budget crisis. reports AP. "Now is the time to chose

between compromises with OPEC and the national interest," said Edger Vallee, a member of the ruling Democratic Action Party and the committee's leader

Venezuela has always been the good guy in the organization," he said of the country's position within the Organization of Petroleum Exporting

He said Venezuela could quickly increase its production to about 2.4 million barrels per day, and export 2.2 million bpd. A production increase would help make up for revenue shortfalls caused by lower-then-expected oil

A sharp drop in oil prices has led to protections of a fed eral budget deficit for 1992 of between one billion dollar and 2.5 billion dollar. The government gets about 70 per cent of its budget from taxes on oil products.

Other officials, including former Petroleos de Venezuela President Andres Sosa Pietri, have called for the country to boost production above OPEC quotas.

Reuter from London says: Nine non-OPEC oil producers have confirmed they will attend ministerial talks with OPEC and others may join the meeting scheduled for April 23 in Vienna, OPEC sources said on Wednesday.

The Independent Petroleum Exporting Countries (IPEC) and the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) are scheduled to discuss environmental issues and the market outlook.

Apr 9: ISLAMABAD. Economic Pakistan's Commission (EC) has reportedly recommended to unload about 600000 government employees in an effort to get rid of the burden of large amounts of non-developmental

expenditure, reports Xinhua. Local daily The Muslim Thursday quoted official sources as saying the commission prepared its proposal to the federal government to fire these employees by offering them a golden handshake.

The commission also recommended that 37 government departments be abolished and at least 22 federal departments be transferred to provinces, the sources said

The implementation of the

the federal government employees, the sources said According to the EC proposal for employee lay-off, ev-

proposal will involve about one

third of the total strength of

ery dismissed employee could get double pay for five years, provided their tenure of service is more than the above period The golden handshake to these employees will require huge funds and the Pakistan

government has already secured the consent of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund for sharing the expenses.

However, the lay-off has been recommended to be implemented only in phases, as

to the government, the sources said. Self-employment loans planned

Another copy adds: The Pakistan government will distribute 20 billion rupee (800 million US dollar) in the form of loans under a self-employment scheme every year to help provide jobs to unemployed youth.

This was announced by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif while talking to a delegation of the unemployed young men at his residence here.

Shartf announced to launch the scheme for fighting unemployment by providing financial assistances to the reself-employment

Earlier on April 3, Nawaz

scheme will be operated purely on non-political grounds and loans ranging between 50,000 rupee (2,000 dollar) and 300,000 rupee (12,000 dollar) will be available to unemployed individual or group from April 15, he

The Prime Minister expressed his hope that the scheme would help build up a network of small industries and lead to rapid industrialisation in the urban as well as rural areas all over the country.

Lakhs died in LDCs from improper preparation!

Euro-parliament votes to ban baby pictures on infant formula tins

STRASBOURG (France). Apr 9: The European Parliament Wednesday voted to strengthen labeling requirements for EC companies who ship powdered infant formula to developing countries, report

In a series of amendment to a proposal by the European Community's Executive Commission, the parliament voted to require companies to label powdered infant formula in the language of the country in which it is sold.

Community already has strict rules on the marketing of infant formula within the EC.

The proposed regulation also would ben tins of infant formula from displaying baby pictures or any other pictures or text which idealizes the usc of the product," according to a report on the subject.

Birgit Bjornvig, a Danish member of the parliament who prepared the report, said hundreds of thousands of infants in developing countries had died over the past 30 years The 12-nation European from drinking improperly

prepared bottled formula. She said the new regulations which must be approved

by the rule-making council of ministers, will encourage companies to include easily understood graphics which stress the need to botl water before mixing it with the for-

According to Bjornvig's report, there was a marked decline in breast feeding worldwide in the 1960s and 1970s following an aggressive campaign by baby food manufacturers to encourage the use of powdered milk formula.

But the report says the product is often improperly used, especially in poorer countries with high illiteracy rates, leading to diarrhoea and

sometimes death. "I have purchased infant formula in the Philippines with only Arabic and English instructions on it," Bjornvig said.

Interior ministers from the 12 EC member state are expected to approve the proposed regulations when they meet on May 14.

UK court halts BCCI compensations

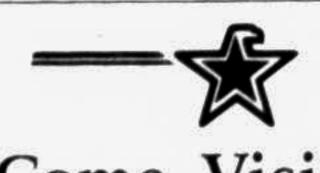
LONDON. Apr 9: England's high court on Wednesday withheld approval of a plan to compensate creditors of the closed Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI) to give them time to find out more about it, report Reuter.

The ruling was the latest twist in the saga of BCCI since regulators in many nations halted the bank's operations on July 5 on suspicion of a huge fraud.

Accountants Touche Ross. the BCCI liquidators, want to go ahead and implement a compensation plan worth US dollar 1:7 billion which they have agreed with the bank's Abu Dhabi majority sharehold-

But creditors asked for four weeks to get more information to help them decide what to

The judge, Vice-Chancellor Str Donal Nicholls, said individual creditors should have the benefit of recommendations of a creditors committee when deciding whether to ac cept compensation terms offered by Abu Dhabi and Touche



"US BUSINESS IN BANGLADESH"

A WIDE RANGE OF AMERICAN PRODUCTS AND SERVICES WILL BE ON DISPLAY AT:

The Dhaka Sheraton Hotel

April 16-17, 1992 Date

Thursday, April 16/12:00 AM to 8.00 PM (traders' day) Time

Friday, April 17/10.00 AM to 8.00 PM (Open to general public)

Jointly Sponsored by THE US EMBASSY AND THE AMERICAN BANGLADESH ECONOMIC FORUM

West buys Soviet arms know-how

MOSCOW, Apr 9: Russia's top nuclear weapons and energy laboratory joined forces with a New York company Tuesday to market once secret Soviet military technology to the West, reports AP. National Patent

Development Crop pledged one million dollar to launch the joint venture with the Kurchatov Institute of Atomic Energy in Moscow, which employs about 10,000 nuclear experts.

We see in the Kurchatov Institute an incredible amount of technology that has not been exposed to the world. that has been used in their military operations", Jerome Feldman, the US firm's president, said at a news confer-

Institute officials said they hope to sell diamond-hard coverings for spaceships. dealing." Rakitin told recomputer disk drives and surgical instruments. They also porters.

hope to find buyers for devices designed to fully automate nuclear reactors. The US-Russian venture, to

be called Interpatent Corp was announced two weeks after President Bush approved a 14 million dollar purchase of Russia's "Topaz" space-based nuclear reactor, plutonium-238 space fuel and other technology. The Bush administration

also gave its blessing to further US purchases from Russia if the technology is better than US alternatives or would cost too much for the United States to develop on its own. "We are just scientists of the old-fashioned Soviet type:

we have no profound ideas on marketing," said Iger Rakitin, the institute's chief of laboratory automation and control. "National Patent will give us the expertise in Western-type

Feldman said selling the Kurchatov Institute's leftover nuclear technology will earn "vasts amounts of dollars" to be shared equally by the two partners.

The venture also will help Russian scientists who might be tempted to sell their expertise to nations trying to build nuclear weapons.

"We think it's part of our responsibility to try to expose this technology to other parts of the world - safer parts of the world." Feldman said. "We would like to keep their people fully occupied here and not emigrating to the Middle

Western fears about a brain drain of former Soviet nuclear experts grew in January when a Kurchatov Institute scientist revealed that Libya twice had tried to hire two of his coworkers for 2,000 dollar-amonth salaries.

Business briefs

Brent Crude gains grounds: North Sea Brent Crude oil prices gained ground in London reaching 19.15 dollar a barrel for May delivery in the afternoon as trading continued, reports AFP from London

Brent then eased back to 19.10 dollars barrel in midafternoon on the international petroleum exchange, against 18.83 dollar at the Tuesday close.

China records \$ 1.126 trade surplus: China recorded a 1.21 billion dollar trade surplus during the first three months of 1992, the China Daily said Wednesday. sharply down from last year's 2.14 billion dollar during the

same period, reports AFP from Beijing. Exports rose 12.7 per cent to 14.97 billion dollar between January 1 and March 31 this year while imports climbed 23.5 per cent to 13.76 billion dollar, the paper said quoting customs figures.

Taiwan moves to squeeze credit: Taiwan's central bank is tightening credit to combat inflation and cool speculation on the property market, officials and economists said on Wednesday, reports Reuter from Taipei.

The central bank has issued Taiwan dollar 27 billion (US dollar 1.07 billion) of treasury bills this week, and officials and economists say more issues are expected soon.

