

BRIEFLY

Cuba, Kazakhstan set up ties: Cuba and Kazakhstan on Tuesday established diplomatic relations at embassy level, bringing to 11 the number of former Soviet republics which have formalised ties with the communist-ruled Caribbean island, Reuter reports from Havana.

Cuban first Deputy Foreign Minister Alcibiades Hidalgo signed the diplomatic agreement at the end of an official Prensa Latina said.

Cuba already had an embassy in Moscow, now the capital of Russia. Since the beginning of December, it has also set up formal ties with Latvia, Estonia, Ukraine, Moldova, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Armenia and Azerbaijan.

CIS to get US food aid: The Pentagon Tuesday announced it would send an additional 18,000 tonnes of food and medical assistance to the republics of the former Soviet Union, AFP reports from Washington.

The shipment, which follows the 2,200 tonnes of aid shipped under the provide hope operation in February and March, is expected to arrive in June with supplies from US bases in Italy, Germany and Luxembourg.

Food rations and medical supplies will be transported by land or by sea to avoid the high cost of air freight, according to a statement from the Defense Department.

Violence claims 13 in S Africa: At least 13 people have been killed in South Africa's township wars over the past 24 hours, pushing the death toll to 38 since Saturday, police said, Reuter reports from Johannesburg.

A police spokeswoman said a man and a woman were killed and three people were wounded near Johannesburg on Monday when unidentified attackers raked a moving taxi with machine gun fire.

Police said two men were found murdered and tossed from a moving train near Johannesburg early on Tuesday in the latest of a series of attacks on black commuters. Four other men were shot dead in the city's Katlehong township on Monday.

Three people were killed in a shooting in the Indian Ocean province's Ixopo District late on Monday evening.

19 killed in Colombia: A flareup of fighting in Colombia's guerrilla war has killed 19 people as left-wing guerrillas destroyed a police barracks and clashed with security forces, officials said on Monday, Reuter reports from Bogota.

The spate of guerrilla attacks appeared to pose a new obstacle to peace talks between the rebels and the Colombian government, frozen since a former cabinet minister died last month while a captive of the guerrillas.

Scores of guerrillas of the Marxist Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces assaulted a remote police barracks at Silvania, 300 kms (190 miles) south of the capital Bogota, on Sunday night, using rockets, grenades and machine guns.

The 16 police defending the barracks held off the guerrillas for several hours before the barracks was turned into a heap of stones and rubble. Six policemen died in the attack and three were wounded, police said.

372 Haitians rescued: The US coast guard said on Tuesday it had rescued another 372 Haitians at sea who were fleeing their homeland, bringing the total so far this month to 2,309, Reuter reports from Miami.

The numbers of migrants fleeing Haiti, scene of a bloody coup last September 30, has increased in the past few weeks. Human rights activists cite a deepening gloom about restoring democracy.

The coast guard said it had rescued the most recent migrants Monday night from boats in five separate incidents in international waters off the Haitian coast.

The boat people are kept aboard cutters moored at the US naval base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba where they are interviewed by immigration officials.



TRIPOLI: Libyans listen to the radio in front of the Al-Kabir hotel Tuesday as the Libyan and Arab League offer to hand over to Malta two suspects was rejected by the United States and other Western officials. — AFP/UNB photo

UN sanctions against Libya begin

TRIPOLI, Apr 15: Libya passed a point of no return in its crisis with the West at dawn today when United Nations sanctions, including a ban on flights in and out, went into force, reports Reuter.

The decisive moment passed unmarked in the quiet streets of Tripoli, almost deserted after late-night demonstrations by hundreds of Libyans reacting angrily to the UN Security Council's rejection of a last-minute offer to hand two airliner bombing suspects over to Malta.

Asked what he thought, a lone motorist said: "It doesn't matter what I think. The only thing that matters is what (US President George) Bush thinks".

Libyan Radio began the day as usual by urging citizens to "wake with the new dawn" and telling them they stood at the head of a "third way" in world politics — Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi's Third International Theory which rejects both communism and capitalism.

The UN is imposing sanctions because Libya has failed to hand over for trial in the United States or Britain two intelligence agents accused of blowing up a Pan Am airliner over the Scottish town of Lockerbie in 1988.

The sanctions resolution also orders Libya to give France access to four other men, including Gaddafi's brother-in-

law, suspected of involvement in bombing a French UTA plane over Niger in 1989. The two attacks killed 441 people.

An official at Tripoli airport said there was no movement there at all. Although sanctions started to take effect only at 0400 GMT today, midnight at the United Nations in New York, Libya's airports have seen no international traffic since the country cut itself off from the outside world on Monday night to mourn those killed in US air raids in 1986.

Apart from cutting flights, the sanctions impose an arms embargo and require Libya's diplomatic missions abroad to be downgraded.

A Libyan official woken for comment on the start of sanctions said sleepily: "The flights and the arms don't matter to us".

Libya has defied the West in strident terms since the Security Council first demanded the surrender of the Lockerbie suspects in January but has also fought in inventive diplomatic and legal campaign to try to protect itself.

The last defences fell on Tuesday when the Security Council dismissed Libya's offer to hand the Lockerbie suspects to Malta and the International Court of Justice refused to order the western powers to cease applying pressure to Tripoli.

When news of the Security Council's rejection reached Tripoli, a crowd took to the streets shouting slogans to dramatise the government's defiance: "We are ready for confrontation" and "We don't fear the United States".

Lebanon clash claims two

RASHAYA, Lebanon, Apr 15: Two anti-Israeli fighters were killed, two were captured and an Israeli soldier seriously wounded in a clash Tuesday in Southern Lebanon, a Lebanese source reported here, says AFP.

In Beirut, a Palestinian group hostile to PLO Leader Yasser Arafat, the Fatah-revolutionary council, announced that its forces triggered the exchange when it opened fire on an Israeli patrol near the village of Aishyeh-Jarmak.

But the group, which is close to Iran and Syria, provided no casualty figures from the operation.

The encounter occurred in the eastern sector of an Israeli-imposed "security zone" in southern Lebanon.

An anti-Israeli guerrilla unit infiltrated the buffer zone but was spotted by militiamen of Israel's proxy South Lebanon Army (SLA) near Aishyeh-Jarmak, according to the Lebanese source.

He said the two sides traded fire with automatic weapons and anti-tank rockets and an Israeli patrol rushed to the scene to assist the SLA militiamen.

Iraq pledges solidarity with Libya

NICOSIA, Apr 15: Iraq, groaning under United Nations sanctions, pledged solidarity with Libya which faces a similar fate from today, reports Reuter.

The Iraqi News Agency INA reported on Tuesday that Baghdad affirmed it stood by Libya in its conflict with the West over the Lockerbie airliner bombing.

It said Iraq's stand was conveyed through Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi's envoy who called on Vice-President Taha Yassin Ramadan with a message for Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

The agency, monitored by the British Broadcasting Corporation, said envoy Humayyed Jalloud discussed with Ramadan the threats posed against Libya and the unjust resolutions adopted under the canopy of the UN Security Council.

Ramadan affirmed Iraq's solidarity with sisterly Libya as it faces an explicit plot by America and the enemies of the Arabs, it added.

It said discussions also covered bilateral relations and the current Arab situation, but gave no details about the nature of the message.

Algeria dissolves 400 FIS run local bodies

ALGIERS, Apr 15: Algeria, seeking to stamp out Muslim fundamentalist unrest, on Tuesday abolished more than 400 local authorities run mainly by fundamentalists, reports Reuter.

Elected in a landslide vote, seen largely as a protest against nearly 30 years of one-party socialist rule, candidates of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) won 853 of Algeria's 1,541 local assemblies in June 1990.

They also seized power in 32 of the North African country's 48 regions but were accused of using both the local assemblies and the regions to push their party aims for an Islamic state.

Their local control brought howls of protest from other parties in the first round of a general election last December.

Non-FIS politicians accused FIS officials of malpractice and fraud in voting which gave the FIS 188 seats of the 231 decided outright.

The authorities in January cancelled the election, sparking widespread Muslim fundamentalist unrest.

On February 4 a court ordered the FIS dissolved. The Interior Ministry accused it of multiple violations of the law.

On Tuesday Prime Minister Sid Ahmed Ghazali signed three decrees "relative to the suspension of those elected" to local authorities and dissolving local and regional authorities, an official communiqué said.

The authorities are to be replaced by Interior Ministry nominees.

"After the events which followed the cancellation of the second round of the legislative elections it is evident that these structures can no longer function, the independent newspaper El Watan said on Tuesday before the communiqué.

The dissolution leaves 403 local authorities and 18 regional authorities still controlled by candidates elected on a FIS ticket.

UN team escapes firing in Kashmir

ISLAMABAD, Apr 15: A team of United Nations observers patrolling the India-Pakistan frontier in disputed Kashmir had a narrow escape when Indian forces opened fire, a UN official said today, reports Reuter.

Colonel Gohan Molin, Deputy head of the UN Military Observers Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), denied a Pakistani press report that one of his men was wounded in the firing in the Niklal sector of Kashmir on Saturday.

"We have to correct. No injuries were caused by fire, he said." There was fire in the vicinity of the team members and I cannot draw the conclusion that it was aimed at the team members."

The UN force was set up in 1949 to supervise a ceasefire ending the first of two wars between India and Pakistan over Kashmir following independence from Britain in 1947.

UN inspection team leaves for Baghdad

MANAMA, Bahrain, Apr 15: A four-member team of UN chemical weapons inspectors left Wednesday for Baghdad as part of the programme to dismantle Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, reports AP.

The team left without speaking to reporters.

A regional UN spokesman, Alastair Livingston, said earlier, the team leader, US Army Maj. Karen Jansen, will be involved in the ongoing verification of what Iraq has claimed to have done toward eliminating its chemical weapons.

JAL pilots on strike

TOKYO, Apr 15: Unionised pilots and flight attendants at Japan Air Lines Co Ltd (JAL) began a 24-hour strike today forcing the airline to five flights, a JAL spokesman said, reports Reuter.

The flight crew and flight attendants unions have been negotiating with management over 1992/93 wages and other issues since last month.

Cabin attendants are asking for a pay rise of nine per cent and flight crews for 10 per cent, an airline spokesman said.

Research Group of Media, Pa., and had a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

The AP poll was an effort to put the highly publicized voter polls into perspective by asking some other 'trust' questions of a broader sampling of Americans. Primary voters tend to be a politically attuned minority who have just endured a barrage of sound-bite campaigning.

About half in the poll, 49 per cent, said they mostly trust president Bush to do what is right, and an additional 36 per cent trust Bush some of the time. Just 18 per cent mostly trust Clinton, 19 per cent almost never trust him, and 39 per cent trust the Arkansas governor some of the time.

Even as Clinton enhanced his status as Democratic front-

Development of Arrow Missile US gives green light to Israel

CAIRO, Apr 15: The United States has given green light to Israel for starting the second phase of development of the Arrow Missile, according to reports from Jerusalem, says Xinhua.

Moshe Keret, president of the state-owned Israel aircraft industries, was quoted as telling a news conference that the US has formally questioned the Jewish's for the missile development.

Keret said the US will fund 320 million US dollar for the second phase of the Arrow Missile project which started in 1989 and is expected to complete after 1995.

The US order came nearly two weeks after US investigators failed to find any evidence that Israel improperly sold Patriot Missile or its technology to a third country. The Arrow air defence missile system, designed to defend against ballistic missiles with a range of 1,000 kilometre or less, is being jointly developed by Israel and the US with the American strategic defence initiative funds.

Last May, US Defence Secretary Richard Cheney said the US would underwrite 72 per cent of expenses for the second stage of the Arrow programme. The total cost of this stage was then estimated at 200-300 million dollars.

The US provided 80 per cent of the 158 million dollar in the completed first phase of the project and the Israeli Defence Ministry supplied the rest.

The Arrow Missile, 12 metres long with a firing range of 70 kilometre can reach a height of 30 kilometres. It was designed to replace the US-made Patriot anti-missile system which was deployed in Israel and Saudi Arabia during the Gulf War.

Keret, whose firm is the main contractor on the project, described the Arrow as 'the world's most developed and effective answer' to ballistic missiles.

However, three known test flight have been less than successful. Last November, Israeli newspapers said a malfunction in the third test firing had 'confused' scientists an could set the project back.

Non-governmental talks between India, Pakistan from today

ISLAMABAD, Apr 15: The second round of non-governmental dialogue between India and Pakistan will be held here from April 16 to 19, reports Xinhua.

Local press reports today quoted Niaz A. Naik, President of the Institute of Strategic Studies (ISS), as saying that the non-governmental dialogue will help eliminate principal irritants causing the tensions between India and Pakistan.

Issues related to confrontation between the two South Asian neighbours will come under discussion.

Naik said that the dialogue can prove to be useful as governmental talks are moving at a slow pace to diffuse the tensions and create a friendly atmosphere of mutual confidence and trust between the two countries.

Dialogue and cooperation instead of confrontation and conflict have become the basis of inter-state relations, he said.

The meeting organized by the ISS will be attended by former foreign ministers, foreign secretaries, eminent politicians, industrialists and intellectuals of the two countries, the reports said.

Few can rely on Clinton's presidency

NEW YORK, Apr 15: One in five Americans in an Associated Press poll don't trust Democratic front-runner Bill Clinton to do what's right as president. But the poll also found distrust of Congress even more widespread, reports AP.

The respondents also said that getting the job done is nearly as important as personal honesty and integrity.

When it came to deciding whether to support a presidential candidate, 38 per cent said personal honesty and integrity is most important, while 35 per cent were more concerned about ability to get things done. Twenty-two per cent professed to look hardest at stands on the issues and just 1 per cent cited electability.

Older people were more likely to emphasize integrity. The poll of 1,002 adults was taken April 8-12 by ICR Survey

runner by winning the April 7 round of presidential primaries, interviews with voters showed deepening questions about his trustworthiness. A network exit poll in New York state found 46 per cent of Democratic voters doubted Clinton had the honesty and integrity to serve effectively as president.

American in general are not feeling at all magnanimous about politicians. A meager 1 per cent said they trust Congress to do what is right just about always, compared with 10 per cent who feel that way about the president.

A cynical 29 per cent almost never trust Congress. The figure is several points higher among men, those who live in the west, those in middle-income households and those who call themselves political independents.

Not surprisingly, Democrats

are twice as likely as Republicans and independents to mostly trust Clinton. But Democrats are not that much more likely than others to trust the Democratic-controlled Congress.

Only 49 per cent of all those in the current poll said they think Bush has done a good job of maintaining honesty and integrity in his administration. Thirty per cent of registered voters said he has done a bad job.

"Polls show Bush slightly ahead of Clinton — up to 10 points with Ross Perot thrown in as a third candidate. But the AP poll, showing nearly a quarter of the people not sure whether they trust Clinton, underlines how much the voters' evolving impressions of the candidates will affect the campaign."

Off the Record

Dog breeder imprisoned for 30 days

PHOENIX: A dog breeder was sentenced to 30 days in jail and fined 25,000 dollars Tuesday for criminal littering in the dumping of dead greyhound dogs in a citrus orchard, reports AP.

Glen Eugene McGaughy, 64, also was ordered to complete 400 hours of community service at the Arizona Humane Society, said Judge Ronald Reinstein of Maricopa County Superior Court.

McGaughy, the top greyhound racer in the state, pleaded no contest February 27 to a felony charge of dumping four dogs and ordering the same fate for 18 others.

McGaughy also will have his licence to race dogs revoked for five years, said Gary Fitzsimmons, spokesman for the State Department of Racing.

"I have no future," McGaughy said after sentencing. "It's been a nightmare. I have been stripped of everything."

He is to report to jail May 8 but is eligible for a work-furlough programme under which he can be credited two days for every day served, said his attorney, William Stine.

McGaughy, who lives in the Chandler area south of Phoenix, was forced to close his greyhound operation after the discovery of 143 dog carcasses in a Chandler Heights citrus grove in January.

Goody days are over

NEW YORK: Leona Helmsley can say goodbye Wednesday to her life of luxury, reports AP.

Jewels, designer clothes and servants aren't part of the routine at the Lexington, Ky., prison where the hotel queen portrayed in ads as dedicated to her guests' comfort was to begin a four-year sentence for tax evasion.

The 71-year-old ruler of the Helmsley luxury hotel empire will have to get by with only a bed, a locker, a desk and a chair.

On Tuesday, she lost her final bid to stay out of jail when the 2nd US Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that US District Thomas Griesa acted within his authority in refusing to substitute community service for prison time.

Mrs Helmsley was directed to report to prison Wednesday — coincidentally, the deadline to file income tax returns in the United States — leaving behind her Park Lane Helmsley Hotel penthouse and her billionaire husband, Harry, for the Spartan accommodations at the Federal Medical Center.

She must serve at least 16 months before becoming eligible for parole.

She was frightened and depressed, her lawyers said, but resigned to her fate.

"I accept the judgment, and I'm prepared to abide by the law," she said in a statement.

Mrs Helmsley was convicted in 1989 of evading 1.7 million dollars in taxes by billing personal expenses such as renovations on a country house in Greenwich, Conn, to her companies.

'I'll build again and again'

JERUSALEM: Mohammed Nasser clambered over the chunks of concrete, all that remained of the home he was building for his father. The city of Jerusalem bulldozed it for lack of a building permit, reports AP.

The house on a rocky hillside has been demolished twice as it neared completion, but Nasser vowed to rebuild.

"It is our land and we intend to live on it," the 51-year-old shepherd said defiantly. "I will build again and again."

The site is next to Nasser's own home, also built without a permit but so far spared.

While Israel strives to construct thousands of new housing units for Jews in Jerusalem and the occupied West Bank, Palestinians find it increasingly difficult to build legally.

Palestinian activists contend that Israel makes strict zoning and building rules for territories captured in the 1967 war to thwart Palestinian growth and seize as much land as possible for Jewish settlers.

Israeli officials say building permits are available, but that they want Palestinians to live in multifamily housing, as Israelis do, and abandon the Arab tradition of building small homes on family owned land.



TOKYO: A model shows off a block-patterned big mohair jacket on a knitted turtle-neck one-piece dress with a vest during the Hiroko Koshino's '92-'93 fall-winter collection. — AFP/UNB photo

Armed men kill local assembly chairman in Nagorny-Karabakh

YEREVAN, Apr 15: Armed men burst into the apartment of Arthur Mkrtchian, Chairman of the local assembly of the disputed enclave of Nagorny-Karabakh, and shot him dead Tuesday, the Armenian government announced, reports AFP.

Mkrtchian, a 34-year-old museum director was the leading politician in Nagorny-Karabakh.

"Unfortunately, the decision by Ukraine to suspend withdrawal of tactical nuclear weapons did not meet with an appropriate response by the west," he told a news conference.

Ukraine to transfer N-arms to Russia

KIEV, Apr 15: Ukraine will resume transfers of tactical nuclear weapons to Russia for destruction, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Anatoly Zlenko said on Tuesday, reports Reuter.

"Unfortunately, the decision by Ukraine to suspend withdrawal of tactical nuclear weapons did not meet with an appropriate response by the west," he told a news conference.