Off the Record

Japanese imperial army set up brothels called comfort stations in the Philippines during World War II and forced local women to provide sex to its soldiers, a human rights group said today, reports Reuter.

The Asian Women's Human Rights Council said it had received documents including medical records of at least 19 Philippine women forced into prostitution by the Japanese.

The records, dated 1942 and sent by a Japanese army clinic to the military police.

Sudanese troops recapture town

KHARTOUM, Apr 26: Sudanese government forces recaptured Saturday Mjyaqtifyn town of Mongalla, in eastern Equatoria province, from the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), the official Suna news agency reported, says AFP.

The agency, quoting the military command, said the capture of the town, located on the Nile about 50 miles north of the regional capital Juba, opens up the road to the south.

says Reuter from New Delhi.

shootings in the city.

Colombo.

and the east.

from Belgrade.

reports AP from Colombo.

Delhi when the explosion occurred.

dragged away by their cadres," it said.

Saturday, reports AFP from Sarajevo.

militiamen early this month.

forces in his office on April 9.

the paper, and by Sarajevo police.

the village of Kovacici, in the same region.

Serbian forces, the military sources said.

classified nine of the women as available for use by Japanese soldiers, the group said.

The women had apparently been checked to ensure they would not infect the soldiers with sexually - transmitted

The group said the documents proved the Japanese set up brothels in Manila and on the islands of Panay and Masbate, both around 250 miles (400 km) southeast of the Philippine capital.

Japan invaded the Philippines in January 1942 and established a puppet regime before being ousted by allied forces in February 1945.

Women's groups are scheduled to picket the Japanese embassy in Manila next month to protest against the forced prostitution of Philippine women during the war. Japanese and South Korean reports say between 100,000 and 200,000 women 80 per cent of them Korean, were forced into prostitution to service Japanese troops during

The Japanese government at first denied any military involvement in the brothels but had to admit their existence in the face of overwhelming evi-

BRRETTY

Seven injured in Delhi blast: At least

seven people were injured when a bomb exploded in a bus in

Delhi on Saturday, the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported,

PII, quoting police, said the bus was on a route in north

No one claimed responsibility for the blast, but Sikh mili-

tants fighting for a separate homeland in the northern state of

Punjab have claimed responsibility for previous bombings and

Tigers kill 6 Lankan troops: Tamil rebels

detonated buried explosives and attacked a military patrol in

the northeast killing six soldiers, the military said Sunday.

village of Kokkutoduvai in Mullaittivu district, said a commu-

nique issued by the military headquarters in Colombo.

Two soldiers were injured in the attack Saturday in the

The region is 275 kilometers (170 miles) northeast of

An unknown number of Tamil rebels are believed to have

At least 7,000 people have been killed since June 1990

been killed in the fighting, the communique said, Troops

have seen some terrorists falling and six of them being.

when rebels of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eclam resumed

their campaign for an independent homeland in the north

Reporter killed in battlefield: A reporter

with the main daily paper in Bosnia-Herzegovina was killed in

fighting in the town of Zvornik two weeks ago, becoming the

first journalist to die in the current conflict, officials said

daily Oslobodjenje in the casterntown, which fell to Serbian

fighting in Serbia, said the reporter was killed by the Serb

Kjasis Sajlovic, a Muslim, was the correspondent of the

Sajlovic's wife and son, who have taken refuge from the

The death was confirmed Saturday by both sources close to

Serbs kill 72 Croatian troops: A total of 72

Croat soldiers died on Saturday in clashes with Serbian

forces, including Yugoslav Army units, in the southwest of

Bosnia-Herzegovina, Tanjug news agency said, reports AFP

The agency, quoting military sources, said the deaths oc-

It said 32 Croats died in the Croatian-majority village of

"A large number of Croat soldiers were captured by the

curred in two clashes around the town of Livno, not far from

Celebic, northwest of Livno, and 40 others in fighting around

Than Shwe made armed forces C-in-C:

General Than Shwe, the new chairman of Myanmar ruling

junta, has been named armed forces commander-in-chief,

official radio Yangon reported yesterday Than Shwe replaced

general Saw Maung as Armed Forces Commander-in-Chief,

ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), the

official name of the junta, and also as prime minister, be-

Clashes claim 300 in Bosnia so far?

Three hundred people have been killed and more than 1,500

wounded in the fighting in Bosnia-Herzegovina since April 6,

a "crisis health committee" in Sarajevo was reported as

Saturday that at least nine people died and 56 were wounded

The daily paper Borba also said in its issue appearing

Last Thursday Saw Maung officially resigned as head of the

Than Shwe was officially named Prime Minister on Friday,

Bosnia's border with the Croatian coastal region of Dalmatia.

Israel to propose holding of Rome talks before June 23

Fifth round of ME talks open in Washington today

JERUSALEM, Apr 26: Israel will propose that the sixth round of Middle East peace talks in Rome take place before the June general elections here. Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's spokesman said to day, reports AFP.

"We intend to keep up the momentum of the peace process and will propose that the next round of bilateral negotiations take place in Rome before the general elections in June 23," said Ehud Gold as Israel's negotiators flew out for Washington and the fifth round of talks, which open on Monday.

It had been widely expected that the sixth round between Israel and Jordan, Lebanon. Syria and the Palestinians, would not be held until after the elections.

The statement came after the Director-general of the foreign ministry here, Yossef Hadass, warned against any Palestine Liberation Organisation participation in the talks.

The inclusion of four se nior PLO members to the negotiation, with US approval, does not encourage the Palestinians and other parties to push forward the peace process," Hadass said Saturday night on Israeli television.

He told reporters today upon departure: 'I don't expect any meatier discussions than previously."

There has been no substantial progress made so far and the fact that the talks are continuing is seen here as a success in itself.

PLO members are banned from the peace talks, which were launched last October in Madrid, but several sit on a steering committee for the Palestinian delegation.

A Foreign Ministry spokesman said the Israeli team left Ben Gurion airport, near Tel Avtv, led by Yossi Ben Aharon, Director of the Prime Minister's Office, and Ben-jamin Netanyahu, Deputy Min-ister for Information.

Meanwhile, President Haez Al-Assad has said that Arab lands will only belong to Arabs. and, that peace and the occupation of Arab territory were incompatible.

"The peace we have defined is a fair peace which implements all United Nations resolutions, returns land to its owners and establishes peace for all," he said Saturday at a dinner honouring visiting Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrossian.

On Tuesday, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir asserted that Judea-Samaria the biblical names for the occupted West Bank and the Gaza Strip - would forever remain under Israeli control.

Assad meanwhile said that if previous rounds of bilateral Middle East talks in Washington had been sterile, the reason was due to the stubbornness of Israeli officials and their determination to create obstacles in the path of peace.

His comments came two days ahead of the start of the fifth round of bilateral talks in Washington.

Assad added that for Israeli officials, peace meant "that Arabs accept to hand over their lands to Israel which had occupied them by force of

The Syrian press Sunday voiced skepticism about the success of the Washington talks which are to open

The pro-government Daily Tishrin said the discussions would be no better that the four previous rounds, given Israeli intransigence.

It said "the practices of Israeli officials are a sham for the international community which henceforce has no more excuses not to side with its charters, principles and reso-

Another officials newspaper, Ath-Thwara, said the whole world knew Israel had proved it did not want to respond to any effort likely to create conditions conductve to pursing the peace negotiations.

Austrians vote for successor to Waldheim

VIENNA, Apr 26: Austrians hope to end their nation's isolation as they vote Sunday for a successor to controversial President Kurt Waldheim, reports AP.

Although the incumbent is not on the ballot, his legacy of isolation at home and abroad was a major issue in a dull campaign. All four candidates pledged to offer moral guid ance and secure Austria's place in the world.

Opinion polls showed the Social Democrats' Rudolf Streicher and Thomas Klestil candidate of the Conservative People's Party, were likely front runners, but with neither gaining the absolute majority required to win.

Police say 35 people have

died so far in the Molo vio-

lence which has forced thou

sands of people to flee the

strife-torn region. Many of the

victims and most of the dis-

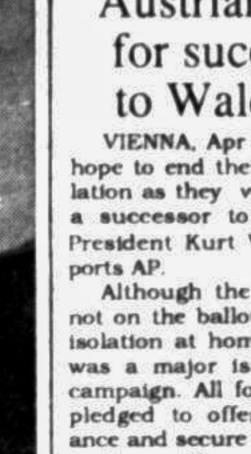
placed are children and

women, according to newspa-

have been streaming to Nairobi

and include Kalenjin, who are

Hundreds of the displaced



Actor turns boxer

Miss Switzerland Sandra Aegerter, Miss France Linda

Hardy and Miss Germany Monika Resch pose for

photographs at Queen Sirikit National Conrention Center

in Bangkok Saturday. The Miss Universe pageant will be

Andrew, Fergie may

patch up marriage

separation was announced last month, are to try for a recon-

chiation, Britain's tabloids reports, says AFP.

sort island of Phuket, off Thailand.

LONDON: Prince Andrew and the Duchess of York, whose

Who 'believes there is a chance' the couple might patch up

But the Sunday Mirror said the Duchess of York had been

Most papers reported that the Duchess of York, popularly

offered four million pound (seven million dollar) as a financial

settlement and that the couple's divorce would soon be pro-

known as Fergie, had meanwhile been vacationing on the re-

- AFP/UNB photo

held in the capital May 9.

nounced.

MAIMI BEACH: Actor Mickey Rourke took over a Gym to prepare to defend his undefeated professional boxing record - one win - in a light heavyweight match with a former sparring partner, reports AP.

The co-star of the newly released movie mystery "White Sands" took over the famed Fifth Street Gym for the scheduled Saturday night bout with Francisco Harris.

Rourke, who had a 23-3 record as an amateur in the 1970s, turned pro last May with a unanimous decision in a sloppy slugfest.

Both Rourke and Harris, 2-2 as a pro and 8-2 as an amateur, weighed in at about 175 pounds (80 kilograms).

Rourke's pro bout last year drew a crowd of 2,200 people, including actors, boxers and a crush of paparazzi, many representing publications in Europe where the 35-year-old actor is popular.

Granny saves baby at cost of life

CHATHAM, Ontario: A woman crossing a highway threw her granddaughter to safety only seconds before being struck

by a car and fatally injured, police said, reports AP. Dana Tourlas, 64, saw the car coming and threw the child out of the path moments before she was struck late

Friday night, police said. Tourlas was taken to a hospital with head injuries and

later died. Her granddaughter, 18-month-old Tammy Tourlas, was admitted to another hospital for observation and treated for a

mild concussion. Police said the woman was wearing dark clothing that might not have made her easily visible. No charges will be filed against the driver of the car, police said.

Emergency declared 11, 862 Lankan babies exported

COLOMBO, Apr 26 : As many as 11,862 Sri Lankan eign countries mostly in the West for adoption during the last two and a half decades, "the island" said today, reports

Out of these only 911 children were sent with approval by the Probation Department, the newspaper said quoting the Commissioner for Department of Child Care and Probation, Padma Ranasinghe.

45 hurt as California

rocked again nty, where the state set a FERNDALE, Calif. Apr 26 preliminary damage figure of Gov. Pete Wilson has declared 3.5 million dollar. Officials said a state of emergency in that of the 45 people injured Northern California after a Saturday, eight were hospital-

major earthquake knocked houses off their foundations, started fires and injured at least 45 people, reports AP.

Saturday's tremor was the second major quake in the state in less than a week, but was unrelated to the Southern California quake last Wed-

Wilson declared the state of emergency in Humboldt Cou-

The worst damage occurred in the town of Ferndale, just a few miles from the epicenter, and in nearby Petrolia, where the post office and other

The area, 250 miles north of San Francisco, is mostly mountainous and sparsely pop-

buildings burned to the

"People were running all over the place," said Ray Azevedo, who drove into Ferndale a few minutes after the quake struck. "It was like a

bees' nest, with people running every which way. The quake, which measured 6.9 on the Ricther scale, was centered just onshore near the

town of 1,300 residents where brick facades collapsed during a street festival and Victorian homes were knocked from foundations. Shop windows shattered

throughout the center of town, and cars were crushed by falling bricks and debris when the quake struck at 11:06 am (1806 GMT) Saturday.

The US Geological Survey in Golden, Colo, confirmed a reading of 6.9 on the Richter scale and reported several aftershocks.

Richardson said power was out in the city and some large water mains were broken.



explosion continued demolition work in the Lebanese capital. The city is starting to rebuild - AFP/UNB photo after 16 years of civil war.

Fresh ethnic riots kill 35 in Kenya

NAIROBI, Apr 26: A new round of tribal clashes has killed 35 people and forced thousands to flee their homes in western Kenya, while newspaper reports Sunday indicated the violence may be spreading toward the capital's volatile slums, reports AP.

The country's mainline Anglican denomination, the Church of the Province of Kenya, broadly criticized the government for failing to control the violence which has killed more than 100 people since beginning late last year in the Rift Valley and the nearby region bordering Lake Victoria.

The CPK's criticism follows statements from other churches that have accused the government of orchestrating the clashes which followed

Arap Moi's reluctant decision to permit pluralism in what had been a one-party state. Victims of the violence

closely upon President Daniel

claim it is perpetrated by members of Moi's small Kalenjin tribe, which comes from the Rift Valley, against Kenya's predominant Kikuyu, Luo and Luhya ethnic groups, and that security forces do little to halt the attacks. In a statement printed

Sunday, prominent opposition activist Wangari Maathai said the government was sending contradictory messages: "One to the Kalenjin to continue the butchering of other tribes, and one to the general public to maintain peace." Western diplomats and op-

position figures have said they suspect Moi's government

bid to discredit pluralism, which the president has long said would lead to ethnic vio-Mot ended 22 years of sin-

might incite the violence in a

gle-party rule in December when he legalized opposition parties shortly after Western donors suspended aid to this East African nation of 24 mil lion, citing mismanagement corruption and political repression. In subsequent statements,

Moi has complained that the move to pluralism was forced upon him by foreign powers. The latest round of fighting,

which began Monday, centers upon the Molo area, 130 miles (210 kilometers) northwest of Nairobi, and like previous clashes features bows, arrows, spears, machetes and arson as

being attacked by mobs seek ing vengeance. English-lan guage newspapers reported The Nation reported that in

separate incidents, mobs killed a man carrying arrows as police escorted him to Nairobi's central police station, while another group attacked and seriously injured a couple believed to be Kalenjin.

All-race polls a ploy to prolong white rule, says Mandela Mandela's rejection of the plan blacks and whites and drawn JOHANNESBURG, Apr 26

Black South African leader Nelson Mandela on Saturday dismissed a government plan for all-race elections as a ploy to prolong white rule and condemned as 'reckless' its demand he disband antiapartheid guerillas, reports Reuter.

Mandelas's main black rival, Zulu leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi, also rejected the plan unveiled by South African President F W de Klerk on Thursday, calling it so "sketchy and ambiguous that it is difficult to comment at all." De Klerk's National Party

(NP) said in a statement

was simplistic nonsense.

His refusal to disband the armed wing of his African National Congress (ANC) did not inspire confidence that the movement was committed to peaceful negotiations, it said.

De Klerk's plan is for the election of an all-race council to rule the country in the transition from 300 years of white supremacy to a democracy giving the black majority the vote. De Klerk said on Thursday

he would propose at multiparty democracy talks that his powers should be taken over by an interim executive council elected as soon as possible by from the three to five biggest The job of head of state and

government should rotate at half-yearly intervals and the council should rule by consen-

"The NP is proposing a loser takes all solution ... that will permit the political parties to ignore the verdict of the electorate," Mandela said at his installation as Chancellor of the black university of the north in the tribal territory of Lebowa north of Pretoria. The ANC president said he

was impatient to bring about democracy

to West for adoption

babies were "exported" to for-

Lebanon to hold legislative polls

AFP reports from Bangkok.

cause of deteriorating health.

saying, AFP from Belgrade says.

in the latest fighting on Friday.

BEIRUT, Apr 26: Lebanon will hold its first legislative elections for 20 years between July and August, Prime Minister Omar Karami said in a statement published here

Saturday, reports AFP. But he told an Nahar newspaper that he was opposed to moves which would allow Lebanese living abroad to take part in the vote.

"Those who left the country did so under political pressure or for security reasons. Their vote would not count because it would not be made in light of the situation (of peace) that now prevails," Karami

The holding of elections has stirred passions in Lebanon, with opponents, mainly Christian leaders.

Over 20 Ethiopian returnees die in camps a day DOLO, Ethiopia, Apr 26:

Thousands of skeletal figures came running from all directions when the plane swooped towards the landing strip in the dust-swept Ethiopian hamlet of Dolo, reports Reuter. On the ground, haggard and

emaciated men and women -some including bony children waited expectantly for long promised food handouts as the party of journalists piled out of the aircraft.

Slowly, the crowds realised this was not to be the day. Dejectedly they turned round and shuffled back to the makeshift camps which surround Dolo.

"There is no food, no water, no medical care, there is nothing here except death," said one camp resident.

Community leaders told journalists that more than 20 people die every day around Dolo, a remote spot near the Somali border.

"Dolo must be one of the most miserable places on earth." Said Ben Parker of the UN's emergency and preparedness group.

The camps at Dolo are composed of thousands of flimsy shelters, held together by bits of rag and sticks. They offer no protection form scorching midday heat or chilly nights.

Tankers with drinking water, a common sight in more well-established camps in Ethiopia, are no where to be

Inside the shelters, children suffering from famine and

related diseases lie on dirty floors awaiting near certain

Other children stand around out side, with eye sources and the classic bloated bellies of the severely malnourished.

More than 200,000 former Ethiopian refugees who originally fled into neighbouring Somalia during the 1977-78 Ogaden war have moved into the camps.

These people, known in aid organisation Jargon as "returnees", have now lost everything twice in 15 years -some of the most tragic victims of the turmoil in the horn of Africa where more than 23 million now face starvation. About 145,000 Somali refugees who fled months of savage country have also flocked to the camps. The numbers have been further swollen by thousands of

inter-clan fighting in their own

local people who left their villages because of drought in the region. Community leaders say that

for the last four months the people have lived by selling what little they have and scouring the desert for anything to help them survive. The huge number of people now living around Dolo has

dried up the water wells in the

Demoz Kebebu, a representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNCHR), said about

distributed among the people some months ago. This amounted to a kilo or

18,000 litres of edible oil were

less for each person, he said "That was what we had and that was what we gave ... now our stores are empty." The UNCHR and the gov-

ernment-run Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) have only a token presence in the area, visitors say. Rains have failed for the second successive year over

much of Ethiopia, and the RRC estimates that more than seven million people in the country now face death from starvation. The drought has been exac

erbated by widespread ban ditry and ethnic clashes that 300 tonnes of grain and

south since dictator Mengistu Haile Mariam was ousted last Aid operations have been

severely disrupted by lack of security. Bandit gangs of former Mengistu soldiers roam unopposed. Relief work in the Ogaden,

have erupted in most of the

another badly hit area, was suspended this month after a UNCHR worker was shot dead -- the 15th aid worker killed in Ethiopia in the last seven months. Ethiopia has appealed for

1.4 million tonnes of emer gency food aid but only a fraction has arrived. "People are tired of Africa. It just never seems to get any

Ferndale Mayor Ron better," lamented one aid worker based in Addis Ababa.