

BRIEFLY

US Bar to send lawyers to CIS: The American Bar Association said on Friday it would send US lawyers to the Commonwealth of Independent States to help establish a democratic legal system in the former Soviet Union, Reuters reports from Washington.

The goal is to help these countries establish the rule of law. ABA President Talbot D. Alenbert told a news conference.

The programme is an extension of the ABA's central and East European law initiative that has sent 125 American lawyers and judges to workshops in those countries and brought several Eastern European lawyers to work in the United States.

The US Agency for International Development gave the ABA a one million dollar grant to fund expenses of the CIS programme for one year. The lawyers will donate their time.

Peace talks stalled in Bosnia: A European Community mediator suspended Bosnia-Herzegovina peace talks Friday blaming Serbia for violating the cease-fire agreement, AP reports from Lisbon.

Mediator Jose Guterres of Portugal said he was calling a halt to the eighth round of talks with three warring ethnic factions because Serbia has failed to withdraw artillery or remove blockades.

One student was listed in critical condition. Two students and an adult were listed fair condition and four others were reported stable.

Deputies of Yuba County sheriff's deputies surrounded the school building that houses its library. California Highway Patrol helicopters circled overhead.

Witnesses who ran screaming from the school told of multiple injuries and said student were taken hostage by a young man wearing a camouflage military coat, with bullets strapped to his chest.

Army for fresh polls in Haiti: Army leaders who ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide are insisting on new elections to replace him, a legislator said Friday, AP reports from Port-au-Prince.

Officially, the army leadership said it would not take a political position in talks that started Wednesday among military commanders, interim President Joseph Nerette and legislators.

The army said it brought no plan to the talks, aimed at resolving the crisis triggered by a bloody September coup that ousted Aristide.

But House of Deputies member Joseph Fignole Jean-Louis said the army rejected a plan brokered by the Organisation of American States that envisions Aristide's reinstatement.

Blast kills 13 in Rwanda: A suspected terrorist attack killed 13 people and injured 22 others Friday when a mine blew up a minibus at Ruhango in Rwanda, diplomatic sources reached from Nairobi said, AFP reports from Nairobi.

The cause of the blast, about 100 kilometers (60 miles) south of the capital Kigali, was not known, the sources said. Fourteen of the injured were badly hurt.

Official radio Rwanda said the authorities were "doing everything in the power" to track down those responsible.

Similar attacks with Soviet-made mines have killed 10 people and injured some 50 others since March 12 when 10 people including four children died at Nyanza in central Rwanda on their way to a funeral.

All set for Korean peace talks: North and South Korea have agreed on final arrangements for next week's talks between their prime ministers, a Seoul government spokesman said on Friday, Reuters reports from Seoul.

The two sides concluded all procedural matters for the seventh round of South-North high-level talks in Seoul, the spokesman said.

North Korean Prime Minister Yon Hyong-Muk, heading a 40-member delegation and accompanied by 50 reporters, will cross the closely guarded border into the South on Tuesday for a four-day visit that will include talks, dinners and sightseeing, he said.

Violence claims 21 in Mozambique: Twenty one people were killed and 26 wounded when a convoy of vehicles was attacked in Mozambique near the South African border, Portuguese radio said, Reuters reports from London.

The radio, monitored by the British Broad Casting Corporation, quoted survivors as saying the convoy was being escorted by Mozambican soldiers.

Police-rioters clash in Egypt: 30 arrested

CAIRO, May 2: An anti-government sit-in in a mosque erupted into violence between Muslim extremists and police Friday. A 9-year-old girl was killed and three officers and four rioters were injured, reports AP.

About 30 rioters were arrested, police sources said.

The violence was the latest in a string of clashes between police and radicals. Some of the radicals arrested have been linked to the Muslim group that assassinated President Anwar Sadat in 1981.

The girl killed Friday was hit by a stray bullet while she was standing at the door of her home, said police sources who asked not to be identified further.

The clashes began when police used tear gas to end a sit-in at Al-Ikhlal Mosque in Imbaba district by about 500 Muslim extremists shouting anti-government slogans after noon prayers.

The extremists threw fire bombs and used stones, chains

and sticks against police. By nightfall, the situation in the densely populated area was calm but tense. Police forces ringed the district and ordered residents to stay indoors.

One Muslim extremist was killed and two police officers were wounded Wednesday in similar clashes in the area and in southern Egypt.

Interior Minister Abdel-Halim Moussa said the incident Wednesday in Cairo was sparked by Muslim extremists who stoned a Coptic Church and then turned on an arriving police car. A man tried to disarm its commander, who opened fire on the bearded attackers, killing a 22-year-old man.

In the southern incident, security officials said, two Muslim extremists opened fire on a police officer as police tried to arrest them at a coffee shop at Dayrout in the province of Assiut. The area is a hotbed of sectarian violence.

UK supports Japan's stand on Kurile Islands

LONDON, May 2: Prime Minister John Major assured Japan on Thursday that Britain fully supported Tokyo's position in its territorial dispute with Moscow, a Japanese official said, reports Reuters.

He quoted Major as telling Japanese Finance Minister Tsutomu Hata that an early resolution of the dispute over four islands which Japan claims would benefit the global community.

Japan has said that the dispute over the Kurile Islands, seized by Moscow in 1945, is a major obstacle to aiding the former Soviet Union.

China expels 7 Europeans as they protest in Tiananmen Square

HONG KONG, May 2: China expelled seven European trade unionists including a British member of parliament, yesterday after they staged a 20-minute protest in Beijing's Tiananmen Square, centre of 1989's abortive student uprising, reports Reuters.

Security men manhandled them into cars to break up the demonstration but did not physically mistreat them during 17 hours of detention members of the group — one Briton, two Germans, one Swiss and three Frenchmen — said after arriving in Hong Kong.

"This is an important day in the labour movement and unfortunately myself and all my colleagues were virtually de-

Ramos supporters barge into Congress bldg

MANILA, May 2: Supporters of presidential candidate Fidel Ramos broke into the House of Representatives on Saturday and claimed the speaker was using the chamber's printing press to produce material for his presidential campaign, reports AP.

Marine guards locked the intruders inside the building and called the police. But when police discovered that the intruders included congressmen, they allowed them to leave without arrest.

The group then milled around the building, complaining to reporters about an alleged violation of campaign regulations. A representative of the Commission on Elections was sent to the building to investigate the complaint.



MANILA: President Corason Aquino (L) gives the thumbs up gesture Friday together with her choice as her successor, Fidel Ramos, in the upcoming national elections May 11. Aquino denied charges by Marcos' former defence minister Juan Ponce Enrile Friday that Ramos, who served as paramilitary chief under the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos, was behind the detention of opposition members during the Marcos' regime.

Indian-ruled Kashmir to become part of Pakistan: Sharif

ISLAMABAD, May 2: Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said on Friday the victory of Afghan Mujahideen guerrillas in Afghanistan would help what he called freedom movements of Kashmiris and Palestinians, reports Reuters.

"Today Afghanistan is free, now Kashmir will be liberated, Palestine will be liberated and Muslims wherever they are subjugated will be free," the state television quoted him as saying in a speech in the Punjab province capital Lahore. He was addressing thousands of people at a Muslim prayer meeting at Lahore's Badshahi Mosque.

Sharif had called for thanksgiving prayers across the country to celebrate the victory of Islamic guerrillas in the 14-year Afghan civil war.

"Inspired by the same spirit which helped the Mujahideen in getting victory against a superpower in Afghanistan, Kashmir will also be liberated," he said.

Sharif said he believed Indian-ruled Kashmir would become part of Pakistan, and that one day he might pray at a mosque in Kashmir's summer capital Srinagar as he did in the Afghan capital of Kabul on Wednesday.

India controls two-thirds and Pakistan the rest of

Kashmir, over which the two countries have fought two of their three wars since their independence from Britain in 1947.

More than 7,000 people have been killed in Indian Kashmir during the two-year-old uprising by Muslim militants seeking independence or union with Islamic Pakistan.

India accused Pakistan of training and arming Kashmiri militants. Pakistan denies the charge but says it gives the militants only political and moral support.

Many Kashmiri militants have received training from Afghan guerrillas, according to

Kashmiri sources.

AFP adds: Three people were killed in a village north of Muzaffarabad when Indian soldiers fired on a bus from across the border Friday, residents said.

According to officials, the incident occurred in Seemari, in the Neelum valley, some 60 kilometres (38 miles) from Muzaffarabad, the capital of Pakistan-controlled Kashmir.

No more details were immediately available.

In India, an army spokesman said "there may have been an exchange of fire," but he denied any shooting on a bus.

May Day observed Angry workers take to Russian streets, blast Yeltsin's reforms

MOSCOW, May 2: Workers angry over a staggering rise in the cost of living took to the streets and denounced President Boris Yeltsin's free market reforms on Friday, the first May Day in post-Communist Russia, reports AP.

Breaking with decades of tradition, the government did not sponsor a stiff parade of solemn workers across Red Square. Instead Russia's legislature declared the day a non-ideological celebration of spring, as well as labour.

Cash-hungry city officials sold advertisements on giant billboards facing Red Square. In past years, those billboards carried portraits of Soviet founder Vladimir Lenin and 10-meter (30-foot) banners saying "Workers of the World, Unite."

This year's message amounted to "Workers of the World, Take a Vacation." A mammoth billboard on the GUM department store facing Lenin's tomb touted Spain's Canary Islands with a picture of a perfect beach, sea and palm trees.

Spring was in the air as Moscow's ubiquitous Babushkas or grandmothers, strolled without their heavy wool coats. White, red and blue banners — the colours of the Russian flag — rippled in the breeze along the capital's eight-lane thoroughfares.

But the public mood was less cheerful. Diehard Communists, Russian nationalists and others disenchanted by Yeltsin's reforms "vented their anger in cities across Russia, from Moscow to Siberia."

Between 500 and 1,000 demonstrators, some wearing pre-revolutionary Cossack uniforms, gathered at a statue of Lenin in Moscow's October Square. They planned to march to the Kremlin for a rally of the Moscow Labor movement, a neo-Communist organization. Hundreds of police ringed Red Square to await their arrival and keep order.

In Khabarovsk, more than 6,250 kilometers (3,800 miles) to the east, a few hundred protesters also rallied around a Lenin statue, and speakers demanded Yeltsin's resignation, the ITAR-Tass news agency reported.

A pro-Yeltsin speaker was backed at a rally in Petropavlovsk, on Siberia's Kamchatka peninsula.

China executes 5 train robbers

BEIJING, May 2: Five train robbers were executed this week as part of China's new crackdown on increasing crime on passenger trains and theft of railway facilities, reports said Saturday, says AP.

The People's Daily (Renmin Ribao) said the robbers were executed Wednesday in the southern city of Nanchang, Jiangxi province. They had shot and killed one police officer and wounded another during questioning on a train.

The official, English-language China Daily reported separately Saturday that the Railways Ministry last week announced the three-month crackdown on crime on trains, the main mode of long-distance travel in China.

The crackdown was prompted by an incident on April 1 in which six college students were badly wounded when they tried to stop a five-man gang from robbing passengers on a train.

The nationally televised evening news showed the students with multiple knife injuries lying in hospital beds describing how train attendants and police refused to intervene to stop the robbery.

Ten more dissidents freed Husband, sons allowed to meet Suu Kyi

BANGKOK, May 2: The British husband of detained Nobel Peace Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi will fly today to Myanmar where the ruling Junta has said he can see his



wife for the first time in two and a half years, Reports Reuters.

Michael Aris, a visiting professor at Harvard University in the United States is booked on

a Thai Airways International flight from Bangkok to Yangon, a Thai reservations official said on Friday.

Myanmar's ruling military said last week that Aris and the couple's two sons would be allowed into Myanmar for a "family reunion." It would be the first time Aris would see his wife since December 1989.

Aung San Suu Kyi 46, leader of Myanmar's main opposition party the National League for Democracy (NLD), has been detained at her home since July 1989.

She was awarded the 1991 Nobel Peace prize in October for standing up to what the awarding committee called "a regime characterised by brutality."

Another Report adds: Myanmar ruling military authorities released another ten opposition figures on Friday state-run radio Yangon reported.

22 Kurds killed in clash with Turkish troops

DIYARBAKIR, Turkey, May 2: Six soldiers and 22 Kurdish separatist guerrillas were killed in clashes in southeastern Turkey, officials said Friday, Reports AP.

The announcement from the regional governor's office said the soldiers were ambushed by rebels near Kayadere village near Diyarbakir as they were returning from a patrol on Thursday.

Eighteen guerrillas were killed in a shootout near the town of Solhan in Bingol province Friday, it said.

Anatolia news agency reported the site of the clash as near the town of Elmalik earlier in the day. The dispatch said six guerrillas were killed in the five-hour-long shootout.

No more details were given in the official announcement, which reported 12 more deaths.

Three guerrillas were killed in another clash in Bingol province on Thursday, and troops killed another guerrilla and captured four others at the town of Nusaybin in Mardin province, according to governor's office.

Off the Record

Jackson named 'Points of Light Ambassador'

WASHINGTON: Pop singer Michael Jackson Friday was named a "Points of Light Ambassador" for his work with youths and handicapped children, the White House said in a statement, reports AP.

The internationally celebrated star was recognized by President George Bush's "points of light" programme which was developed at the 1988 Republican convention for promoting volunteer work.

Bush calls for physical fitness

WASHINGTON: President Bush urged Americans Friday to make physical exercise a part of each day. But he had to pass up a chance to test his prowess against the likes of Muhammad Ali, Chris Evert and Florence Griffith Joyner, reports AP.

"Fitness can really enrich the human mind and body by lowering stresses, blood pressure and cholesterol," Bush told hundreds of athletes attending the "Great American Workout" at the White House.

"We also have to act on another front, by putting new emphasis on quality physical education in our schools," Bush said.

The President said the goal of the workout was "making exercise a part of American fitness and fitness a part of each American's day."

Arnold Schwarzenegger, the chairman of the President's Council on Physical Fitness, introduced the President. Bush said the body-builder-turned-actor had told him only one state, Illinois, gives daily physical education courses in grades from kindergarten through the high school. The White House South Lawn, more often used for official state welcomes, helicopter landings and the occasional barbecue, was turned into a giant outdoor gym for the workout, the annual kickoff for National Physical Fitness and Sports Month.

Selling pelt of panda sends them to cooler

BEIJING: Two Chinese men have been sentenced to prison for selling the pelt of a panda, an endangered species that China regards as a national treasure, an official newspaper reported Friday, reports AP.

The Wenhui Bag of Shanghai said Wu Huiyuan was sentenced to 12 years for buying and attempting to sell the panda skin. Wang Shuhe was given an eight-year term for helping Wu arrange to sell the hide, the newspaper said.

They were arrested on December at the Peace Hotel in Shanghai as they were accepting 200,000 yuan (\$36,360 dollars) for the pelt, it added.

The report did not make clear if the person who had arranged to buy the skin was working with authorities or if police discovered the deal and moved in as the sale was being made.

"We bought the panda skin for 30,000 yuan (dls 5,450) from two people in the southern province of Sichuan," the newspaper reported. Most of the pandas still living in the wild are found in Sichuan and neighbouring provinces in central China.

The newspaper identified the people who sold the pelt to Wu only by their surnames, Wang and Xie. It said their role in selling the skin was being handled as a separate legal case.



NEW YORK: A police officer (R) tries to remove a Greenpeace activist who chained himself to the US flag pole at the United Nations April 30. Greenpeace protested the US position on global warming as a meeting started in the UN to prepare for the earth summit in June. — AFP/UNB photo

100 abortion protestors held in NY

AMHERST, NEW YORK, May 2: Police Friday arrested more than 100 protestors who tried to close an abortion clinic as the anti-abortion group Operation Rescue resumed demonstrations after two days of prayer and fasting, reports AP.

Four abortion-rights demonstrators also were arrested.

But the group's two-week campaign to stop abortions at four Buffalo-area clinics was to end Saturday. Operation Rescue leaders said.

planation" of the incident it demanded on Thursday.

"We're very pleased Parry and the rest of the party have been released," a spokesman said.

The foreign office said on Thursday that if the group were detained simply for unfurling a pro-democracy banner, that would be viewed as a "disproportionate and unacceptable" response and a protest would be lodged.

On Friday, the spokesman said Britain was still trying to determine what happened and was collating reports from Beijing and Hong Kong before making a decision on possible action.

cannot expel the Chinese workers. They can expel us but they cannot expel their fight for democratic rights, for free trade unions and democracy," said French trade unionist Jean-Pierre Barois.

The seven included a member and assistant of Germany's Saxony parliament, a member of Switzerland's Geneva parliament, two French trade unionists and a French reporter.

In January, China expelled three Canadian members of parliament who had planned to stage a similar protest.

In London, the foreign office welcomed the release of the protesters but said it had not yet received the "full ex-

of demonstrators in June 1989.

China's communist government has kept a tight lid on dissent since the crackdown.

"I deny (That) quite categorically because we walked up and down quite passively and then when we saw we were going to be removed we sat down, quite passively. We didn't use any violence or any force," Parry said.

The group said they met members of the official all-China federation of trade unions but were turned away from the ministry of justice. They dismissed the federation as a "state institution."

Kong activists at Kai Tak airport, the seven chanted "long live free trade unions in China" in the arrival hall before holding an hour-long news conference.

Looking tired and wan, the five men and two women said they had applied in vain for two years for proper visas to visit Beijing to assess human and trade union rights in China and "express solidarity with the Chinese people."

They denied they had behaved provocatively by shouting slogans, unfurling banners and handing out leaflets in the square, one of the most politically sensitive places in China since troops killed hundreds