

BRIEFLY

Kuwait expels Reuter reporter :

Kuwait Sunday expelled a Reuter correspondent for having linked the Emir, Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah, to recent elections for the Chamber of Commerce, the news agency said, AFP reports from Kuwait City.

Diana Abdallah, a 32-year-old Lebanese, was the first foreign reporter to be ordered out since Kuwait was liberated in February 1991. She left on a flight to Cyprus after serving less than three months in the Emirate.

The agency said Abdallah had written a story "erroneously linking the Emir to the defeated side in last Monday's Kuwait Chamber of Commerce leadership elections," widely seen as a test for parliamentary polls in October.

Reuter Editor-in-Chief Mark Wood urged the authorities to reconsider the expulsion, which he described as "severe." He had made a personal appeal to the Emir on Friday to withdraw the expulsion order, served the previous day.

3 peacekeepers killed in Liberia :

Rebels loyal to Charles Taylor attacked the West African peacekeeping force, killing three members and taking jeeps and weapons, witnesses said Sunday, AP reports from Monrovia.

Witnesses returning to the capital from Vahun, on the Sierra Leone-Liberia frontier, said the three dead peacekeeping force members were from Senegal. It was the first major incident since the troops began deploying in territory held by Taylor on April 30.

Senegal joined the force at the request of the United States because Taylor accused the original five members of siding with his opponents.

The witnesses said the incident began Friday when Senegalese troops went to the market to buy food. Taylor's fighters taunted the Senegalese and then attacked them, stripping them of their uniforms and seizing their jeeps and weapons.

The peacekeeping force was sent to Liberia in August of 1990 to end a civil war that had claimed at least 15,000 lives, mostly civilians. The war began when Taylor invaded Liberia in December 1989 to overthrow President Samuel Doe.

Arafat arrives in Amman :

Palestinian President Yasser Arafat arrived here Sunday a working visit during which he will have talks with King Hussein on the Middle East peace process and other regional issues, Xinhua reports from Amman.

Arafat will brief King Hussein on the results of his visits to Cairo and Damascus and the resolutions taken by the Palestinian central council early this month.

The talks will also cover the results of the Arab-Israeli bilateral talks and the latest developments in the occupied lands and in South Lebanon.

Arafat had visited Sanaa, Cairo and Damascus before coming to Amman. In Damascus, the Palestinian leader had talks with President Hafez Al-Assad. The two men, reports said, warned against any eventualities that might arise from Israel's intensified military attacks on Arab targets in South Lebanon.

Clashes claim 17 in Philippines :

At least 17 people were killed Sunday in a gunbattle between supporters of two local officials in Sulu Province, local radio reported Monday morning, Xinhua reports from Manila.

The gunbattle was fought between supporters of incumbent Mayor Abdurassib Harais Kurais and Vice Mayor Abdurassid Sartul, who have had long-standing feud in Tongkil town, Sulu province, some 1,000 kilometers south of Manila.

About 30 houses were burnt during the battle and some 300 inhabitants were forced to flee their homes. The incident took place as the Philippine national police extended indefinitely the ban on the carrying of firearms, which was set to be lifted on June 10.

Several ETA rebels held in France :

Several alleged members of the Basque terrorist group ETA, including key figure Ignaki Bilbao, were arrested here Sunday, a reliable source said, AFP reports from Bayonne.

Also among those arrested was a young woman named Rosario Picabea, whom Spanish police consider an explosives expert.

Composer Welin found dead :

Composer and organist Karl-Erik Welin was found dead Sunday at his home on the Spanish island of Mallorca, news media reported, AP says from Stockholm.

The cause of death was not known. Welin was known for writing and performing avant-garde organ and piano music. Several European composers wrote music especially for him, including Gyorgy Ligeti of Austria and Sylvano Bussotti of Italy.

Welin was born in 1934. He studied at the music conservatories in Berlin and Stockholm. His works include "Renovations", "Manziti", "Warum Nicht?" "Pereo" and "A New Map of Hell".

US, S Arabia to increase military cooperation

WASHINGTON, June 1 : The United States and Saudi Arabia are taking steps to improve bilateral relations, particularly increased military and strategic cooperation, a published report said here Sunday, says AFP.

The two countries will use an amended version of the 1977 military training mission treaty as the basis for expanding joint military exercises with Saudi Arabia, as well as for pre-positioning of US forces in case of future need, the Washington Post said, citing US and Saudi sources.

Last year's war against Iraq pointed to the need for closer ties between the United States and Saudi Arabia, whose relations have been strained in the past over such issues as Washington's support for Israel, The Post said.

"We cooperated together at a time of extraordinary danger for both of us and cooperated

successfully," a senior Pentagon official told The Post.

Immediately following the conclusion of the Gulf War, US officials wanted to negotiate a series of defence agreements with Saudi Arabia and other Middle East nations but Saudi officials were concerned about anti-American sentiments in the Arab world, The Post said.

After Washington signed pacts with Kuwait and Bahrain, the Saudis agreed to discuss an agreement, based on the 1977 treaty, but Riyadh is reportedly reticent to sign any accord that would create a permanent US military presence in the country.

Despite the warming of bilateral relations, problems persist, such as an apparent decision by the White House to delay action on a Saudi request to purchase US-built F-15 jet fighters, The Post said.

Miyazawa to takeover as Foreign Minister

TOKYO, June 1: Japanese Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa will take over as Foreign Minister temporary while the current holder of the post, Michio Watanabe, is in hospital, officials said, Monday reports AFP.

Watanabe was hospitalised Sunday with an acute intestinal illness, the Foreign Ministry officials said.

Watanabe, who is also Deputy Prime Minister, needs complete bed rest for several days, they said.

ROK 'comfort women' start court battle for compensation

TOKYO : South Korean women began their court battle Monday to obtain compensation for wartime sex slavery for the Japanese army, and the first witness said she had been tricked with promises of a factory job, reports AP.

It was not until early this year that the Japanese government admitted the army's role in forcing Korean and other women into World War II military brothels. It has not, however, offered any compensation.

Meanwhile, shame generally kept the victims from coming forward to tell their

We have evidence of Indian subversion : Sharif 200 arrested, travel ban imposed on 300 in Sind

KARACHI, June 1: Pakistani police and troops arrested more than 200 people and slapped a travel ban on hundreds of others in Sind province as part of a security sweep against bandits, officials said Sunday, reports AFP.

Thousands of police and paramilitary troops, backed by the army were mobilised in a campaign against bandits and terrorists in the troubled southern province, arresting more than 200 people, the officials said.

Authorities also imposed a dusk-to-dawn curfew for two months in five districts near the border with India to check "the infiltration of subversive elements" and to stop bandits fleeing, an official said.

Sind's western border with Baluchistan was also sealed and a travel ban imposed on some 300 people, including some deputies and officials.

The move came as Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said Pakistan had "documentary ev-

idence" of the Indian attempts to incite subversion in Sind.

Prof of the "blatant Indian interference in our affairs" had been passed on to the United Nations Sharif told reporters in Islamabad, adding that his government was determined to flush out all the criminals.

But the clampdown failed to check all the violence as two children were killed Sunday in Hyderabad, 130 kilometres north of here, when a bomb they were playing with exploded, hospital sources said.

Last week Sharif ordered the army to carry out a six-month operation against bandits and terrorists in the province and said Saturday that his government would give more powers to the military if necessary to prevent "disruption and lawlessness."

Among those arrested were 40 influential landowners in the province's northern Sukkur district who were suspected of harbouring bandits, a district official said. Another

84 landowners were sought for similar offences, he said.

Opposition leader and former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto criticised the military operation, saying "there is a state of insurgency in Sind and using armed forces at this stage would be a disservice to them."

More than 18,000 troops were taking part and "forces have already plugged loopholes and even made inroads into the marshy jungles of central Sind to take on the bandits," a military official said.

President Ghulam Ishaq Khan told provincial ministers Saturday there were no political motives behind the crackdown, which was solely aimed at "restoring law and order by arresting dacoits (bandits) and saboteurs."

The president, who met Sind Chief Minister Syed Muzaffar Hussain Shah, denied press speculation that the provincial administration was being handed over to the Pak-

istani army.

He said the army had been called in at the request of the provincial government which can ask for assistance from the military under the constitution.

Hussain Shah told provincial legislators that a day would be reserved at the provincial assembly for debate on the law and order situation, but did not specify the date.

Meanwhile, police started proceedings against 14 alleged members of the Al Zulfikar Organisation (AZO) who were captured at sea by a naval task force on May 7 while reportedly trying to cross to India.

Police have charged them with treason after they reportedly confessed that they were going to India for military training.

Most of the accused were members of the Sind People's Students Federation, a dissident student wing of the opposition Pakistan People's Party (PPP).



SUVA : Fijian coup leader Sitiveni Rabuka emerges from a special meeting of his dominant SVT Party Monday called to relay President Penala Ganilau's decision regarding Fiji's new Prime Minister. Rabuka also discussed political coalition after his SVT party failed to win an outright majority in the general elections. — AFP/UNB photo.

Israel digests occupied territories on maps

JERUSALEM, June 1: Twenty-five years after Israel seized the West Bank, Gaza Strip and Golan heights it is virtually impossible to find a map here showing the borders prior to the June 1967 Arab-Israeli war, reports AFP.

The occupied territories have been swallowed up by Israel on all maps printed in the Hebrew state.

The "Green Line" agreed under the armistice signed on the Greek island of Rhodes between Israel and the Arabs in 1949 has disappeared.

"It is a long time since we published maps relating to the situation before 1967. When we are asked if a piece of land is in Israel or Judea-Samaria (West Bank) we give a written answer."

"Our instructions are never to send out a map showing the

old borders," said an employee of the Jerusalem surveyor's office.

The instructions date back to just four months after the sweeping June 1967 victory when the national unity government under Labour's Levy Eshkol decided discreetly to wipe off the 1949 armistice line from all official Israeli documents.

The maps came down from school walls, geography taxis were replaced and today only a few history books show the green line.

As a result youngsters have little idea where the dividing line falls, on a survey carried out in May by the Yediot Aharanot newspaper among secondary school students, none knew where the occupied territories start.

On the ground the reality is

difference.

"The state would not make so much effort to wipe out the green line if it was not so present in everybody's mind, particularly since the Intifada (uprising)," said David Neumann, lecturer in Geography at the University of BeerSheva in southern Israel.

He noted that the only up-to-date green line maps available in Israel today come from the US embassy in Tel Aviv.

Newmann went on: "It doesn't matter so much that the borders have disappeared from the maps, they are a daily reality every time the West Bank or Gaza Strip are closed off from Israeli territory for security reasons."

Like my neighbours on matter what their political opinions are, I prefer to avoid the rocks and Molotov cocktails

8 killed in Kashmir violence

SRINAGAR, June 1: Two Indian army soldiers and a senior paramilitary officer were among eight people killed in weekend violence in Kashmir, torn by a bloody Muslim militancy, police and media reports said, reports AFP.

Suspected Muslim militants late Saturday kidnapped a group of six soldiers on patrol duty in Kahashpura village outside Srinagar, the summer capital of the northern state of Jammu and Kashmir.

At least two of the abducted were shot dead later, police sources said, adding their bodies were found in the area Sunday. The other four are still "missing," they said, without giving details.

No one has claimed responsibility for the killings.

Velayati to visit Lebanon soon

BEIRUT, June 1: Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati will visit Lebanon "shortly" at the invitation of his Lebanese opposite number Fares Bueiz, Iran's Charge d'Affaires Hamayun Ali Zada announced late Sunday, reports AFP.

Zada, speaking to journalists here after an hour-long meeting with Bueiz, declined to give a date for the visit.

He said discussions had covered "the joint causes that link our two countries," but refused to reply to a question about two German hostages held for three years in Lebanon by kidnapers linked with the pro-Iran Shiite Muslims Hezbollah (party of God).

An authoritative source at the Foreign Ministry here said Velayati's visit, to take place in June, "will be an essential turning point in Iranian-Lebanese relations is no far as coordination is concerned on planning of regional policy.

Local radio said the airforce was using fighter aircraft to bombard the guerrilla positions. Troops had defused three minefields set by the guerrillas, it said.

Y'slav plane lands in Athens despite embargo

ATHENS, June 1: A regular flight from Belgrade by the Yugoslav Airline jet landed in Athens Sunday evening despite the embargo imposed Saturday by the UN Security Council, airport sources said, reports AFP.

The plane is scheduled to return to Belgrade around dawn Monday, Athens Air Traffic Control said. The sources said that airport staff had not received instructions regarding the embargo.

An authoritative source said earlier that Greece did not plan to cut its airlinks with Serbia.

No official figures are available, but Korean and Japanese historians estimate that between 70,000 and 200,000 Korean women were forced into prostitution for Japan's wartime army.

Many of the women died of venereal disease or were left to starve and face air raids alone as the tide of war turned and Japanese

forces retreated. Japan, under fire from its Asian neighbours for trying to play down such wartime atrocities as the Nanking Massacre and germ experiments, long had denied the military's involvement in the forced prostitution. But in January, government documents surfaced showing that the army controlled the recruitment of women and the operation of "comfort stations."

On a visit to Seoul soon after that, Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa apologized but stopped short of offering compensation.

Off the Record

Concert for Chernobyl children

MOSCOW : Foreign and Russian musicians rocked central Moscow on Sunday in a benefit concert for children suffering the effects of the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear plant accident, reports AP.

Some 10,000 people filed into the huge Manezh Square adjacent to the Kremlin to hear the Blues Band and the Animals. Rumors had swirled around town for weeks that the Rolling Stones' Mick Jagger and singer Joan Jett also would appear, but the performers were no-shows.

"We want to attract attention of all the world to the problems of healing and helping the children who suffered from the Chernobyl catastrophe, children who are not guilty of anything but who have been made to suffer," said the concert's coordinator, Sergei Kharchenko.

Among the performers expected were Southside Johnny from the United States, Desert Train from Sweden, Empire from Israel, and Andreas Wollendeider from Switzerland.

The concert was organized by the British Record Producers Guild, a Japanese-Israeli joint venture called Kathatus International, and the Russian company Annex.

Admission was free, and all proceeds came from sponsors, which included the Moscow Business Bank, the Chotscools trade firm from Germany, Aeroflot and Finnair airlines, among others.

Children are among many of the victims of the Chernobyl disaster. Although officials still say 32 died, independent estimates put the number in the hundreds or thousands, with many thousands more still suffering the effects.

An exchange of diploma & condom

HOUSTON : Some high school students went home without diplomas after rowdiness at their graduation ceremony - including the appearance of a blow-up doll and the handing of condoms to the principal - caused cancellation of the event, reports AP.

Memorial High School Principal Virginia Leiker halted Saturday's ceremony without explanation. Students and parents boomed loudly.

During the valedictorian's speech, a blow-up doll was dropped among the 400 graduates. The principal stopped the proceedings until the doll was confiscated and the man responsible - a graduate's brother - was escorted out.

She stopped the ceremony twice more when beach balls appeared.

As diplomas were distributed, some students tried to pass marbles, and in two cases condoms - while shaking hands with the principal.

"Believe me, this was not an easy decision," Ms Leiker said in a telephone interview from a restaurant where she and school trustees gathered afterward.

About 100 high school graduates weren't able to get their diplomas. Commencement was cut off after the letter "O." Students whose surnames begin with letters "P" through "Z" can collect their diplomas Monday.

"I don't think I've ever been madder in my life," said Tracy Winborn, 18. "I knew that some people acted up, brought beach balls and marbles and whatever, but I personally didn't do a thing."

During diploma distribution, the principal said, one student tried to hand her a condom.

When a second student passed her two prophylactics and marched off the stage with hands held high, Ms Leiker said she had enough.

Fighting in Colombia's decades-old guerrilla war has increased sharply since peace talks between the government and guerrillas in Mexico were suspended early in May after making no progress.

Fresh violence leaves 17 dead in Colombia

BOGOTA, COLOMBIA, June 1 : Soldiers battled left-wing guerrillas in several regions of Colombia on Sunday and military sources said at least 17 rebels and soldiers had been killed, reports Reuter.

The most serious fighting was near Chameza, in the foothills of the Andes mountains 150 kms northeast of Bogota, where military sources said 12 guerrillas and three soldiers had died since last Friday in fierce fighting.

Another four soldiers were wounded in the clashes against both the Marxist Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC) and the National Liberation Army rebel groups, they said.

Local radio said the airforce was using fighter aircraft to bombard the guerrilla positions. Troops had defused three minefields set by the guerrillas, it said.

Local radio said another three guerrillas and three civilians were killed on Sunday after the FARC ambushed a military patrol in northwestern Colombia.

At the weekend the army dismantled three guerrilla camps, killed two guerrillas and captured four in the San Lucas mountains, 300 kms north of Bogota, the military sources said.

Local radio said another three guerrillas and three civilians were killed on Sunday after the FARC ambushed a military patrol in northwestern Colombia.

White House proposes \$ 40m CIA budget to oust Saddam

LOS ANGELES, June 1: The US administration has proposed almost tripling the \$15 million dollar CIA budget for covert operations to help overthrow Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, the Los Angeles Times reported on Sunday, says Reuter.

The request calls for an increase in CIA spending to 40 million dollar for the campaign against Hussein, who has frustrated the White House with his ability to withstand political and military punishment from last year's operation desert storm, US sources told

the newspaper.

The new funding would be devoted to a programme that began in May 1991, when President George Bush signed a Presidential finding after a US led invasion and uprising by Hussein's Shiite and Kurdish opponents failed to dislodge the Iraqi leader. A finding is a special order required under US law to authorize covert operations.

The finding opened the way for US covert action to destabilise Hussein and encourage internal efforts to overthrow him, the sources were quoted

as saying.

A Presidential spokesman, Michel Busch, said the White House had no comment on the report.

Senior US analysts have told the Bush Administration that Hussein may be able to stay in power indefinitely.

According to the newspaper's sources, the Central Intelligence Agency would use the funds primarily to conduct surveillance over Iraq to detect arms deployments, to assist Iraqi opposition groups and to expand an anti-Hussein propaganda campaign.

On the third day, she said, a soldier accused her of disobedience and cut her in the chest.

In 1945, she underwent surgery to remove her womb because of infection, her lawyers said.

Ms. Kaneda, who now works as a maid in South Korea, said she still cries often when she thinks of her wartime suffering.

An attorney for the government reiterated its position rejecting compensation demands.

Japan maintains that South Korea renounced all claims on Japan under the 1965 treaty that normalized diplomatic relations between the two countries.

No official figures are available, but Korean and Japanese historians estimate that between 70,000 and 200,000 Korean women were forced into prostitution for Japan's wartime army.

Many of the women died of venereal disease or were left to starve and face air raids alone as the tide of war turned and Japanese

forces retreated. Japan, under fire from its Asian neighbours for trying to play down such wartime atrocities as the Nanking Massacre and germ experiments, long had denied the military's involvement in the forced prostitution. But in January, government documents surfaced showing that the army controlled the recruitment of women and the operation of "comfort stations."

On a visit to Seoul soon after that, Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa apologized but stopped short of offering compensation.

Rebel casualties were not available.

Reporters are barred from entering the war zone and independent verification of the military's claims was not immediately possible.

In Mullaitivu troops were expected to resume their advance on the Tiger base today after a day's rest.

The military began its offensive against the Tigers, who are fighting for a separate state in the island's north and east, last Thursday.

At least 250 soldiers and rebels have been killed over the previous three days. Over 100 wounded soldiers were admitted to government hospitals on Sunday.