

## BRIEFLY

## 15 killed in Indian train mishap:

An express train left the rails in central India on Thursday, killing at least 15 people and injuring 20, news reports said, reports Reuter from New Delhi.

The train, travelling from the western city of Ahmedabad to Calcutta in the east, left the rails near the town of Wardha, the United News of India (UNI) reported.

Wardha, in Maharashtra state, is about 90 km (560 miles) south of New Delhi.

UNI said the injured had been taken to hospital but gave no further details.

## UN sends official to Baghdad:

The United Nations rushed a senior official to Baghdad on Wednesday to press Security Council demands that UN inspectors be given access to an Agriculture Ministry building, reports Reuter from Baghdad.

Iraqi authorities and UN officials held an hour of talks without resolving their three-day standoff.

"Nothing has changed," said Douglas England, UN head of field operations, who was dispatched from Bahrain for the talks.

It was the first high-level meeting since UN inspectors were barred from entering the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation on Sunday in search of documents on ballistic missiles.

In New York, a spokesman for the UN special commission in charge of scrapping Iraq's lethal weapons said it was routine that Iraqi officials would consult before coming back with an answer.

## 4 communists held in Albania:

Four top officials of the former Communist leadership were placed under house arrest as corruption investigation proceeded, Albanian TV said Wednesday, reports AP from Tirana.

The TV also reported that a similar investigation against 18 others, including the wife of former Stalinist leader Enver Hoxha, had been completed and that they could stand trial soon.

Those placed under house arrest, the report said, were former Premier Adil Carcani, one-time Interior Minister Simon Stefani, Communist personnel chief Lenka Cuko and ideology chief Foto Cami.

They are being investigated for abuse of power and corruption. There was no word on when the investigations would be completed.

## Aftershock rattles California:

Another strong aftershock from last month's twin earthquakes rattled southern California on Wednesday, touching off a fire and shaking two houses off their foundations in the mountains east of Los Angeles, authorities said, reports Reuter from Los Angeles.

Seismologists at the California Institute of Technology said the quake, which hit at about 6:41 pm PDT (0141 GMT) measured 4.8 on the Richter scale and was centred near the town of Big Bear in the San Bernardino mountains.

"I've heard one structure on fire and two houses shook off their foundations," said a fire department spokesman in Big Bear, a town about 90 miles east of Los Angeles that was hit hard by one of the quakes that struck June 28.

There were no immediate reports of injuries.

## Fighting hinders relief efforts

## Bosnia seeks foreign military intervention

SARAJEVO, July 9: The United Nations' top refugee official toured devastated Sarajevo and said aid flights were not enough to save the people of the besieged Bosnian capital, reports Reuter.

Bosnia's Defence Minister pleaded for foreign military intervention to stop the agony which he said the UN-organ-

ised airlift was actually prolonging.

Just hours after Sadako Ogata, the UN High Commissioner for refugees, flew away after a lightning tour of the city the worst fighting for a week flared up.

Serbs besieging Sarajevo and Bosnian government forces defending it fired mortars

and rocket-propelled grenades at each other in night-time clashes centred in the southern suburbs.

"There are heavy artillery duels, the worst in weeks. All parts of town are being hit," said Sarajevo Radio Editor Zoran Pirolic. "It's really bad. People are back in their shelters."

In a relative lull earlier a crowd of about 60 people broke into a store room for a aid — to find it empty.

They surged into the city centre building after a woman smashed her fist through a window, praying blood and shattered glass around her.

"I can't stand it anymore," she yelled.

Ogata said aid flights had brought in more than 900 tonnes of food and medicine since UN troops took over the airport 10 days ago but that only land convoys could really feed the city's 380,000 hungry residents.

"The airlift is not the solution, far from the solution," she said after meeting Bosnian government and Serbian leaders.

"Sarajevo is not the only place that needs assistance."

Ogata, who toured Sarajevo in a flak several sizes too big for her, said she was seriously worried for tens of thousands of people in Serb-surrounded Bihac, Tuzla, Gorazde and other towns in war-battered Bosnia-Herzegovina which have been cut off from all relief by heavy fighting.

She arrived from the Croatian capital Zagreb on the third day of a five-day visit to see at first hand Europe's worst refugee crisis since World War two.

More than two million people have been made homeless by battles in Croatia and

Bosnia and more than 7,500 people have been killed in Bosnia alone.

Ethnic Serbs, who have seized two-thirds of Bosnia to set up their own state, are fighting Muslims and Croats.

Sarajevo Radio said 23 people had been killed in Bosnia since Tuesday, 14 of them in Sarajevo.

The UN Security Council blames neighbouring Serbia mainly for the fighting and has imposed sanctions on it and its tiny ally Montenegro, who make up a new rump Yugoslavia.

Bosnia's Defence Minister Jerko Doko, a Croat, said sanctions were not enough and relief flights were holding up the rescue of Sarajevo by delaying military intervention.

"I wish the airport had never opened in this way. This has slowed down the liberation of Sarajevo," he said.

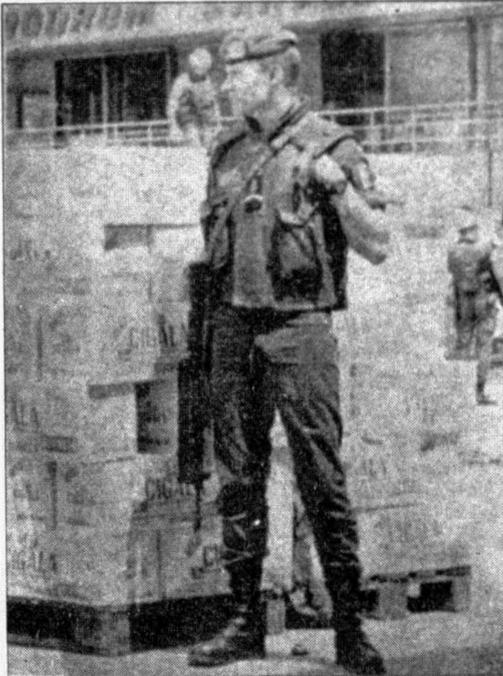
"We believe only in the US sixth fleet to blockade Bosnian air space and give an ultimatum to the aggressor (Serb forces) to withdraw from our territory," he said.

Doko and Bosnia's Muslim President Alija Izetbegovic criticised a year-old UN embargo on arms sales to former Yugoslav republics.

Izetbegovic said in a newspaper interview he would ask US President George Bush for arms and ammunition to prevent mass killing of civilians if Serb forces overrun Sarajevo.

"I'm afraid the population would be subjected to a terrible slaughter as a revenge for their 100 or 200 days of resistance," he said.

Izetbegovic left Sarajevo for the first time in months for Helsinki where he will meet Bush on Friday during a session of the conference on Security and cooperation in Europe.



SARAJEVO: A French soldier of the UN peacekeeping force stands guard in front of humanitarian aid at Sarajevo airport Wednesday. —AFP/UNB photo

## S African govt hails UN efforts for peace talks

JOHANNESBURG, July 9: South Africa's white-led government has welcomed efforts by the United Nations to get democracy talks going again and avert political and economic disaster, reports Reuter.

Foreign Minister Pik Botha on Wednesday welcomed a proposed visit by UN Envoy Cyrus Vance and said it should precede next week's UN Security Council debate on South Africa's worst political crisis in two years of reforms.

"In my opinion, the council will not be in a position to

conduct a balanced debate... unless it has all the facts and points of view before it." Botha said in a letter to Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

Diplomats said the UN head as considering sending Vance — a former US Secretary of State and UN negotiator in Yugoslavia — to South Africa on a goodwill mission.

The African National Congress (ANC) and African states at the United Nations had called for the special Security Council meeting to help halt growing violence

## Ashrawi urges US to act as neutral arbiter in ME talks

WASHINGTON, July 9: The Palestinian spokeswoman in the Middle East peace talks, Hanan Ashrawi, Wednesday urged the United States to act as a neutral arbiter in the negotiations, reports AFP.

Speaking in an interview on Cable News Network, Ashrawi hoped bilateral talks between Israel and the Arab parties would resume next month in Rome, the venue chosen by participants at the last round of talks here in April.

"I would like to see the

United States as an even-handed peace broker," Ashrawi said.

As an example of neutrality, she cited Washington's rejection of Israel's request for 10 billion dollar in loan guarantees so long as Israel continues building settlements in the occupied territories.

Palestinian reject the distinction drawn by Yitzhak Rabin, Israel's newly-elected Prime Minister, between "political" and "strategic" settlements, she said.

"All the settlements are illegal and they have to stop," Ashrawi said in what appeared to be an appeal to the US government.

The United States, which has repeatedly called on Israel to stop new settlements in the West Bank, Golan Heights and Gaza Strip, has yet to comment in detail on Rabin's election victory.

Without welcoming the opposition Labour victory, the Palestinian spokesman hoped it would lead to "serious talks."

## Rain delays Columbia's landing

SPACE CENTRE, Houston, July 9: A storm off California extended Columbia's record-breaking mission to a full two weeks, and NASA on Thursday gave the crew instructions for a landing at the second-choice site in Florida, reports AP.

On Wednesday, the spaceship missed two chances to land because of rain.

The chances for touchdown were at 7:43 a.m. EDT (1143 GMT) at Florida's Kennedy Space Centre, and 9:09 a.m. EDT (1309 GMT) at Edwards Air Force Base in California, the preferred landing site because of its wide-open spaces in the Mojave Desert.

Pindi, Kabul set up jt commission to promote economic ties

ISLAMABAD, July 9: Pakistan and Afghanistan Wednesday agreed to set up a joint ministerial commission to strengthen and improve economic cooperation in the fields of trade, agriculture, science and technology and culture, reports Xinhua.

A memorandum of understanding to this effect was signed here Wednesday by Pakistan Finance Minister Sartaj Aziz and Afghan Planning Minister Sayed Muhammad Ali Javed on behalf of their respective governments.

A formal agreement to set up the joint commission will be ratified after the two governments have approved the proposal and the draft of the agreement, according to the official news agency APP.

The Afghan Planning Minister arrived here on July 6 for an official visit to Pakistan.

## Off the Record

## Diana gives up services of councillor

LONDON: The Princess of Wales has decided to do without the services of her holistic masseur and councillor, Stephen

Twigg, who recently told the media of his tears for her marriage. Buckingham Palace said Tuesday, reports AFP.

"He is no longer attending the Princess of Wales," a palace spokesman said, without going into any details.

Stephen Twigg, who attended the Princess every week for three years, recently gave an interview in which he spoke of Diana's low morale and the alleged difficulties in her marriage to the a British heir, Prince Charles.

"The situation has to end or there will be a tragedy," he said.

He made the comments to coincide with the publication of a biography of the Princess, "Diana, her true story," which exposes the alleged marital problems of Britain's royal couple.



## Poor zoo sells lion, pelicans

BEIJING: The Shanghai Zoo is so desperate for money that it has given away a lion and is selling off its pelicans, an official newspaper said Thursday, reports AP.

The African lion, one of two in the zoo, was the first to go because it was the zoo's biggest eater, the China Daily said.

The pelicans are being sold for the same reason — they need 1.5 kilograms (3 pounds) of fish a day.

Most breeding programmes have been stopped because the zoo, one of China's largest, can't afford to feed more animals, the report said.

Last year, the zoo spent 250,000 yuan (dhs 46,000) on feed, but the bill this year is expected to quadruple, it said. It was not clear why feed costs were going up so sharply.

The overall inflation rate in large cities was 11 per cent from January through May, according to the government. The city government has offered to invest 30 million yuan (dhs 5.5 million) in zoo expansion to attract more tourists, but it apparently isn't willing to help foot the feed bill.

## Unhygienic health workers increase medical cost

BOSTON: Most US health care workers do not wash their hands before examining patients, which may help explain why hospital patients develop infections that cost up to 10 billion dollar a year to cure, a study found, reports Reuter.

Researchers at the University of Iowa hospital found that only three out of five healthcare workers in an intensive care unit bothered to scrub even though they knew they were being watched.

The study appears in Thursday's New England Journal of Medicine. The lack of hygiene is apparently a major problem even though washing is one of modern medicine's basic tenets.

"Experts in infection control coax, cajole, threaten and plead, but still their colleagues neglect to wash their hands," said Dr Donald Goldmann of children's hospital in Boston and Elaine Larson of the John Hopkins School of Nursing.

## Girls get close to boys in math, science

WASHINGTON: US girls are closing up gap with boys in math and science achievement at elementary and secondary schools, said a report released Tuesday by the US Education Department, says Xinhua.

The condition of education 1992's said the tendency for American girls to fall behind boys in math and science between age nine and 17 diminished between 1973 and 1990.

It said at age nine, there was no difference between boys and girls in average math proficiency from 1973 to 1990. In science, girls were slightly behind boys in average proficiency.

## Police patrols beefed up as riots on in Manhattan

NEW YORK, July 9: Police continued beefed-up patrols Wednesday in northern Manhattan after a third night of unrest stemming from the police killing of a Dominican man, reports AP.

There were 2,000 police on the streets of Washington Heights on Tuesday night and "we're not going to scale back," Deputy Police Commissioner Suzanne Trazoff said.

Since the police shooting of Jose Garcia on Friday night, police had made 125 arrests in Washington Heights, a district where many Hispanics live.

Fifty-three officers and 16 civilians were injured, 14 buildings and 121 vehicles were set afire, and 11 police cars were damaged, Trazoff said.

The worst unrest was on Monday night, with violence in a 70-block area. One man died. Scattered violence broke out again Tuesday, resulting in 39 arrests, 25 fires and 12 police officers injured, police said.

Police also had reported some trash fires in the neighbourhood on Saturday night.

One officer was shot in the leg Tuesday, but police said it wasn't definitely linked to the violence.

Mayor David Dinkins visited the neighbourhood for the third straight day Wednesday to try to preserve peace for the Democratic National Convention, which begins Monday at Madison Square Garden, more than five miles (eight kilometres) south of Washington Heights.

"The hope is there will be no negative impact on the convention," Dinkins said before his latest tour. "Our concern is for this community. Our secondary concern is for the image of New York."

Manhattan District Attorney Robert Morgenthau promised a "thorough, careful, impartial and competent" investigation into the deaths of Jose Garcia

and Dagoberto Pichardo.

Garcia, 23, was shot and killed Friday by Officer Michael O'Keefe, the incident that touched off the unrest. Pichardo, 29, fell to his death Monday from a six-story building while fleeing police.

City Councilman Guillermo Linares of Washington Heights said residents were ready to cooperate with the investigations. Police had said witnesses were refusing to talk to them.

"We know a number of witnesses that are prepared to move forward," Linares said.

Dinkins, during a two-block walk, was cordially greeted by most locals. But Luisa Burgos, 40, an immigrant from the Dominican Republic who came to the largely Dominican neighbourhood 20 years ago, wanted assurances about the police.

"They don't really care about the Hispanic community," said Ms Burgos.



MUNICH: US President George Bush joins (L-R) Italian Prime Minister Giuliano Amato, British Prime Minister John Major, French President Francois Mitterrand, Russian President Boris Yeltsin and German Chancellor Helmut Kohl for the group picture at the end of three-day G-7 summit in Munich Wednesday. —AFP/UNB photo

## Pindi, Kabul set up jt commission to promote economic ties

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The Afghan Planning Minister arrived here on July 6 for an official visit to Pakistan.

## US extends sanctions against Libya

MUNICH, Germany, July 9: US President George Bush prolonged US economic sanctions against Libya by six months on Tuesday, on grounds that the North African nation still posed a threat to US national security, reports AFP.

The policies and the actions of the government of Libya continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States," he said.

The sanctions, essentially an embargo against all transactions with Libya, have been renewed every six months since January 7, 1987 as Washington accuses Tripoli of supporting international terrorism.

"I shall continue to exercise the powers at my disposal to apply economic sanctions against Libya fully and effectively as long as those mea-

asures are appropriate," Bush said in a letter addressed to Congress and published here where he is attending the Group of Seven summit of most industrialised nations.

The US government accuses two Libyans of involvement in the December 21, 1988 bombing of a Pan American plane which blew up over Lockerbie in Scotland killing 270 people.

The United States and Britain have both called for the two men to be extradited.

AP adds: The mother of a Pan Am Flight 103 victim says she was asked to sign a letter to Congress to try to end United Nations sanctions against Libya.

Carole Johnson, whose daughter Beth Ann died in the 1988 bombing of Flight 103 over Scotland, said representatives of an American businessman with Libyan ties implied that she would be paid dhs 1 million for her support.

## 300 Muslim fundamentalists face trial in Tunisia

TUNIS, July 9: With one eye on instability next door in Algeria, Tunisia brings nearly 300 Muslim fundamentalists to trial Thursday on charges of trying to overthrow the government and set up an Islamic state, reports AP.

The trial of 279 fundamentalists is the biggest legal process against Islamic extremists in North Africa in years. It opens four days before the resumption of a trial of top Islamic leaders in Algeria.

Both the Algerian and Tunisian cases stem from attempts by extremist Islamic movements in North Africa to take power and impose Koranic rule in secular societies.

In Tunisia, a country of 8 million people wedged between Algeria and Libya, the

fundamentalists are accused of belonging to the non-recognized movement Annahda.

The suspects, including a score of police officers and soldiers, were arrested in a crackdown launched in the spring of 1991.

The Interior Ministry claimed that Annahda, which means Renaissance, was plotting to wage a general terror campaign to topple the government. One alleged tactic was to try to procure a shoulder-fired Stinger missile to shoot down President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali's aircraft.

Hundreds of people were arrested and detained. Amnesty International and Western governments claim many were tortured, and up to nine people were killed in custody.

The official TAP news agency said the 279 suspects will appear before the military tribunal on charges ranging from violence against people and goods to concocting plans to "change the form of state, eliminate the republican regime and establish a totalitarian theocratic state."

Some of the suspects risk the death penalty.

Foreign observers and the press have been given permission to attend the trial, according to TAP.

The leader of Annahda, schoolteacher Rachid Ghanouchi, has been in exile since 1990 and is believed to be traveling between Europe, Africa and the Middle East on a Sudanese diplomatic passport.

Before the 1991 crack-

down, Annahda had organized violent student demonstrations and attacked the headquarters of the ruling Constitutional Democratic Rally party.

Annahda has never been recognized as a legal organization in Tunisia, where religion-based parties are constitutionally banned. However, independent candidates linked to it won 15-30 per cent of the vote in legislative elections in 1989.

Tunisia counts about 10 legal opposition parties, but together they have only a handful of parliamentary seats.

Opposition leaders claim Ben Ali, a general, has used the fundamentalist crackdown as an excuse to stall democratic reforms he promised in 1987

after deposing long-time president Habib Bourguiba.

Authorities claim that the fundamentalists would use democracy as a means to install dictatorship. A fundamentalist regime would outlaw abortion and force Tunisian women to wear veils.

It would also undermine Tunisia's economy, based largely on the millions of scantily clad European tourists who sun themselves each year on the pristine Mediterranean beaches.

The trial coincides with the military trial in Algeria of seven top leaders of the Islamic Salvation Front. The party was banned by a military-backed regime that seized

power in January to stop the fundamentalists from winning in parliamentary elections.

The Salvation Front leaders face the death penalty if convicted of conspiracy and inciting violence to overthrow the state.

Armed Islamic extremists and Algeria's corrupt ruling elite are the popular suspects in the assassination June 29 of Mohamed Boudiaf, president of Algeria's ruling High State Committee.

Tunisian officials, who were openly critical of Algeria allowing the Muslim party to take part in elections, have called Boudiaf's assassination a blow to regional stability.

## Military leaders oppose idea of Latin American defence force

BUENOS AIRES, July 9: Military leaders in Argentina and four neighboring nations oppose the creation of a Latin American defence force, Admiral Emilio Jose Osas said Wednesday, reports AP.

In an article published by the newspaper La Nacion, Osas said top-ranking officers from Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay met in Argentina two weeks ago, along with the presidents of the five South American countries.

The military officials endorsed democracy and each country's right to determine its own policies.