UK newspaper editors amend code of practice

LONDON, Feb 6: Britain's newspaper editors said Friday they have amended their industry's code of practice to bar journalists from using bugging devices or telephone taps except in special cases of public interest, reports AP.

The move follows publication last December by some British newspapers of the transcript of an intimate telephone conversation allegedly between Prince Charles and Camilla Park Bowles, a former girlfrienc. The transcript reportedly was based on a tape of

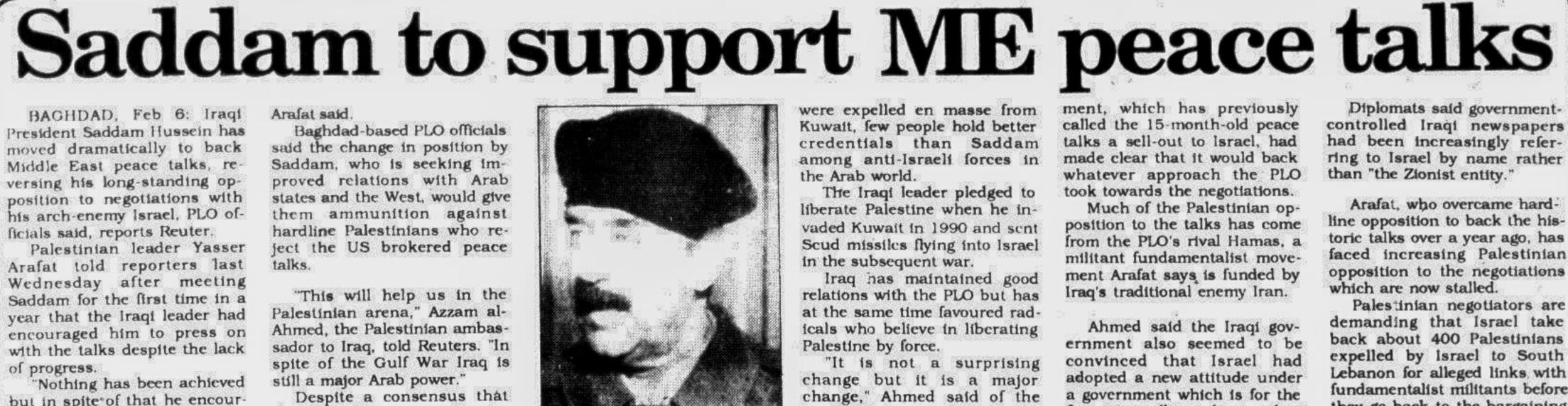
Critics accused the press of unwarranted intrusion.

BAGHDAD, Feb 6: Iraqi

Baghdad-based PLO officials said the change in position by Saddam, who is seeking improved relations with Arab states and the West, would give them ammunition against hardline Palestinians who relect the US brokered peace

"This will help us in the Palestinian arena," Azzam al-Ahmed, the Palestinian ambassador to Iraq, told Reuters. "In spite of the Gulf War Iraq is still a major Arab power."

Despite a consensus that the 1990 War was a disaster for ordinary Palestinians who



Saddam: A dramatic change

were expelled en masse from Kuwait, few people hold better credentials than Saddam among anti-Israeli forces in the Arab world.

The Iraqi leader pledged to liberate Palestine when he invaded Kuwait in 1990 and sent Scud missiles flying into Israel in the subsequent war.

Iraq has maintained good relations with the PLO but has at the same time favoured radicals who believe in liberating Palestine by force.

"It is not a surprising change but it is a major change," Ahmed said of the Iraqi shi t.

He said the Iraqi govern-

ment, which has previously called the 15-month-old peace talks a sell-out to Israel, had made clear that it would back whatever approach the PLO took towards the negotiations.

Much of the Palestinian opposition to the talks has come from the PLO's rival Hamas, a militant fundamentalist movement Arafat says is funded by Iraq's traditional enemy Iran.

Ahmed said the Iraqi government also seemed to be convinced that Israel had adopted a new attitude under a government which is for the first time talking about ceding territory.

Diplomats said governmentcontrolled Iraqi newspapers had been increasingly referring to Israel by name rather than "the Zionist entity."

Arafat, who overcame hardline opposition to back the historic talks over a year ago, has faced increasing Palestinian opposition to the negotiations which are now stalled.

Palestinian negotiators are demanding that Israel take back about 400 Palestinians expelled by Israel to South Lebanon for alleged links with fundamentalist militants before they go back to the bargaining

Influx of US tourists in Vietnam

BANGKOK, Feb 6: Some 700 American tourists have arrived in Vietnam aboard cruise ships within the last week and more will be coming in the near future, a Vietnam News Agency reports seen Saturday said, reports AP.

The influx results from a partnership between Saigon Tourism, a government agency, and the Royal Viking Line, a major international cruise operator, the agency said in the Friday-dated story monitored here.

More than 500 Americans arrived in Hi Chi Minh City Friday.

Castro tries to lift. US sanctions

HAVANA, Cuba, Feb 6: President Fidel Castro said on Friday his country would wage a campaign across the world to obtain the lifting of a US economic embargo against it, reports Reuter.

"United Nations agreements are not enough," Castro told a conference of Latin America teachers in Havana.

He was referring to a resolution approved by the UN General Assembly in November which criticised the 30-yearold US embargo against the communist-ruled island.

"We have to wage a political battle at the level of the world to defeat the (US) blockade," the 66-year-old leader said.

He added the US trade restrictions against Cuba had been made even harsher by the collapse of the island's past economic ties with eastern Europe and the former Soviet

Union, its main suppliers for

President Saddam Hussein has

moved dramatically to back

Middle East peace talks, re-

versing his long-standing op-

position to negotiations with

his arch-enemy Israel, PLO of-

Arafat told reporters last

Wednesday after meeting

Saddam for the first time in a

year that the Iraqi leader had

encouraged him to press on

with the talks despite the lack

but in spite of that he encour-

aged us to continue in our at-

tempts to achieve feal peace."

"Nothing has been achieved

of progress.

Palestinian leader Yasser

ficials said, reports Reuter.

"Those who organised and created the (US) blockade wove their web well and tangled it up like a godian knot, difficult to unite," Castro said.

The Caribbean Island is currently experiencing an economic recession marked by shortages of oil, food, medicines, raw materials and consumer goods.

"We look for new ways and new formulas but there in front of us we have the yankee blockade, implacable, systematic, pitiless and strengthened," Castro added.

Cuba has accused the US government of widening the embargo by trying to block the island's trade with third countries. US-Cuban ties have been hostile since Washington broke off diplomatic ties with Havana in early 1961.

Krajina Serbs won't attend UN talks



SARAJEVO: Two small boys with their dog play during a lull in fighting in an empty street of Sarajevo. The city ended its first 10 months of siege still under fire from Serb gunners with - AFP/UNB photo fighting particularly fierce around the airport Friday.

BELGRADE, Feb 6: Rebel Serbs in the Croatian enclave of Krajina will not attend peace talks at the United Nations headquarters in New York, the Belgrade-based Tanjug news agency reported today, says Reuter.

It said Krajina Serb authorities would only negotiate with Croatia, which lunched an offensive to reclaim Serb-held areas of the enclave on January 22 after its troops had withdrawn from the land they had

Both sides in the conflict were invited by international mediators Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen last Tuesday to join peace efforts at the United Nations, where negotiations on a peace package for Bosnia's civil war resumed on Friday after reaching deadlock in Geneva a week ago.

Tanjug said Krajina Serb officials decided at a meeting in their main city of Knin of Friday not to send a delegation to New York.

India plans to set up human rights body of violating human rights by NEW DELHI, Feb 6: Home

Minister SB Chavan will meet political party leaders Monday to discuss setting up India's first Human Rights Commission, a move which has earned praise from Britain, reports AFP.

Chavan will also meet federal ministers and state chief ministers next week, in the run-up to parliament's budget session during which a bill on the proposed commission will be moved, officials said Friday.

The planned human rights bill is widely expected to be approved without dissent.

The officials said among those invited to discuss the setting up of a commission were the federal ministers of law and human resource development and state chief ministers of Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Karnataka and Maharashtra.

Provincial police in the first three state have been accused

a telefax from Santiago.

detuning Maoist rebels and ordinary criminals without judicial approval or killing them in staged encounters.

The planned discussions follow a series of meetings between state police chiefs and Home Secretary Madhav Godebole -- in charge of setting up the rights commission last month.

British Prime Minister John Major, who made a landmark visit to India last month, praised India's pledge to create the commission saying local human rights groups could address their grievances to the

India faces intense criticism from Amnesty International over allegations of widespread rights abuse in Kashmir and Punjab in the country's north were thousands of soldiers are engaged in crushing Muslim and Sikh militancy.

Lord Bernstein dead: Lord Bernstein, a 20th century pioneer of popular entertainment and founder of Britain's Granada television station, died Friday at his London home, his son said. He was 94, reports AP from London.

David Bernstein said his father died peacefully "of old age and left instructions there should be no mourning or memorial'service. "Having come to the end in the fullness of years I see no reason for any public or formal acts to mark my death," David Bernstein quoted his father as writing in a final instruction.

Sidney Lewis Bernstein was the second of nine children of a well-to-do businessman who had emigrated from Sweden and founded a string of musical halls.

Bernstein took over in the 1920s after the deaths of his father and elder brother and built a nationwide chain of vast cinemas - also called Granada. By 1935 a new one was being opened every week.

Raised in a Orthodox Jewish home. Bernstein was not particularly religious himself. But he was a lifelong supporter of many Israeli charities and a dedicated anti-fascist.

Philosopher Jonas dies: The German-born Philosopher Hans Jonas, author of the influential "Principle of Responsibility", died Friday in New York, his German publisher said. He was 89, reports AP from Frankfurt.

A student of Martin Heidegger, Jonas, a Jew, fled from the Nazi rule in 1933 to Palestine, joined the British military during World War 11 and resettled in the United States in 1955. The Suhrkamp publishing house said Jonas died at his home in New Rochelle. The statement did not give the cause

Jonas was born on May 10, 1903, in Moenchengladbach and studied in Freiburg, Berlin, Heidelberg and Marburg.

His earlier works focused on the history of religion. In 1979, Jonas published his "Principle of Responsibility," which dealt with the influence of technology on the future of man and the environment.

Irish censors ban US film: Ireland's censors on Friday banned an American film about a crooked cop, reports AP from Dublin.

"Bad Lieutenant," starring Harvey Keitel and directed by Abel Ferrara, charts the moral descent of a New York detective who abuses his position to feed his addictions to sex, drugs and gambling. Acclaimed by some critics, it features graphic violence and a masturbation scene.

The Irish Department of Justice, which oversees the state censorship board, refused to comment on the reasons for the film's ban.

The Irish republic, founded in 1922, heavily censored books and films until the mid-1960s.

Irish officials last ordered a film ban in 1991 over Ken Russell's "Whore," in which Theresa Russell guides viewers through a day in the life of a prostitute.

Avalanche claims 9 in Iran: At least nine people were killed and several others injured on Friday when an avalanche cut the Tehran Shemshak road 40 kilometers (25 miles) from the capital, official Iranian television reported, says AFP from Tehran.

It said the four-meter (13-foot) avalanche blanketed several vehicles, including two buses carrying skiers to major resorts in the area

Five passengers in one car and four others were killed in the accident triggered by a major snow storm

Mobutu sacks PM for second time

GBADOLITE, Zaire, Feb 6: Zaire's President Mobutu Sese Seko fired reformist Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi for the second time on Friday. blaming him for riots which killed at least 80 people, reports Reuter.

Mobutu said he would ask the transitional parliament of the huge central African country, the High Council of the Republic (HCR), to propose a fresh premier as Tshisekedi had not fulfilled him mandate to form a new, broad-based cabinet.

"In view of Mr Tshisekedi Wa Mulumba's inability to form a government of national unity, I am asking the High Council of the Republic... to present me everything swiftly with a

Two lakh flee

Lome to Ghana

200,000 people from the

Togolese capital Lome have

fled their homes to neighbour-

ing Ghana, a local chief said

here Friday in this border

tv told APP that entire families

had been fleeing across the

loosely guarded border since

Sunday to escape political vio-

heads of families returned to

Lome after seeing their fami-

Violence by pro-govern-

ment troops has left at least

19 civilians dead in Lome over

the past 10 days, and residents

fled to escape the troops who

have been looting the city.

Many of the inhabitants have

fled to the provinces, while

around 70,000 have sought

refuge in Benin, on Togo's

population of about 600,000

tered Ghana through the offi-

cial frontier post, but many

crossed at semi-legal crossing

points. More than half the reg-

istered Entrants were children

aged five or less, local officials

are believed to have fled.

In all, nearly half of Lome's

Most of the refugees en-

lies safely arrived in Ghana.

Often however the male

lence in Lome.

eastern border.

Paramount chief Togbe Fitti

AFLAO, Ghana, Feb 6: Some

personality to be charged with forming a government of public salvation," he said on a televised speech, the text of which was given to reporters before broadcasting.

Tshisekedi was elected by a national pro-democracy conference last August. Mobutu other of allegiance.

At a new conference at his isolated stronghold of Gbadolite, 1,300 km (800

pose another name," he said. "Because of him my soldiers shot at each other." The two men are locked in a power struggle which has

come to a head over new fivemillion-Zaire banknotes, issued by the pro-Mobutu central bank but outlawed by Tshisekedi as inflationary. AFP adds: Officials of Zaire's High Council of the Republic

appealed Friday for foreign troops to help restore peace and legal order in the troubled African state. The High Council, a tempo-

rary ruling body overseeing Zaire's transition from dictatorship to democracy, met Friday under the chairmanship of archbishop Laurent Mosengwo.

A high council communique, telephoned to AFP by council spokesman Tshimpumpu, said conditions for protecting people and good haven't been decided. Also, legal institutions aren't functioning normally.

"This is why the council office confirms the need to obtain support from foreign troops for Zaire's army with the goal of restoring and consolidating civil peace and republican lawfulness."

The High Council statement also said "It had pursued talks with the Prime Minister on the subject of reorganizing the transition government." Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi promised to respect the High Council's "relevant decision."

Indians slates UK

politicians for

encouraging

Kashmir militants

community in the UK has

voiced its deep concern over

the disquieting role of some

British politicians in encourag-

ing the Kashmiri separatists

operating from the British soil, reports PTI.

Overseas Congress called on

the Foreign and Commo-

nwealth Minister Mark Len-

nox-Boyd, and conveyed to him

the widespread anguish among

the indian community here

over the manner in which

some British MPs were lend-

ing respectability to the

Kashmiri separatist movement

and thus allowing the British

A delegation of the Indian

LONDON, Feb 6: The Indian

German law doesn't permit a trial in absentia for Honecker's case, but it appears that in absentia, he can pose a severe trial for German justice.

law look stupid, Herr Honecker."

fire for interfering in court affairs, reports AP.

When he was brought unwillingly from exile in Moscow last July, Honecker was promised a fair trial, not a political show.

Off the Record

Honecker is gone but

controversy on

former East German leader's manslaughter trial rumbles on.

German courts are a laughingstock and a politician is under

flew to Chile on January. 13 when his trial was abandoned on

the grounds that he wasn't expected to live to see the verdict.

up the case properly - a request that Honecker snubbed with

BERLIN: Erich Honecker is gone but controversy over the

Honecker, 80 years old and suffering from liver cancer,

Yet the Berlin district court invited him to return to wrap

The Volksstimme newspaper in the eastern city of

Magdeburg printed a cartoon with three judges dressed as

clowns pondering a fax saying 'Ha ha ha' and signed EH. The

Berliner Norgenpost had a cartoon Friday with three judges

lecturing a scarecrow: "Don't think you can make the rule of

Though some Germans doubted the wisdom of the whole affair, many hoped to see the brutality of Communist East Germany laid bare and condemned.



KUALA LUMPUR: Twelve year-old Ayavoo Remasamy fulfils a vow to the Hindu deity Muruga by piercing an iron rod through his mouth whilst in a trance during the Thaipusam festival at Batu Caves Temple Saturday. 800,000 devotees are expected to gather at the temple -AFP/UNB photo during the two-day festival.

> World's second baboon liver recipient dies

PITTSBURGH: The world's second baboon liver recipient, who had been battling an infection in his abdominal cavity. died on Friday night, a spokeswoman for the University of Pittsburgh Medical Centre said, reports Reuter.

The patient, a 62-year-old man who had asked to remain anonymous, died at 6:50 pm est (2350 GMT), 26 days after the transplant operation, the spokeswoman said. She quoted doctors as saying that one of the reasons for his death was due to sepsis, widespread infection throughout his body.

The actual cause of death will not be determined until later next week, when results of an autopsy will be known.

Plans to resume Guatemalan peace talks cancelled

of death.

GUATEMALA CITY, Feb 6: President Jorge Serrano said Friday that plans to restart peace talks on ending Guatemala's 32-year civil war have been cancelled, reports

The president said the chief peace mediator, Monsignor Rodol of Quezada Toruno, informed him that the lestist rebel Guatemalan National Revolutionary Union rejected plans for the peace talks to restart February 15.

The president accused the rebels of "displaying delaying tactics

ABU DHABI, Feb 6: The United Arab Emirates (UAE)

parliament will focus on pressing the government to cut the number of mostly Asian foreigners when it reconvenes this week after a recess of more than a year, reports AFP. The measure, if imple-

mented, will mostly affect Asians who account for more than half the two million population and 70 per cent of the 600,000-strong workforce in the Emirates.

The problem of Asian labour and its serious social, political and health effects should be among the priorities

of the council as it has become a national issue that touches on security and stability," said Ali Musabah Al-Nuaimi, one of the 27 new appointed MPs.

Most Asians in the UAE come from India, Pakistan, Iran, the Philippines, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka and are a major source of hard currency for their countries which suffer from high unem-

New legislators of the 40member Federal National Council (FNC) said they wanted authorities to take action by restricting the entry of expa-

previously appointed him premier in October 1991 but sacked him within a week after he refused to swear and

miles) north of the capital Kinshasa, the strongarm leader made clear he would not allow the opposition-dominated HCR to resubmit Tshisekedi's name. "I am asking them to pro-

US plans to close 20 embassies

WASHINGTON, Feb 6: The State Department on Friday disclosed the names of 20 DS embassies and consulates which it plans to close this year and next year to offset spending on new diplomatic posts in former Soviet republics and central Europe, reports AP.

The list includes several desirable travel destinations.

Deputy Secretary of State Clifton Wharton told reporters the list was prepared by President Bush's outgoing administration and was sent to Congress January 14, stx days before President Clinton was inaugurated.

After the Senate confirms Clinton's nomination of Brian Atwood as undersecretary of state for management, "we plan to review that list to be certain that we are fully in accord with those posts that have been designated," Whar-

ton said. In the Caribbean the list includes the embassy at St Johns in Antigua, and Consulates in Curação in the Neth erlands Antilles and Fort de France, Martinique; in Europe the consulate in Salzburg.

triates and limiting the num-

and private institutions.

invasion of Kuwait.

ber of workers hired by public

Gulf Arab states have debated

cutting the number of foreign

workers for several years but

the effort gained momentum

after the Iraq's August 1990

foreign population by more

than half, saying the invasion

into the Gulf after the discov-

ery of oil in the region several

decades ago. Oulf states had to

underscored their threat.

Kuwait has since cut its

Foreigners began streaming

The UAE and other wealthy

Austria; in the Mediterrancan, Palermo and Genoa, Italy: Alexandria, Egypt, and Izmir, Turkey; in the South Pacific embassies in the Solomon Islands and Western Samoa and a liaison office in Palau; and the consulate at Mazatlan on Mexico's Pacific coast. Candidates for closure in

Africa are the embassy at Moroni in the island state of Comoros; consulates at Oran, Algeria: Douala, Cameroon: Mombasa, Kenya, and Kaduna, Other consulates on the list

are Maracaibo in Venezuela, Songkhla in Thailand, and a "branch office" in Geneva of the US embassy in Bern. Switzerland. Congress has often resisted

proposals from the State Department to close diplomatic posts. The Senate has blocked attempts in the past to shut the consulates in Salzburg and Genoa.

But the latest request comes after the United States has had to open posts in 14 newly independent states of the former Soviet Union, 3 former Yugoslav republics, and Slovakia and Albania.

rely on expatriates due to a

lack of skilled labour but most

of the region's countries have

turned to training their na-

tionals to replace the foreign-

warned against the growing

reliance on such foreighers

since many of them are not

Muslims and some have been

charged with various crimes,

attention now to security as we

are living in a country whose

population is mainly non-Arab

expatriates." Al-Shuruq maga-

zine quoted former FNC

"The FNC should pay more

including drug trafficking.

Authorities have repeatedly

soil to be used for the extremists' campaign. The Indian Overseas Congress delegation also drew Lennox-Boyd's attention to the support the Kashmiri militants

were getting from Islamabad. Meanwhile, the India High Commission here has rejected the so-called peace initiative launched by Azam Inquilabi, a close associate of Magbool Butt of JKLF, proposing tripartite talks between Indian, Pakistan and the representatives of Kashmir for a negotiated settlement of the Kashmir issue.

Deputy Speaker Abdallah Al-

on Saturday after a suspension

of more than a year caused by

delays in naming its members

by the seven Emirates making

Shetkh Zayed Ibn Sultan Al-

Nahayan will outline the fed-

eration's domestic and foreign

policy in and opening address.

bers are appointed and not

elected, has no decision-mak-

ing power and is limited to ad-

vising on domestic and foreign

The council, whose mem-

"The UAE's President

The FNC is due to convene

Muhairbi as saying.

up the UAE.

FNC will press UAE govt to cut number of Asian labourers affairs but there have been calls for expanding its role. There are several issues to

be discussed by the council during its new session," said FNC member Salim Al-Shamsi. "But one of the most important matters is the imbalance in the demographic structure, which should be considered seriously and sincerely this time."

Another member, Ahmed Hamdan, urged the FNC to take "adequate steps to regulate foreign labour and eurb the influx of expatriates, who have created a serious gap in the UAE's society."

Russia earned sales last yr MOSCOW, Feb 6: Russia

earned 1.8 billion dollars in arms sales last year, the Trade Ministry disclosed Friday in figures carried by the Interfax news agency, reports AFP from Moscow In 1993 Russia hopes to boost sales to 3.8 billion dol-

the country's Defence Industry Committee Viktor Glukhin. Key market targets for

lars, according to the head of

Russian arms dealers over the last few months have been in Asia and the Middle East, where material is being offered at very competitive prices.