Govt, UNITA agree to share power

ABIDUAN, Apr 17: Angola's government and UNITA rebels reached an agreement in principle to share power in the Southern African country and the head of the UNITA delegation said he believed a ceasefire was attainable, reports Reuter.

during peace talks in Abidjan, capital of Ivory Coast, said the government agreed to improve a 1992 offer of minor government posts for UNITA mem-

Republic of Angola and UNITA have agreed that... the principle of a larger participation of UNITA in the governmental executive at the national, provincial and local levels is accepted", the statement said.

UNITA delegation head

Jorge Valentim said specific posts would be negotiated later

Interior, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Interior Administration, all those posts.

of them for UNITA," he said. The wo sides, joined at most sessions by UN mediators and US, Russian and Portuguese observers, spent

sions on the release of prisoners and the provision of humanitarian aid were likely to be announced today.

Serbs asked to halt onslaught

UNSC declares Srebrenica a haven for Bosnian Muslims

UNITED NATIONS, Apr 17: The Security Council has declared Srebrenica a haven for Muslim civilians, demanding that Bosnian Serbs halt their

The Serbs were reported within 1,000 yards (metres) of the enclave in eastern Bosnia, and some news reports had said earlier that Serbs had taken the town. UN diplomats, however, said that the Serbs apparently did not move in.

"The fall of Srebrenica to the Bosnian Serb forces would have been a disaster," Security Council president Jamsheed Marker of Pakistan told reporters early Saturday.

all 15 council members Friday

condition of anonymity.

Friday's resolution reaffirmed the Security Council's condemnation of the Serbs' 'ethnic cleansing' removal from contested areas, of Bosnian Muslims and interfer-

ence with relief convoys.

said the UN decision-making body hoped that when the council passed the resolution "the Bosnian Serbs (will) show

restraint." The United Nations, which has some 10,000 peacekeepers in Bosnia, has become increasingly frustrated at its inability to persuade Serbs to stop their advance in the eastern part of the republic in an attempt to bring all areas un-

der Serb control. UN officials reacted with uncharacteristically frank anger when Bosnian Serbs killed more than 50 civilians in Srebrenica with a ferocious

nutes after their commander swore to respect a cease-fire.

In recent weeks, a bid to ferry out Srebrenica's wounded by helicopter was disrupted by shelling, an attempt to bring in a French sield hospital was refused, and the UN force commander in the republic, Maj. Gen. Philippe Morillon, was forced to turn back from an attempt to go to Srebrenica to stand in solidarity with civilians there.

A UN Security Council instruction that the 14 UN troops in Srebrenica be reinforced has gone unfulfilled, also due to Serb opposition. Friday's resolution made no mention of how many troops might be needed to monitor a

UN officials said about 150 Canadian UN soldiers would be permitted to enter Srebrenica on Saturday morning to avert a

Security Council diplomats said the mayor of Srebrenica had offered to surrender the city in return for safe passage out for all its 60,000 inhabitants. The Serbs, however, did not respond and the city had not fallen by late Friday, said the diplomats, on condition of

UN officials could not confirm French Foreign Ministry reports Friday night that some Serbian forces had entered the enclave.

The haven proposal was and reward Bosnian Serb ag-

We cannot allow the people to be terrorized by the Bosnian Serb attackers," ambassador Diego Arria of Venezuela told reporters.

haven there. humanitarian disaster.

> made by nonaligned members who say evacuating the town would further the Serbian 'ethnic cleansing' campaign

gression. "This would be a first step.

Off the Record

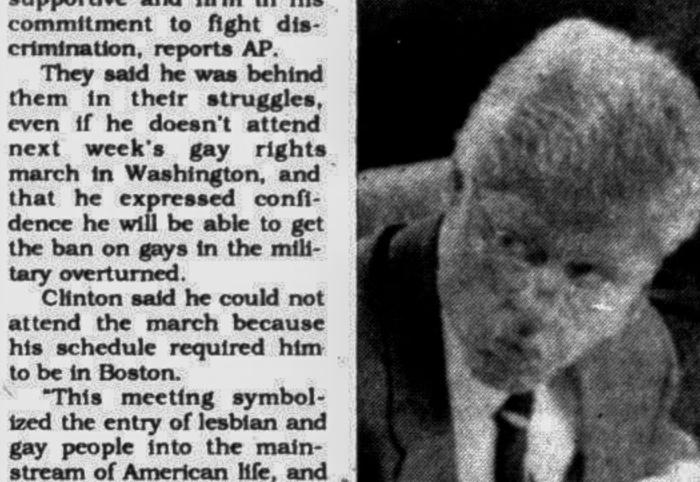
He is behind gays

WASISINGTON: Gay and lesbian activists who met with President Clinton in the Oval Office described him as friendly, supportive and firm in his

tary overturned.

to be in Boston.

on gays in the military.



it is the president of the 'United States who, through his moral leadership, permitted that to happen," said Tom Stoddard, executive director of the Campaign For

Military Service, an ad-hoc group working to overturn the ban

Lottery cancelled for gun symbol

WASHINGTON: Local lottery officials cancelled a 250,000 dollar drawing Friday after a Washington resident objected to having pistols pictured on the tickets, reports AP.

Jon P Peterson complained in a letter published in The Washington Post last Monday that the gun symbol was not appropriate for a city *sometimes called the murder capital of the nation."

The letter — the only complaint received about the game prompted lottery officials to cancel the game, which is promoted under the name of "Aim to Win."

"We in no way intentionally promote violence. In our demonstration of support for a safe city, we are willing to incur a financial loss by eliminating this game," lottery executive director Anthony S Cooper said in a statement Friday.

Yes, we've no bananas'

WASHINGTON: Japanese Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa used humour and the lyrics of an old American song Friday to shrug off a recent comment by President Clinton that may have offended some Japanese, reports AP.

Clinton was asked twice by Japanese reporters at the White House Friday to explain his comment to Russian President Boris Yeltsin that Japanese negotiators often say yes when they mean no.

"I don't know whether to say yes or no," Clinton said when the issue was raised during a picture-taking session at the start of his meeting with Miyazawa.

Miyazawa jumped in: "Remember the song, 'Yes, We Have No Bananas?" He said that helps explain misunderstandings based on the fact that 'every language has its own peculiar-

"Bananas. Yes. That's it," said Clinton.

Three hours later, at a news conference concluding the meeting, the question was asked again.

"Let me say first of all the world would be a sad place if people could never say anything in an offhand manner without having it turn into an international incident," Clinton replied. "I remember when I was elected, someone in your country suggested that presidents always spoke a lot of hot air (nonsense) once they got elected. I took no offence at that. That's a part of the daily life."

The State Department has apologized for the remark, which offended some Japanese but which Miyazawa has basically laughed off.

They survived for six-day on chocolate bars

MOSCOW: Four British climbers survived for six days on chocolate bars and melted snow after they blundered down the wrong side of Europe's tallest mountain, reports Reuter.

The group, looking thin and weather-worn but otherwise unharmed, told a news conference on Friday they started heading down the north face of Mt Elbrus to escape driving snow and biting 80 km per hour winds at the summit.

But their adventure holiday turned into a nightmare when they lost radio contact with their base further down the south face of the mountain.

BROBET BY

Bush ends Emirate trip: Former US President George Bush left Kuwait late Friday after a three-day visit and a hero's welcome as the Emirate's liberator from Iraqi occupation, AFP reports from Kuwait City.

Bush who was on his first visit to the Emirate, was awarded the mubarak medal, Kuwait's nighest distinction, by its ruler Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah who praised him as the key player in the Liberation of Kuwait.

Prior to his departure, Bush visited US troops deployed here and conducting joint maneuvers with Kuwaiti forces, he told them his trip had been "terribly emotional and wonderfully fulfilling." Bush, who orchestrates the US-led military coalition that

ousted Iraq from Kuwait in February 1991 after seven months of occupation, was accompanied by his wife Barbara, members of his family and former Secretary of State James Baker.

Pope gives \$3 lakh for Bosnians: Pope John Paul on Friday gave a 300,000 dollar cheque to United Nations Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali to help Bosnian war refugees, Reuter from Vatican City says.

A Vatican statement said the Pope had made the donation in response to an appeal from the UN High Commissioner for Refugees for contributions to help victims of the war in Bosnian.

The Pope and Boutros-Ghali discussed the fighting in Bosnia, as well as conflicts in the Middle East and the Caucasus, during a 45-minute meeting, the Vatican said. It gave no details.

28 Palestinians shot at in Gaza: Israeli soldiers on Friday shot and wourded 28 Palestinians, two of them seriously, during clashes in the occupied Gaza

City Strip, Palestinian sources said, reports AFP from Gaza. The clashes erupted during demonstration to mark the fifth anniversary of the death of Palestine Liberation. Organization official Khalil-al-Wazir known by his Nom De Guerre as Bu Abu Jihad.

The worst fighting occurred in Gaze City, where troops opened fire several times on youths throwing stones, the sources said.

CIA chief pays secret visit to Egypt: CIA Director R James Woolsey paid a secret visit to Egypt this week meeting with President Hosni Mubarak to discuss the extent of Iranian support for militant Islam in the region,

official sources said Friday, AP reports from Washington. Woolsey, who assumed office in February, was on an orientation tour of several Middle Eastern and European countries, including Israel and Italy, said one source who spoke only on condition of anonymity.

The CIA routinely declines to discuss the director's travels for reasons of security.

An official familiar with his tour said Woolsey was particularly interested in hearing Egyptian officials' assessment of the extent to which radical Islamic forces are geining influence around the Middle East with the military and financial support of Iran.

Haitian army rejects US

plan to restore democracy

A refugee holds her crying child on Friday in Lukavac, Bosnia as she narrates tales of horror after fleeing the Muslim enclave of Srebrenica. -AFP/UNB photo

Human Rights Group says

99 Kashmiris killed in police hands

SRINAGAR, India, Apr 17: A Kashmir-based human rights group on Friday said it had identified 99 people who were killed in police custody in the first three months of this year and added that the actual number of victims could be higher, reports Reuter.

The Jammu and Kashmir Human Rights Movement comprising lawyers and independent Indian activists, said as many as 127 Kashmiris may have died while in police hands between January and March and another 36 have been killed so far in April.

Police in Srinagar, summer capital of India's Jammu and Kashmir state on Friday returned three bullet-riddled bodies of youngmen to their relatives saying they were Muslim militants killed in an

encounter with Indian security

The relatives, attending a funeral for the three, said two of the dead were militants of the pro-Pakistan Hezb-Ul-Mujabilicen and the third a government employee. They said all three were

captured by police on Thursday and shot dead in cus-

Meanwhile, six people were shot dead by Indian troops on the India-Pakistan ceasefire line in the north western Kupwara sector of Kashmir. Police said the six youths were returning after training at a camp in Pakistan for anti-Indian guerrillas.

Pakistan denies regular Indian charges that it trains and arms anti-Indian militants. Alleged custody deaths have

been at the heart of separatist violence since last week. Today, hundreds of

protesters flooded Lal Chowk and burned down a building being used as a barracks. Fighting erupted between militants and security forces and dozens of houses and shops were burned.

Residents alleged the security forces doused them with petrol and set them ablaze. The government has promised

Police said at least 36 people were killed over the weekend. They put the toll since the beginning of April at about 120 in a major surge of violence in a rebellion that has cost some 11,500 lives according to police and hospital reports, since Muslim separatists launched an open revolt in

police used batons, tear gas and shots in the air to disperse hundreds of demonstrators alleging that five people, whose bodies were taken to police headquarters by security

On Tuesday, paramilitary

India acknowledges that some human rights abuses have occurred, but it says those found guilty have been punished and that most of the charges are militant propa-

forces, had been killed in cus-

Major international human rights groups such as Amnesty International and Asia Watch, however, have backed Kashmiri allegations of murder, torture and rape by the security forces.

Armenian fighters

bomb two

Azeri towns

Armenian fighter aircraft bom-

bed the towns of Fizuli and

Agdam in the South and east of

Azerbaijan Friday, while land

clashes left a number of people

dead and wounded, Itar-Tass

Attacks by an MIG-23, a

MIG-25 and a SU-25 were fol-

lowed by land attacks by

Armenian troops on the two

towns, the agency reported

from the Azerbaijani capital

Fizuli, which Armenian forces

have been trying to seize con-

trol of for the last few days,

The attack on the region of

reported, says AFP.

MOSCOW, Apr 17: Three

Pak ulemas protest crackdown on Arabs

ISLAMABAD, Apr 17: A grouping of Pakistani religious parties staged rallies in several major towns Friday to protest a recent crackdown on Arabs living in the northwestern region bordering Afghanistan, reports

The Mutahida Ulema Council organised the demonstration after Friday prayers and witnesses put the number of participants at several hundred in the cities of Lahore, Islamabad, and Peshawar.

Sources in Peshawar, capital of North West Frontier Province, said the operation had slowed down after more than 200 Arabs were rounded

Ninety eight Arabs were detained when they could not produce valied papers, while the rest were released. The operation was lunched

in response to reports that Arabs, who had participated in the 14-year anti-communist war in Afghanistan, were abetting terrorist activities in Pakistan. No official figures were

given about the number of people still being held in cus-It was also not clear

whether those in custody for staying illegally in the country would be deported. Speaking to a rally in

Peshawar, the provincial chief of the fundamentalist Jamaat-I-Islami (JI) party, Maulana Gohar Rahman, demanded that the government call off the operation immediate.

The source said Caputo Thai forces won't Living with gun has become a way of life in Afghanistan'

a slower-paced, negotiated so-

HAITI, Apr 17: A UN mis-

"We proposed a definitive

sion to restore democracy to

Haiti ended in failure Friday,

with army chiefs rejecting a

solution of the Haitian crisis.

Unfortunately, we did not get a

Dante Caputo, an Argentine

diplomat, told reporters at the

airport at the end of four days

positive answer", UN envoy

US backed plan, reports AP.

border forces have vowed to disarm any Cambodians and to push them back into their own country if they try to cross into Thailand, a news report said today, reports AFP.

Armed Services Chief of Staff Visit Artkhumwng said no more Cambodians, either armed guerillas or civilians, would be allowed to cross the That border, the English-language Bangkok Post reported. General Visit said the situa-

tion along the That-Cambodian border remained under the control of Thai forces, the report added

Thatland passed a law on filegal foreign entry in 1979 which would be enforced against any Cambodians-

came to Haiti accompanied by American threats to cut air traffic to Haiti and mobilize 5,000 UN peacekeepers unless the army high command stepped down and let ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide return within 60 days. The source said army chiefs

did not believe Washington would follow through on the threats or that Aristide would carry out a promised amnesty to leaders of the military coup that overthrew him in September 1991.

Caputo said he would consult with the secretaries-general of the United Nations and the Organization of American States, which have sent more than 100 human rights observers to Haltl as a first step toward bringing back democ-

Fresh vow to ensure CIS future ence that Yeltsin's opponents crendum asks Russia's 107

MINSK, Belarus, April 17: Leaders of the Commonwealth of Independent States, thrown onto the defensive by political turmoil in Russia, its largest member state, made new pledges to ensure the grouping's future, reports Reuter.

"Rumours of the collapse of the commonwealth have been fully dispersed," Russian television said after a one-day CIS summit on Friday in Minsk, the Belarus capital. Commonwealth leaders put

economic, military and political differences behind them to throw their weight behind Russian President Boris Yeltsin and his free market economic reforms. "What happened matched

my expectations," Yeltsin told a news conference. Everybody said, "we need the CIS." Yeltsin, one of eight leaders at the summit, faces a tough

battle on April 25 when a ref-

million voters if they support him and his reforms. He arrived in Minsk after

being laughed out of court by Moscow industrialists when he claimed that his government was succeeding in fighting in-He left with unexpected

support from fellow commonwealth heads, some of them clearly afraid that defeat for the Russian leader could create even more tensions with Russia and lead to attempts to rebuild the Soviet Union in some form.

'A threat to reforms and democracy forces people to unite," Russian Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Shakharai told reporters after the meeting.

Ukrainian President Leonid

Kravchuk, whose Slav state has

clashed with Russia on a series

of political and economic is-

sues, told a joint news confer-

in the April 25 poll wanted to restore the Soviet Union. "If somebody takes this road, it will be watered with

lots of blood. The fate of the

commonwealth depends on April 25," Kravchuk said as Yeltsin nodded in agreement. President Islam Karimov of the central Asian state of Uzbekistan said he fully supported Russia's actions under

Yeltsin's leadership." I declare

categorically that we are inter-

ested in the victory of reforms," he said. The 10-member commonwealth arose last year from the ashes of the Soviet Union, but its leaders have skirted round a series of key issues and dis-

The summit was preceded by a forecast that the grouping had outlived its usefulness and was about to split.

was repulsed by Azerbaijani fighters, the agency said. The agency, monitored by the BBC in London, said the

Armentan forces suffered casualties and lost equipment.

pronounced certain words.

"When we entered the city, all of Kabul was under our control. If we had wanted to capture power, we could have," said Defense Minister Ahmed Shah Masood, whose forces joined with rebel Communist soldiers to bring down the Soviet-installed regime.

"But we didn't want to monopolize power. All those who fought in the war against the Communists had a right to participate in ruling Afghanistan," Masood said in a recent interview with The Associated Press.

But not all rebel groups seem interested in peaceful coexistence.

The hardest-hit area, western Kabul, is engulfed in suburban warfare between Shiite and Sunni factions that have

verve than they ever mustered against the Communists. The warring factions have

inflicted damage with more

been encouraged by Pakistan, Iran and Saudi Arabia, the three Islamic countries that provided the financial, military and moral support for the rebels during the war. Those countries now are competing to become the dominant force in the neighbouring Central Asian republics of the former Soviet Union.

And thousands of foreign Muslim militants who came to Afghanistan to help fight the invading Soviet army have emerged even more militant. They are determined to use Afghanistan as a base to carry Islamic fundamentalism to

in Mali BAMAKO, Apr 17: Mali's

Presidency Friday unveiled a new government after the resignation of the previous administration in the wake of violent student demonstrations in Bamako, reports AFP.

The new government, led

by new Prime Minister Abd-

oulaye Sekou Sow, includes

among its 22 ministers, members of two parties previously in opposition. The previous government in this former French colony consisted of 19 ministers from five parties. President Alpha Oumar

Konare named Sow as Prime Minister Monday, two days after the collective resignation of the government of Younoussi Toure.

of negotiations. "The situation is complicated, but with will and a cooperative spirit, a solution can be found", he said. Looking drawn, he then boarded a jetliner to New York. An army source, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the military remained open to

KABUL, Apr 17: Life in the to cross border war-scarred streets of the capital seems so surreal, as chil-BANGKOK, Apr 17: That dren fly their kites in the weed-infested parks, their laughter drowned by the bursts of nearby machine-gun fire, reports AP.

> Noisy taxis, buses and bikes weave through the vendors lining the dusty rutty streets, seemingly oblivious to the boom of artillery streaking across the sky. A slight man hunches over a small wooden cart, laboriously pushing it through the shattered neighborhood. Pausing for a moment, he flashes a toothless grin at strangers and says, salaam alatkom," the Muslim greeting meaning 'peace be

But peace is nowhere to be found in Kabul.

Euphoria followed the Muslim rebels' victory over the Communist rulers in the "holy war" that started with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. But the glue of Islamic righ-

teousness that held the resistance together before the Red Army withdrew in 1989 quickly came apart. Hopes for peace were dashed by the bombs and bullets that led to more destruction and bloodshed in Kabul in one year than during the entire 14-year civil

More than 5,000 people are dead, 20,000 have been injured and nearly 1 million people - half of Kabul's population - have fled to safer

Homes, shops and mosques have been destroyed. Kidnarobbery are common. Schools and universities remain closed and the country's best doctors, lawyers and teachers have left. Despite a dozen cease-fires

pping, looting, rape and armed

and end ess promises to share power, the nine top rebel leaders appear no closer to peace than they were on April 28, 1992, the day the Communist surrendered power. "Living with the gun has become a way of life," said

Saeed Habib, a 23-year-old

rebel soldier manning a chec-

kpoint at Kabul's southern

entrance. For thousands of years, Afghanistan was one of the great crossroads of Asia. Mighty imperial armies, nomadic tribes and camel caravans crisscrossed its deserts and mountains in search of

riches and religion.

agreed on others.

Today, Afghanistan lies in ruins, drifting into anarchy, isolation and backwardness. Farms, vineyards and terraced hillside fields have reverted back to wilderness, littered with millions of mines that will take decades to clear. Kabu, is a microcosm of a

country in which the fragile ethnic and tribal patchwork is quickly unraveling. A mile-high (1.5-k.lometer-high) city ringed by mountains, Kabul is divided among the well-armed, rival rebel factions fighting for a greater share of power and territory The invisible boundaries

shift daily. Innocent people are snatched off the streets by sentries who simply didn't like the way they dressed, their facial features or the way they

other parts of the world:

but would have to be positions of real influence. There are key Ministrics... Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Minister of the

A joint statement issued "They should look (at) some

"The government of the

the week seeking general points of agreement in a ninepoint agenda, with specifics to be left to further talks. A UN spokesman said decionslaught, reports AP.

The resolution approved by included no enforcement provisions and served as little

more than a threat. The council would meet immediately to tighten sanctions of the Serbs' sponsors in the Yugoslav republic of Serbia if Srebrenica falls, a Security Council ambassador said on

Before the vote, Marker

artillery barrage Monday - mi-