

# 34 patients killed in ROK hospital fire

SEOUL, Apr 19: Thirty-four patients were burned to death in pre-dawn fire that swept through a mental hospital in a provincial town on Monday, police said, reports AP.

Two patients were in critical condition and nine others were rescued unharmed, police said.

Quoting firefighters, the state television, KBS, reported that some dead patients were found with their feet shackled or their hands chained to hospital beds.

Forty-five patients, under treatment for alcoholism or mental problem, were asleep in three rooms when the fire broke out at Seoul Neuro-Mental Hospital in Nonsan, 150 miles (240 kilometers) southwest of Seoul, at 2 am (1700 GMT Sunday), police said.

In the initial confusion, police had reported that 35 people were killed but later corrected the figure to 34.

Some patients were found dead with their feet shackled or their hands chained to hospital beds, apparently to prevent them from fleeing, police said.

The front door of the two-story building was shattered, which also contributed to the high death toll, they said.

Kim Hyong-kon, a firefighter, told police that the entire building was ablaze when he arrived about 10 minutes after the fire was reported.

We broke open with axes one side of the wooden building and found about a dozen bodies huddled in one corner of a hallway, police quoted Kim as saying. Three patients were alive and were immediately brought out.

The state television, KBS, quoted Ha Jong-hwan, a hospital official, as saying that the fire appeared to have started in a first-floor room.

It was like hell. Smoke was all over and patients were crying for help, KBS quoted Ha as saying.

The blaze, whipped by string winds, was brought under control in one hour by 10 fire trucks, police said.

Police said they were investigating the cause of the fire and why so many patients were crowded into three small rooms.

# Clinton, Major warn Serbia of hardship, isolation

LONDON, Apr 19: British Prime Minister John Major and US President Bill Clinton on Sunday welcomed tougher UN sanctions against Yugoslavia and warned Serbia of hardship and isolation if it refused a just peace settlement, reports Reuters.

During a 50-minute telephone call the two leaders also agreed on the importance of maintaining a UN-sponsored ceasefire agreement for Srebrenica and continuing humanitarian relief operations. "They welcomed the rapid adoption last night of the further Security Council resolution enforcing tougher sanctions on Serbia," a spokeswoman for Major said.

"They agreed it was vital to ensure that these sanctions were imposed effectively and rapidly and that action should be taken to isolate Serbia and close any loopholes on land, sea or river," she added.

The United Nations Security Council voted late on Saturday to impose its toughest sanctions yet on Yugoslavia. The measures intended to isolate Serb-led Yugoslavia from the outside world, will come into force on April 26 if the Serbs do not sign an international peace plan drawn up by mediators Lord Owen and Cyrus Vance.

Major, quoted by the spokeswoman, said Serbian leaders and people must be told they faced long isolation and hardship if they continued to refuse to come to a just and internationally acceptable settlement or try to acquire or hold territory illegally.

Earlier on Sunday, Yugoslav peace envoy David Owen reiterated his view that selective air strikes against supply lines used by Bosnian Serbs might be necessary if the Serbs refused to sign the peace plan.

Neither Clinton nor Major mentioned international military intervention but the spokeswoman said "they had informal discussions of the pros and cons of various options." She gave no details.

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# Off the Record

## He makes political pilgrimage

VLADIMIR, Russia: President Boris Yeltsin mixed religion and politics Sunday, marching in an Easter procession and campaigning for votes one week before a referendum on his leadership, reports AP.

Yeltsin flew by helicopter to his 12th century city 150 kilometers (90 miles) east of Moscow to kick off the final week of political activity before the April 25 balloting. He called the referendum to settle his power struggle with Russia's Communist-dominated parliament.

A choir sang, church bells pealed and more than 15,000 people cheered Yeltsin as he walked down Vladimir's main street behind altar boys and Russian Orthodox priests carrying candles and icons in celebration of Christ's resurrection.

At the steps of the white stone cathedral topped with golden onion domes, Yeltsin briefly addressed the crowd and asked for support next Sunday.

"I hope that during the referendum on April 25, Vladimir residents will again remember that we must save Russia, and vote so that Russian will not fall back into the abyss of Communist non-existence," the president said.



## Large families foster spirit of competition

TOKYO: The Japanese should have at least three children to preserve the "competitive spirit" necessary in a market economy, the Secretary-General of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party was quoted yesterday as saying, reports AP.

"You don't need to have as many as ten, but three to five," Seiuro Kajiyama was quoted as saying at an LDP seminar on women in Atami, southwest of here.

Kajiyama, himself the youngest in a family of 10 children, said large families fostered a spirit of competition among children, particularly at meal times when they fight over food, newspapers reported.

The Japanese birth rate has been falling for some time, and stood at 9.9 per thousand last year, too low according to the government.

Press reports said Kajiyama's remarks met with mixed reaction from an audience familiar with his penchant for controversial statements.

In September 1990, when he was Justice Minister, Kajiyama sparked outrage in the United States when he said that foreign prostitutes in Japan, like blacks in the United States "ruin the atmosphere" of neighborhoods.

## Parental love falls short of 100 dollars

BARTLETT: A teen-ager killed his parents in their home, brutally slashing their throats with the help of a friend who was paid \$100 for the job, authorities charges, reports AP.

Neighbours in this quiet Chicago suburb who woke up Sunday to find a trail of blood on the street expressed shock at the brutal killings.

"I wonder what would make a 17-year-old turn on his parents like that," said neighbour Linda Ryan. "To have such a violent crime — to slash their throats — it just gives me the chills."

Diana and Peter Robles, both in their 40s, were found Saturday night stabbed and with their throats cut, police said.

"The people were killed in cold blood and butchered in their own home," DuPage County State Attorney James Ryan said.

Their son, Eric Robles, and Sean Helgesen, also 17, were charged Sunday with murder. Both are students at nearby Elgin High School.

Robles, who was scheduled to be confirmed at church Sunday afternoon, also is charged with solicitation to commit murder for allegedly hiring Helgesen, Ryan said.

## Afghan war takes 200 lives in 3 days

QUETTA, Pakistan, Apr 19: More than 200 people have been killed in fighting in the southern Afghan province of Kandahar in the last few days, sources at the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said on Sunday, reports Reuter.

Fighting in the province near the border with Pakistan's western Baluchistan province has raged for three days between forces loyal to President Burhanuddin Rabbani and supporters of guerrilla groups claiming the governorship of Kandahar.

The rivals were attacking each other's positions with heavy weapons, including field guns and rockets, and at least 200 people had been killed and many more injured in the bloody clashes some 400 km (250 miles) south of the capital Kabul, the sources said.

The seriously injured, most with shrapnel wounds were transported to the Baluchistan provincial capital of Quetta for treatment, the ICRC said.

The battles were between the forces of Kandahar Governor Gul Agha, who belongs to Rabbani's Jamiat-Islami Party, and supporters of three other parties — all once allies in the 14-year insurgency against the former communist government.

The fighting for the governorship of Kandahar was still raging into Sunday night, the ICRC sources said, adding that hundreds of people had fled across the border from Afghanistan into neighbouring Pakistan.

# Tension mounts as 19 massacred ahead of Chris Hani's funeral

JOHANNESBURG, Apr 19: The massacre of 19 people in drive-by shootings in Sebokeng black township has escalated tension ahead of the funeral of assassinated black leader Chris Hani today, reports AP.

The attack, allegedly by four black gunmen, came barely hours before South African communist party leader Hani's burial prompting law and order minister Hennis Kriel to appeal for calm.

"I appeal to people not to take the law into their own hands," Kriel said.

Police spokesman Captain Piet Van Deventer said the gunmen hijacked a grey Volkswagen Jetta, killing the car owner, before rampaging through the township on a four-hour murder spree. Gunning down 19 residents in six attacks.

Witnesses said the victims of the attack were all black, as were the four occupants of the car. The Jetta was later found burnt out in the township.

Police said the motive for the attack was not immediately clear.

Sebokeng, a bastion of several black organisations including the racial Pan-Africanist Congress, is one of South Africa's most violent black townships and is notorious for crime.

Meanwhile, tension was mounting at the soccer stadium where some 80,000 mourners, have gathered since early Sunday ahead of Hani's burial in Elspark cemetery east of Johannesburg.

Early today a car was overturned and set alight near the stadium and police fired tear-gas as youth pelted police cars parked along the route with stones. Late Sunday two men were wounded in a shooting incident in the stadium and an armoured police car patrolling the area came under attack with automatic gunfire. No injuries were reported.

As mourners continued to pour into Johannesburg early today, police and African National Congress (ANC) Publicity Secretary Pallo Jordan appealed to people to stay away as the stadium was packed to capacity.

As organisers were gearing up for the 42 kilometre funeral procession from the stadium, nervous Whites living in the small suburb opposite the cemetery where Hani will be buried later today were arming themselves.

Preparing for an invasion of the 250,000 mourners expected at the burial site.

Armed members of the ultra-right Afriliner Resistance Movement (AWB) were seen patrolling the Elspark area Sunday.

A 40-year-old AWB man, Janusz Walus, was arrested 10 days ago shortly after Hani was gunned down in the driveway of his home in the eastern Johannesburg suburb of Boksburg. His arrest was followed by the arrest late Saturday of top right-wing Conservative Party (CP) official Clive Derby-Lewis.

Early today, tow hand grenades were hurled at the CP office in Roodepoort, the suburb where Derby-Lewis lives. The extent of damage was not yet known.

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Saudi Arabian Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al-Faisal (C) attends the opening of the 99th session of Arab League Foreign Ministers meeting in Cairo Sunday. — AFP/UNB photo

## Arab League FM's discuss ME peace

CAIRO, Apr 19: Arab league foreign ministers convened Sunday to discuss a number of regional issues including the stalled Middle East peace process, reports AP.

The gathering is the 21-member organization's first biannual meeting at the foreign ministers' level this year. Fifteen foreign ministers attended, along with the permanent delegates of six other countries.

League sources said Farouk Kaddoumi, who represented the Palestine Liberation Organization at the meeting, said Israel has to take "encouraging steps" for the Palestinians to participate in the next round of peace talks. The sources did not specify the demands.

The meeting observed a minute of silence for Turkish President Turgut Ozal.

# Pak involvement in Bombay blasts: Two Indian ministers contradict Dinesh Singh's statement

NEW DELHI, Apr 19: Pakistan was responsible for the deadly bomb blast which killed some 3000 people in Bombay on March 12, two Indian Ministers said Sunday, contradicting a statement by the country's Foreign Minister, reports AP.

Minister of State for Internal Security Rajesh Pilot and Minister of State for Home PM Sayeed said separately the Islamabad was to blame for the string of 13 explosions, the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported.

Pilot told a massive public meeting in the northern state of Punjab that at least eight of the nearly 80 people arrested for involvement in the bomb blast had said they were trained in the handling of explosives in Pakistan.

Police investigations clearly indicate Pakistan's involvement, he was quoted as saying in the sixth holy city of Amritsar, almost 400 kilometers (250 miles) northwest of here.

Sayeed, speaking to reporters in the southern city of Kochir, also held Pakistan responsible for the blasts, which devastated the Bombay Stock Exchange and Air India headquarters among other places.

The two ministers contradicted External Affairs Minister Dinesh Singh's statement Saturday that India had no proof of Pakistan's direct involvement.

Maharashtra state Chief Minister Sharad Pawar, who also governs Bombay, has alleged that the bombings were the work of Pakistan's intelligence. The Bombay police say some of the bombers were trained abroad.

Pakistan, which has fought three wars with India since the two countries' independence in 1947, has denied involvement in the blasts, which also injured more than 1,400 people.

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# Channel Tunnel opening may be delayed

LONDON, Apr 19: The opening of the Channel Tunnel could be delayed again beyond the end of 1993, the project's chief executive Sir Alastair Morton said Monday, reports AP.

The tunnel should open "within a year," Morton said in a letter to the London Stock Exchange. Morton previously forecast a Dec 15 opening date, and that was six months later than originally planned.

"This magnificent project ought to open within a year and will represent a triumph of the determination, engineering skill and cooperation of many parties, including our bankers," Morton's letter said.

Morton blamed the delay on Transmanche-Link, the consortium involved in building the tunnel.

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# Peacekeeper killed in Cambodia

A large group of Khmer Rouge guerrillas attacked a village west of the capital early yesterday killing one Bulgarian UN peacekeeper and injuring two others, a UN spokesman said, AFP reports from Phnom Penh.

The Bulgarians were arriving at the scene of the attack in an armoured personnel carrier when the guerrillas attacked with an anti tank grenade, UN spokesman Eric Falt said. One Bulgarian died and two others were injured, one seriously. They were taken to the UN Hospital in Phnom Penh, he said.

The attack began at 2:30 am (1930 GMT Sunday) and lasted two hours. It was apparently aimed at a Phnom Penh government army position in the village of New Oral, Falt said.