

BRIEFLY

Quake rocks Indonesia: A strong earthquake was detected in northeastern Indonesia early Tuesday but there were no immediate reports of damages or casualties, the Meteorology Agency said, AP reports from Jakarta.

The quake measuring 6.5 on the Richter Scale struck at 4:02 am (2102 GMT Monday) at a depth of 100 kilometers (62 miles) under the Pacific Ocean, about 3,000 kilometers (1,850 miles) northeast of Jakarta, said Yusuf, an officer of the agency.

The nearest major city to the quake was Ternate, the capital of North Maluku Regency, which was 350 kilometers (220 miles) from the epicenter.

Tornado claims 8 in China: At least eight people were killed and more than 200 hurt by a tornado and hailstorm that swept through Yangchun country in Southern China's Guangdong province, a report said yesterday, reports AFP from Hong Kong.

The tornado and hailstorm struck 12 villages in Yangchun over the weekend. Of the 200 people injured, 19 were in serious condition, the Beijing-funded Hong Kong China news service said.

More than 16,310 houses were flattened by the natural disasters, which cut off telecommunications and electricity in the affected areas.

Israelis kill two Palestinians: Israeli soldiers shot dead a Palestinian activist in the occupied West Bank on Monday and another was killed in Gaza, Palestinian and Israeli sources said, reports Reuter from Gaza.

Palestinians said soldiers shot and killed Majdi Abu Moussa, 27, from the town of Khan Younis, in Nusseirat refugee camp. The army said its forces were not involved in the shooting and the matter was being investigated.

The Palestinian sources said Abu Moussa belonged to the radical Palestinian Red Eagle group, which claimed responsibility for Sunday's killing of an Israeli lawyer in Gaza city with axes and knives.

Nazi documents auctioned: Nazi documents signed by Adolf Hitler, including papers detailing the secret suicide of Field Marshall Erwin Rommel, sold for \$53,000 at an auction Monday, AP reports from New York.

The secret document sealing Rommel's fate was auctioned for 18,000 dollars as part of a collection of 14 papers. The 13 other documents went for \$35,000, said Chuck Mattes, an associate of auctioneer Herman Darvick, who coordinated the sale. All prices included a buyer's commission.

An American soldier rummaging through military offices in Berlin after World War II found the documents and kept them as souvenirs, Darvick said.

Russia to unveil top military secrets at Birmingham show

LONDON, Apr 20: Russia is to display secret rocket technology and "Star Wars" lasers that once defended communism in a bid to win capitalist "business" in Britain, reports Reuter.

The exhibition is part of Russia's conversion of military factories for civilian use, Russian diplomats said on Monday.

The "conversion 93" exhibition at Birmingham's National Exhibition Centre, will offer more than 100 technologies processes and application for sale and will unveil many of Russia's top military secrets.

Briton faces 120 lashes in S Arabia

LONDON, April 20: A British man faces 120 lashes after being convicted of breaking Saudi Arabian anti-alcohol laws, the foreign office said early today, reports AFP.

Damien Devine, understood to be a firefighter aged 51, was also sentenced to six months in prison by a judge in Riyadh, a spokesman said adding that this had yet to be confirmed by Saudi ministers.

Officials were monitoring the situation, he said. The early editions of today's newspapers reported that Devine was accused of producing his own alcohol at Christmas.

South Africa on brink of racial war: De Klerk

BOKSBURG, South Africa, Apr 20: Assassinated black leader Chris Hani was buried on Monday amid a surge of violence that President F W de Klerk said had brought South Africa to the brink of race war, reports Reuter.

More than 50 people, mostly black, have been killed since the 50-year-old Communist Party leader idol of militant black youth, was slain by a white assassin nine days ago.

Nineteen were slaughtered when gunmen in a car went on a killing spree in Sebokeng township south of Johannesburg on Sunday night. Seven more died in other incidents on Monday as mourners paid their last respects to the former guerrilla chief.

The senseless murders of members of the public women and children, black and white, carries with it the potential to spark a raging racial conflict," de Klerk told parliament in Cape Town.

rites that were largely orderly although marred by mob violence at the edges. Several hundred youngsters burned at least five houses and skirmished with armoured police, who responded with tear gas and shotguns outside soccer stadium where final tributes to Hani were paid.

State television reported two charred bodies were carried from a gutted house. A rural supermarket was looted and a farm stall torched by youths near the cemetery in the mixed-race working class town of Boksburg where Hani was buried. Five houses close to Hani's in Dawn park district were broken into police said.

The troublemakers were disowned by Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC), the leader of the anti-apartheid alliance in which Hani played a major role.

Mandela spoke of the pain the assassination had caused the black community. He said the killing must speed up multiparty efforts to fix a date for blacks to vote for the first time and for installation of a transitional government of blacks and whites.

As rocket technology used to put cosmonauts into space, other processes will be available which could assist western research in aviation, oil and gas, communications, medical and other industries, the diplomats said.

"We want to establish ongoing business relationships with companies in western Europe and the United States," he added.

Organisers of the sword-to-plough shares exhibition, from May 24-27, said the sales drive was unique in offering such Russian advances made during the east-west arms race.

"The Russians now want to convert their military technology for peaceful purposes," organisers said. They will be looking to discuss its use and development in joint deals with western industrialists and businessmen.

Russia will also be seeking help an investment to convert production at Russian factories from military equipment to consumer goods.

"Many of the technologies to be shown have been developed at untold cost. Now our best is being made available to the West," a spokesman for the embassy of the Russian Federation in London said in a statement announcing the exhibition.

Editorial writers in all leading English-language newspapers agreed that Sharif's dismissal to perpetuate such a military-bureaucratic state," it said reflecting a common concern that relations between the two old enemies could not improve without solid democracy in Pakistan.

The tone of the editorials was radically different from that throughout Sharif's two and a half years in office, during which Indian newspapers attacked him over Kashmir, because of two of the three wars the countries have fought.

Efforts on to persuade allies for jt operation US may take unilateral action against Serbs



A wounded refugee from the besieged town of Srebrenica grimaces as he is placed on a stretcher upon his arrival in Tuzla aboard a UN helicopter Monday. — AFP/UNB photo

WASHINGTON, Apr 20: The United States has not ruled out unilateral action against Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina, but would prefer to act in concert with its allies, White House spokesman George Stephanopoulos said Monday, reports AFP.

It was the first time the US administration has expressed the possibility of acting independently to end the fighting in Bosnia and force the Bosnian Serbs to sign a peace plan.

The other parties in the conflict, the Croats and the Muslim Bosnians, have already agreed to the plan, brokered by the United Nations and European Community.

The United States has been trying to persuade British and France to agree to lift the UN imposed arms embargo on Bosnian Muslims to step up pressure on the ethnic Serbs.

Questioned whether Washington was considering taking unilateral action in the face of European reluctance to accept the lifting of the embargo, Stephanopoulos replied: I can't rule that out in all conceivable circumstances.

But obviously the presidents preference is to take multilateral actions, and that's why we are consulting with our allies now.

Clinton held a lengthy telephone conversation with British Prime Minister John Major on Sunday, discussing options to force the Serbs to end their military assaults, in

the battered ex-Yugoslav republic. A senior administration official said privately that the top option under consideration was lifting the weapons embargo.

Clinton was to telephone French President Francois Mitterrand later yesterday (Monday) Stephanopoulos said.

White House spokeswoman Dee Dee Myers reiterated US preference to engage in multilateral actions to resolve the Bosnian crisis.

"It's not something that we can do alone, we must act in concert with the allies," said Myers. "Europe needs to be a partner in any action that we take there, and the president will continue to consult with the allies about this very difficult situation."

Britain and France have argued that lifting the embargo would endanger humanitarian operations and prolong the conflict.

In London on Monday, British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd rejected the idea of lifting the arms embargo, and cautioned that any allied air strikes on Serb positions in Bosnia would raise the prospect of civilian casualties.

Reuter adds: UN helicopters evacuated 351 seriously wounded people from the Serb-besieged Muslim enclave of Srebrenica in Eastern Bosnia on Monday, completing a humanitarian airlift linked to a ceasefire accord, UN officials said.

Sharif's dismissal raises fear of yet another coup: Indian press

NEW DELHI, Apr 20: Indian newspapers today mourned the sacking of Nawaz Sharif, the Pakistani Prime Minister they severely attacked throughout his time in office, reports Reuter.

Editorial writers in all leading English-language newspapers agreed that Sharif's dismissal by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan was a serious blow to Pakistan's fledgling democracy, raising fears of yet another military takeover.

It is premature to conclude that the armed forces will not intervene in this power struggle," said The Hindu.

The dismissal of Sharif and his government sustained "a convenient facade for Pakistan's feudal oligarchy to rule with the help of the army and the civil service," the Economic Times said.

"Sustaining tension with India is an imperative condition to perpetuate such a military-bureaucratic state," it said reflecting a common concern that relations between the two old enemies could not improve without solid democracy in Pakistan.

The tone of the editorials was radically different from that throughout Sharif's two and a half years in office, during which Indian newspapers attacked him over Kashmir, because of two of the three wars the countries have fought.



Women supporters of deposed Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif stage a protest rally in his hometown in Lahore Monday. — AFP/UNB photo

They had backed New Delhi's charges that Pakistani armed and trained secessionist militants in Jammu and Kashmir.

More recently the papers supported charges that Pakistan was behind a string of bombs in Bombay on March 12 this year.

Weapons, grenades and food were recovered, it said.

Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam guerrillas have fought since 1983 for a homeland for their minority race in the north and east.

Arab League meet ends

CAIRO, Apr 20: The Arab league on Monday ended a meeting that focused on the Arab-Israeli conflict and efforts to improve Arab relations strained by the Gulf War, reports AFP.

Arab League Secretary General Esmat Abdel Meguid said after Turkmen, Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), presented the League with a report on Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied territories.

Turkmen proposed that Arab countries help settle UNRWA's debts, "not in their capacity as Arab countries but rather as members of the United Nations."

According to a Lebanese diplomat here, Foreign Ministers Saud al-Faisal of Saudi Arabia, Faruq al-Shara of Syria and Fares Bwetiz of Lebanon backed the proposal.

'Christ' Koresh, 80 followers commit suicide as FBI storms his hqs

WACO, Texas, April 20: Cult leader David Koresh and more than 80 of his followers committed mass suicide on Monday in an apocalyptic inferno after federal agents attacked his fortress-like compound with tanks and tear gas, authorities said, reports Reuter.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation said Koresh, who claimed he was the incarnation of Jesus and in personal contact with God, ordered his followers to set ablaze his last battle before the world ends.

The flames that turned the sprawling compound of the branch Davidian Sect into a blazing funeral pyre also ignited a major controversy over the Clinton administration's decision to try to end the 51-day siege.

Among those believed dead were Koresh, his chief aides, his wives and 17 children, all believed to have been fathered by the 33-year-old cult leader.

Only nine of the estimated 95 people inside the isolated compound in farmland 10 miles (16 km) east of Waco survived.

They included a woman in flames who tried to run back into one of the burning buildings but was stopped by a federal agent, who jumped out of a tank to rescue her.



Bob Ricks, the leader of the FBI team on the scene, said he gave the order for agents to use tanks to ram holes in buildings and fire tear gas inside in hopes that the cult members would surrender peacefully. Ricks also said it was possible that Koresh had

to give injections to children to put them to sleep before they were burned alive.

"His (Koresh's) desire was that he wanted to have as many people killed in that compound as possible. That is why it was named the 'Ranch Apocalypse'," Ricks said, adding that Koresh also wanted to kill as many federal agents as possible.

Ricks said one survivor told the FBI an exultant cry rang through the building as it went up in flames of "the fire has been lit, the fire has been lit."

Attorney General Janet Reno took full responsibility for a tragedy that seemed triggered by the FBI's decision to pour tear gas into the compound.

Reno, who has only been in her job one month, and FBI Director William Sessions both acknowledged on Monday night that they had misjudged Koresh by failing to predict that stepped-up pressure from authorities would trigger a mass suicide.

"We were going to just gradually increase the pressure day by day until we hoped that

through negotiations or through them walking out, they would walk out," a shaken Reno told a news conference. "Obviously if I thought the chances were great of a mass suicide, I would never have approved the plan," she said.

The tragic outcome is certain to haunt the Clinton administration for weeks, may be months, to come. Reno said she had told President Bill Clinton in advance of her decision but had not given him the details. She added that the FBI had concluded that Koresh never intended to come out on his own.

Koresh's lawyer, Dick DeGuertin, told a news conference that he blamed the FBI for the tragedy saying that they had not attacked, Koresh would have left the compound peacefully.

Several Senators promised hearings and a group of left-wingers picketed FBI headquarters in New York, calling the FBI murderers. Reno said she would welcome a review of the government's handling of the case.

Off the Record



This hard-hitting advertisement is the first in a poster campaign launched by the Respect for Animals Group in London Monday. The poster features a model wearing a skinned fox as a 'collar' while wearing a fur hat. — AFP/UNB photo

Court refuses to endorse nude sunbathing

WASHINGTON: The Supreme Court on Monday turned aside arguments for a constitutional right to sunbathe in the nude, reports AP.

The justices, without comment left intact a Los Angeles city ordinance that bans nudity at public beaches.

The ordinance's "chilling effect" had been attacked by advocates of "the mental, spiritual and physical benefits of public nudity, nude sunbathing and nude swimming."

The appeal denied on Monday said Los Angeles officials should be forced to allow nude sunbathing on some portions of Venice Beach.

"The 'evil' is in the mind of the beholder," the appeal said. "The undesired impact upon individuals and families may be controlled successfully by segregated beaches."

Lawyer Stanley Raskin, representing three nude sunbathers and a group called Beachfront USA, told the justices, "Nude sunbathing is consistent with contemporary morality and should not be over-regulated."

He argued that the Los Angeles ordinance violates, among other things, freedom of expression and association, personal privacy and guarantees of equal protection under law.

Those arguments had been rejected by lower federal courts, which relied on a 1991 Supreme Court ruling that upheld Indiana's ban on nude dancing.

Giant gay parade

WASHINGTON: Homosexual Americans are pouring into the nation's capital for events ranging from drag shows to prayer vigils and a Sunday march to press their case for gay rights, reports AP.

There will be cross-dressers and gay congressmen, bisexual soldiers and lesbian mothers. Organizers hope what the public notices most, though, is the sheer number of ordinary-looking people.

"What we're trying to do is put a human face on this issue," said Robert Bray, spokesman for the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

Organizers predict as many as 1 million people will march Sunday to demand a national civil rights law protecting homosexuals, an end to the military's ban on gays, and increased spending on AIDS research.

Almost 300 march-related events begin Tuesday, ranging from lobbying Congress and mourning AIDS victims to a leather-fetish party and a mass gay wedding.

"This is a civil rights demonstration, not a gay pride parade," said Scout, co-chair of the march on Washington for Lesbian, Gay and Bi Equal Rights and Liberation. She has only one legal name.

"For every one person who is somehow outrageous, there will be 100 just like the neighbours next door," she said.

Algerian troops kill 8 fundamentalists

ALGIERS, Apr 20: Algerian security forces killed eight armed Islamic activists and seized four automatic weapons in separate incidents overnight and on Sunday, police said Monday, reports AFP.

Two of the alleged fundamentalist "terrorists" were killed and one was injured when police chased four men preparing to carry out a holdup in the east Algiers suburb of Hussein-Dey on Sunday. The fourth man escaped.

Two other people were killed in incidents at Larbaa, 30 kilometres (19 miles) south of Algiers and at Lakhadria, 70 kilometres (43 miles) to the east of the capital.

Overnight, four suspects were killed in Algiers itself. Since last Thursday 10 members of the security forces have been killed in an attack.

Nine of them were policemen who died in an ambush at M'Sila, 250 kilometres (150 miles) east of Algiers. That attack was the single deadliest against Algeria's security forces since a state of emergency was declared in February 1992 to fight Islamic fundamentalists.

Anti-terrorism prosecutor killed in Turkey

ADANA, Turkey, Apr 20: Three gunmen killed an anti-terrorism prosecutor and his police guard in this southern city Tuesday, the Anatolia news agency reported, reports AP.

The prosecutor, Ethem Ekin, was shot to death when he came out of his apartment building, the agency said.

Eastern Algeria is not under a curfew in force since December in most of the country.

Fundamentalists have targeted the security forces since the military-backed government cancelled general elections the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was poised to win in January 1992.

Hundreds of militants and security forces members have died in the clashes and thousands of people have been detained. The FIS was outlawed 13 months ago and its main political leaders are behind bars.