

## Ailing prisoner plans hunger strike in China

BEIJING, May 12: An ailing political prisoner plans to go on a hunger strike if authorities continue to ignore his attempts to appeal his conviction and requests for proper medical care, his wife said Wednesday, reports AP.

Wang Juntao told his wife during their monthly visit Tuesday that he planned to begin a hunger strike on June 3, the fourth anniversary of the military crackdown on the 1989 Tiananmen Square democracy movement. Wang is serving a 13-year prison term for the backstage role he played in the movement.

He has written several hundred letters to authorities trying to appeal his conviction, but all have been ignored. He and his family also have requested that he be released on

medical parole or be transferred to a hospital that can give him proper medical attention.

His wife, Hou Xiaotian, said Wang will go on a hunger strike if he does not get a 'believable, fair and reasonable' response to his requests by June 3.

That date is also the deadline for President Clinton to decide whether to extend China's most-favoured-nation trade status for another year or to attach conditions to it.

Wang, 34, was editor of the Economics Studies Weekly, a newspaper set up by a private research institute. He and the institute's founder were accused of masterminding the 1989 protests. The founder, Chen Ziming, also is serving a 13-year prison term.

## Congress (I) under fire for aborting trial of SC judge

NEW DELHI, May 12: India's ruling Congress (I) Party came under bitter attack today for aborting a historic trial by Parliament of a Supreme Court judge accused of corruption, reports AFP.

Almost all newspapers pilloried MPs from Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao's party for abstaining en masse when an opposition-sponsored motion to impeach Judge V Ramaswami came to a vote late Tuesday.

A total of 196 opposition legislators voted in favour of impeachment, but 205 MPs, mostly from the Congress (I), abstained in a surprise move widely seen as a directive from the party high command to bail out the beleaguered judge.

"In the face of a strident opposition attack, the Congress's instinct was to exonerate the controversial judge," said the mass-circulation Hindustan Times.

A two-thirds majority was needed to impeach the Supreme Court justice in what would have been the first such dismissal in the history of the Indian parliament.

Tuesday's late night vote came after two days of debate in the House on the opposition crusade to pry the judge from his constitutional office.

Ramaswami, 64, was accused of being extravagant with public funds while serving as Chief Justice of the Punjab and Haryana State High Court between 1987 and 1989, when he was named to the Supreme Court.

Ramaswami allegedly spent five million rupees (166,666 dollars) on carpets and furnishings, ran up huge telephone bills, took money against false car repair bills and vacationed on government funds.

Congress (I) MPs justified their action by saying the impeachment move was excessive and disproportionate to the acts on the part of Justice Ramaswami, party officials said.

Dailies joined opposition politicians to castigate the Congress (I) which has 251 MPs in the 545 seat lower house, saying the decision to abstain from the vote was "pre-planned and was kept a closely-guarded secret."

"That the Congress would ensure the defeat of the motion was prognosticated well in advance for a party caught in a dilemma, abstention appeared the only possible way out," the Indian Express said.

References to the political dilemma of the ruling party stemmed from worries within the Congress (I) that impeachment could divide the party since many of its MPs hail from southern India, Homeground of Judge Ramaswami.

Earlier this week Congress (I) urged its MPs to follow their conscience in voting on the impeachment motion, but the dailies said the decision to abstain was made before the house sat to try the judge on Wednesday.

## Off the Record

### She requests sex attacker to wear a condom

AUSTIN, Texas: When a drunken man stumbled into her apartment in the dead of night, grabbed a steak knife and demanded sex, a woman testified, she decided not to resist but pleaded with him to wear a condom, reports AP.

"I knew there wasn't much I could do to prevent what was going to happen, the 26-year-old woman told a jury Tuesday, occasionally crying. "I thought maybe I could protect myself from dying from AIDS."

The first prosecution witness in the trial of Joel Valdez, 28, was the woman he is accused of sexually assaulting September 6. She said Valdez refused to wear a condom at first.

He said, "I don't got no AIDS," she said. "How do you know that I don't?"

Valdez grabbed a knife in the kitchen after entering the apartment around 3 am, she said. She said she ultimately gained control of the knife and a pair of scissors and ran naked to a neighbour's house where police were called.

Valdez is charged with aggravated sexual assault and burglary with intent to commit sexual assault. If convicted, he faces up to life in prison.

A jury of eight women and four men was seated late Monday, and the trial was expected to last a week.

### A royal feud

LONDON: A British tabloid on Wednesday published what it claimed was British intelligence monitoring of an argument between the Prince and Princess of Wales over custody of their two sons, reports AP.

The Sun, Britain's biggest-selling newspaper, said the security service MI5 taped Charles and Diana feuding at their country home in November, a month before they announced they were separating.

The sensational tabloid, publishing what it called a full transcript, did not say how it came by the tape.

Excerpts from the Sun's transcript:  
Diana: Have you considered the implications of a custody battle?

Charles: For what?

Diana: The children.

Charles: Oh, don't be so silly. No, no, I haven't.

Diana: Well, that's what would happen. The children would suffer. You know that?

Charles: No, no, I don't. This is so silly, talking like crazy people, talking about custody. It won't come to that.

Diana: Let's decide it now and then we can start a fresh tomorrow morning. If nothing is decided now we'll be in the same position tomorrow, next week, next month, as we are tonight. If there's just one God-forsaken thing we can do, let's decide tonight.

Charles: "I am trying to see things your way. I just can't. Its too late."

Diana: "Well for once could you put yourself out and think of me?"

Charles: Don't you dare to sit there and tell me to think of you. How the hell do you have the nerve to say that? I've done nothing but think of you and the children ever since this thing started. You..."

Diana: "No, no, I don't believe that at all. For once stop being so self-centered. You still think of me as the person you married."

Charles: "I stopped thinking like that years ago."

Diana: "Yes, I suppose that would be a good indication of why we drifted apart, my dear."

Charles: "Can I say anything right? Tell me what it is you want me to say."

Diana: "Say something I want to hear."

Charles: "I'm leaving."

Diana: "Oh don't be so bloody childish."

Charles: "Oh God."

Diana: "Must you always run when the pressure gets too much?"

Charles: "I'm not running. Unlike you, I want to deal with this like adults."

Diana: "I think I am. It's just that I want to get it done now rather than later. I don't want it to run on like a silly soap opera."

Charles: "I'm going to bed."

### Stray dogs distinguished guests

COLOMBO: Stray dogs were treated as distinguished guests after politicians failed to turn up at a ceremony to mark the opening of a funeral hall in eastern Sri Lanka, a press report said yesterday, says AFP.

The disappointed organisers rounded up dogs and showered them with food originally meant for the guests who failed to turn up at the Thambalagamvula village in Kantalai region recently, the Sinhalese-language Dvinita says.

The villagers had collected 10,000 rupees (200 dollars) to build a small hall at their cemetery and wanted their political leaders to ceremonially declare it open, the newspaper said.

### Teens rape retarded woman, videotape the act

STATESVILLE, NC: A fifth teenager was rearrested Tuesday on charges that he and four others raped a 19-year-old retarded woman and videotaped the act, reports AP.

The original charges were dropped last week when a judge found flaws in the wording of the arrest warrants. A court appearance set for Tuesday for four of the teens, rearrested last Friday, was continued until June 3, said Iredell County assistant district attorney Jeannie Rogers.

The fifth teen Jonathan Horn, 18, was rearrested Tuesday and freed on 20,000 dollars bond, the sheriff's department said.

All five face a variety of rape and sexual offence charges. The original warrants described the woman as mentally incapacitated, which by law means she was unable to resist because of being drugged or injured.

New warrants issued Friday described the woman as mentally defective, a legal definition that includes retardation.

The woman testified last week that on December 31 and January 1, the teenagers promised to take her to the movies but instead got her to have sex with them and penetrated her with a candlestick, a broom handle and a plastic pipe.

At the first hearing, prosecutors said the teenagers brought a video camera with them on one of the nights.

## BRIEFLY

### Lester del Rey dead:

Lester del Rey, an editor and author of more than 40 books on science fiction and scientific topics, has died at age 77, reports AP from New York.

Del Rey died Monday after a brief illness, according to his publisher, Ballantine-Del Rey-Fawcett-Ivy, a division of Random House.

Until his retirement last year, he had been the fantasy editor for the Del Rey Books, named after him.

Del Rey published his first story at age 22. He began to edit in 1947 and turned to full-time writing in 1950.

He wrote 40 books, many of which dealt with robots and outer space for children and adults.

Two of his most successful were set on Earth. "Nerves," written in 1956, was about an errant nuclear power plant, and "The 11th Commandment" in 1972 dealt with a world ruled by a militant religious cult.

### Panama to try Attorney General:

Panama's nine-member Supreme Court Tuesday decided to try Attorney General Rogelio Cruz for alleged abuse of authority, concealing documents and failure to perform his duties, reports AP from Panama City.

Chief Justice Carlos Cuesta said that Cruz, suspended from his post since December 23, was cleared of allegations levelled by the Director of Panamanian customs, Rodrigo Arosemena, and three others of accepting kickbacks for opening access to 32 frozen bank accounts in the past three years which allegedly were linked to drug trafficking interests.

Cuesta said Cruz now would face trial for the three other charges.

It was not immediately known if Cruz would be removed from his post permanently.

### Walesa arrives in Portugal:

President Lech Walesa of Poland arrived in Portugal Tuesday on a two-day visit in a bid to improve his country's chances of early EC membership, AFP reports from Lisbon.

Walesa was to have talks with President Mario Soares and Prime Minister Anibal Cavaco Silva, and address the Portuguese parliament.

He was accompanied by Foreign Minister Krazysztof Skubiszewski, Transport Minister Zbigniew Jaworski, and Minister for Foreign Economic Relations Andrzej Arendarski.

Poland is seeking rapid ratification by Portugal of Poland's bid for associate membership of the European Community (EC), the head of Polish President's office, Janusz Ziolkowski, said.

### Ariane missile launched:

An Ariane missile bearing two telecommunication satellites was launched Tuesday from the Kourou space centre in Kourou, reports AP from Kourou.

The first Ariane to be launched this year lifted off at 9:56 pm (00:56 GMT Wednesday).

The satellites are in Astra-1C of the Luxembourg-based Societe Europeenne Des Satellites and an ARSENE (Ariane Radio-Amateur Satellite Pour l'Enseignement de l'Espace) belonging to the French radio-amateur club de l'Espace.

Tuesday's launch was the 56th of an Ariane missile.

### Quake shakes Philippines:

A severe earthquake with a magnitude measuring 6.6 on the Richter scale shook the southern island of Mindanao on Wednesday but no damage or casualties were reported, scientists said, reports AP from Manila.

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said the earthquake, recorded at about 2:27 am (1827 GMT Tuesday), was centered 37 kilometres (23 miles) beneath the Philippine Sea, just off the coast of Caraga town in Davao Oriental province.

Caraga is about 1,000 kilometre (630 miles) southeast of Manila.

Leyo Bautista, a spokeswoman of the institute, said the tremor was caused by a movement of the Philippine Trench and was felt in at least seven provinces.

### Storms leave 11 dead in China:

Heavy rain and hailstorms killed 11 people in eastern China's Jiangxi province, an official newspaper said Wednesday, AP reports from Beijing.

The rain and hail also injured six people and destroyed 5,000 houses, the China Daily reported. In one county alone, 88,000 houses were damaged and 16,000 hectares (39,500 acres) of farmland flooded.

The newspaper also said 10,000 travelers were stranded on dozens of trains in northwest China's Gansu province after a series of sandstorms buried sections of railway track. The latest storm hit on Sunday and no deaths were reported. Another storm May 5 killed 47 people.

Food and water were being delivered to the stranded passengers, the paper said.

## Russia vetoes UN Council resolution

UNITED NATIONS, May 12: Russia vetoed a UN Security Council resolution Tuesday that obligated UN members to pay for peacekeeping operations on Cyprus, the first veto by Moscow in nine years, reports AFP.

The last time Moscow, one of five permanent members of the UN Security Council, exercised its veto power was in 1984 when the then Soviet Union nixed a French proposal to send UN troops to Lebanon.

The British proposals would have obliged Russia to pay 1.9 million dollars a year toward the UN peacekeeping mission for Cyprus, in place since 1964.

## 300m indigenous people targets for human rights abuse

LONDON, May 12: The 300 million indigenous people in 70 countries worldwide are prime targets for human rights abuses, Amnesty International said in a report released Wednesday, reports AP.

The London-based human rights organization called on governments of all countries with indigenous, or native, people to order an independent inquiry into their human rights.

"Indigenous people have been abducted, tortured and killed by hired gunmen for their lands or the resources on them, often with the tacit support of state authorities," Amnesty

International said. The organization listed several examples of reported abuses against indigenous peoples of residents of the village of Logang in Bangladesh were reportedly shot dead or burned in April 1992 by armed civilians and paramilitaries who had set fire to their homes.

Babies were reportedly snatched from their mothers' arms and thrown into the flames.

State officials in Tanzania allegedly tried to force a boy from the Barabai people to have sex with his mother last August and beat him severely when he refused.

Indian leader Domingos Paulino was shot dead in Brazil in December because he opposed logging operations inside indigenous areas. Although a suspect has been identified, no arrests were made and no inquiry opened, the report said.

An official commission in Australia reported in 1991 that Aboriginal people were arrested at 29 times the rate of others, that Aboriginal communities were often over policed, and that police harassment and provoked arrests were widespread.

More than 40 villagers from the Nuba mountains were killed by Sudanese forces

in March and April 1992 during counterinsurgency operations.

Security forces in Peru killed villagers from several small communities in the Ayacucho area in September 1990 because they refused to join civil defense patrols.

In the United States, 44 native Americans are on death row. Amnesty International opposes death sentences in all cases.

Amnesty International also recommended the retrial of Leonard Peltier, an Ojibwe leader of the American Indian Movement who is serving two life sentences for killing two FBI agents in South Dakota in 1975.

Amnesty International said the prosecution with held evidence indicating the gun allegedly belonging to Peltier had a different firing pin from the gun used in the killings.

At the time of Peltier's third appeal, in November, 55 members of Canada's 295-member parliament argued that Peltier was wrongfully ordered extradited from Canada based on false affidavits. There has been no decision on the appeal.

Despite last year's publicity surrounding the 500th anniversary of the Europeans' arrival in the Americas, governments on that continent

have taken few practical steps to protect indigenous rights," Amnesty International said.

The organization noted the United Nations has designated 1993 as the International Year of the World's Indigenous People, which will be marked by a human rights conference in Vienna in June.

"Unless the international community acts urgently, there is a danger the UN's international year will also pass without significant progress towards protecting indigenous peoples from human rights violations," it said.

## ROK urges DPRK not to rely on China's protection

SEOUL, May 12: South Korea warned rival North Korea Wednesday not to count on China's protection against international sanctions if it fails to take immediate steps to allow inspections and resolve the nuclear crisis, reports AP.

The warning came hours after the UN Security Council voted overwhelmingly Tuesday to urge North Korea to revoke its announced withdrawal from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and to permit nuclear inspections.

"North Korea can no longer expect China to take its side when the time comes for global sanctions on Pyongyang," it said.



An identified Bosnian Serb soldier removes shell fragments yesterday from his family's grave that was recently wrecked. He had taken this opportunity to visit the grave as the ceasefire is being respected in the Bosnian town of Bosanski Samac. — AFP/UNB photo

## Five Indians died last year during N-installations

NEW DELHI, May 12: Five people were killed in India last year in incidents at installations operated by the Department of Atomic Energy, the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) said in a report released today, reports AP.

The AERB, in its annual reports, said there were 148 safety-related unusual occurrences at atomic sites during the 1992-93 financial year, which ended March 31.

The incidents resulted in five deaths and an unspecified number of injuries, the AERB said.

The report provided details about only one of the fatal incidents, in which a scientist died after being exposed to hydrogen sulphide gas which leaked out of two vales at the Manuguru Heavy Water Plant in the state of Andhra Pradesh.

Other incidents included a fire at the Thal Heavy Water Plant in Maharashtra state in which flame shot 40 metres (120 feet) into the air, the report said.

Three people received burns in an explosion in September at a nuclear fuel complex in Hyderabad, capital of Andhra Pradesh, it said.

The AERB said human error, violations of technical specifications and leaks led to shutdowns at various atomic facilities for periods of between 26 days and two months.

Radioactivity leaked from an emergency condenser tube at a unit at the Tarapur Atomic Power Station in May 1992, the report said. The incident was reported to the International Atomic Energy agency.

Two people were exposed to a high dose of radiation at the Narora Atomic Power Station in Uttar Pradesh while mishandling fuel. The Narora plant has been shutdown for repairs following a turbine fire in March.

Twenty-eight incidents were reported at India's seven Nuclear Power Stations in India last year, but none with potential safety consequences.

As well as the seven power stations — with seven more under construction — the Department of Atomic Energy is responsible for heavy water and nuclear fuel production and research and development units.

India exploded a nuclear device in 1974 but claims that its atomic and nuclear programmes are entirely geared for peaceful purposes.

## Riyadh to buy 72 F-15s

ST. LOUIS, Missouri, May 12: The United States and Saudi Arabia have signed an agreement for McDonnell Douglas to sell 72 F-15 fighter jets to Saudi Arabia, the aircraft manufacturer said Tuesday, reports AP.

The agreement authorizes McDonnell Douglas to manufacture the planes that will cost Saudi Arabian nine billion dollars, said McDonnell Douglas Vice President Pete Von Minden.

Former President George Bush had approved the sale of the planes last year, which the company said would allow it to avoid closing its St. Louis plant and eliminating 40,000 jobs, directly and indirectly.

Delivery of the planes would begin at the end of 1995 and would continue through the end of 1998. The Saudi military already has 90 F-15 jets.

McDonnell Douglas in December also got a 122 million dollar US air force contract to supply parts for the F-15 fighter jets to Saudi Arabia.

## 57 Chinese held in Japan

TOKYO, May 12: The Maritime Safety Agency said Wednesday it has arrested 57 Chinese hiding in the hold of a Philippines-registered freighter in the southern Japanese port of Naha, reports AP.

The Chinese — seven women reportedly in their 20s and 50 men were arrested for allegedly violating the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Law, said Nobuhito Fujii, an agency spokesman.

Fujii said the agency investigators also arrested Cadorna Rogelio, the 54-year-old Filipino captain of the vessel, and Huang Willy, a 53-year-old Chinese crew member, for assisting the illegal entry.

The 57 are Chinese from Fujian, a southern province of China, said Fujii, quoting the Chinese responding to investigators' questions.

## Fresh fighting in Kabul kills 3

KABUL, May 12: Tank and rocket fire thundered through Kabul on Wednesday as rival Muslim militias battled for control, reports AP.

Kabul's two main hospitals reported three dead and 94 injured, but an unknown number of dead not at hospitals were not counted.

The war escalated Tuesday as factions that comprise the government exchanged rocket fire with rivals controlling the southern suburbs.

Leaders of the militias — known as Mujahideen — have been fighting among themselves since the demise of the Communist government in April last year. They have killed tens of thousands of people and destroyed much of

the capital.

Unemployment is running at more than 70 per cent, and shortages and soaring inflation has forced many Afghans to scrounge rubbish heaps for food.

Roads to the southern enclaves were closed Wednesday by fighting. The International Committee of the Red Cross, which operates a hospital in a Shiite-controlled enclave, said that casualties there were believed high.

Armin Kobel, head of the Red Cross in Kabul, said an orthopedic centre, closed by fighting for months, was hit by a rocket Tuesday and caught fire.

Plumes of dust and smoke rose from strategic mountain

tops amid an incessant roar of tank and rocket fire. Most people stayed off the streets.

Rocket attacks were reported in many parts of the city. At least 20 rockets landed in the northern suburb of Kherkhaneh, which suffered the worst destruction.

"Every Mujahideen leader should be forced to bring his family to Kabul, so that next time he will think twice about raining rockets on our heads," said Dr Fatima Ayoubi, whose house was destroyed in fighting last February.

Leaders of the main factions have been discussing peace in the eastern city of Jalalabad for more than a week. A peace agreement signed by the rival factions in March never really

held.

Defence Ministry spokesman Mohammad Yunus Qanooni said government forces had made significant gains since Tuesday. He said the forces were trying to capture a strategic road running south.

Capturing the Darul Aman road would cut off the government's Shiite rivals from their allies of convenience, the hard-line Hezb-e-Islami guerrilla group.

It would also link government forces with allies holed up in a tiny enclave in Kabul's southernmost point.

Qanooni blamed Hezb-e-Islami leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar for the renewed fighting.