

North Korea won't yield to US pressure

TOKYO, May 30: North Korea warned the United States on Sunday it would not yield to pressure in this week's talks on the North's refusal to accept further international inspections of its nuclear programme, reports AP.

The warning came as the North's official Korean Central News Agency reported the departure of Kang Sok Ju, first vice minister of foreign affairs, on Sunday for talks with US officials in New York.

The official Workers (Communist) Party newspaper Rodong Sinmun urged the United States to use the talks to end what it said were hostile policies toward North Korea.

Remarks by American officials before the talks, however, "give the impression that they intend to use the upcoming talks as an opportunity to put

pressure on (North Korea) thinking that things will go as they please if they do so. It is a mistake if the United States intends to use the talks in finding justification for sanction against the North.

"No pressure can work on (North Korea), and the problem cannot be solved by such means," said the commentary, carried by the official news agency and monitored in Tokyo.

It was referring to the possibility of the UN Security Council adopting sanctions against North Korea for dropping out of an international nuclear controls treaty and refusing to accept further outside inspections.

The North's action reinforced suspicion that it was developing nuclear weapons, despite its denials.



Aborigines from Taiwan's Orchid Island wear anti-nuclear headbands and their traditional warrior outfits as they perform a ritual dance to ward off the evil brought about by the dumping of nuclear waste on their tiny island Sunday during an anti-nuclear protest in Taipei.

Taiwanese protest new N-plant

TAIPEI, Taiwan, May 30: About 5,000 people marched through Taipei streets Sunday to demand that the government halt construction of a forty nuclear power plant in Taiwan and find safer ways to generate electricity, reports AP.

"Shouting 'No nuclear, save Taiwan,' the protesters began the five-hour peaceful demonstration with a rally at a baseball stadium.

"The government should respect the choice of the people. There are safer and cleaner alternatives than nuclear power," said Shih Hsin-min, chairman of Taiwan Environmental Protection Union.

Shih said many advanced countries have halted construction of nuclear power plants for safety reasons.

Iran opposes use of force to settle Kashmir issue

TEHRAN, May 30: Iran has come out strongly in favour of bilateral negotiations between India and Pakistan in Kashmir voicing its opposition to the use of force and outside interference to settle the issue.

A top Iranian leader denied during an interview with a PTI correspondent here that militants in Kashmir were getting any help from his country, "It is totally baseless," he affirmed.

Alli Akbar Natchang Noori Speaker of Iran's National Assembly emphasised three point on

Kashmir — bilateral Indo-Pak discussions, respect for the views of the people of Kashmir and recourse to UN Security Council as well as UN resolutions if bilateral discussions failed.

Noori ranked second only to President Rafsanjani answered with an emphatic 'yes' when asked if recourse to the UN should be the last option.

Iran has made critical references to India over the Kashmir situation as well as the Ayodhya events. These are sought to be

explained by the Iranian leadership as issues on which their concern stems out of 'humanitarian' and religious reasons respectively.

Interviews with senior Iranian officials and leading journalist show that criticism of India though muted lately is the result of a mix of false information and domestic as well as external factors to take up what are regarded here as 'Islamic issues' anywhere in the world.

But there is a recognition that India is an important factor

in the region and that the two countries cannot ignore each other. Infact the Iranians are looking forward to a possible visit by the Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao this summer.

Noori as well as top officials in the Iranian Foreign Office emphasised the long-standing relations between the two countries which they want to strengthen. The need to give a strong economic content to the ties is emphasised at all levels as Iran tries to overcome its current economic difficulties.

Heavy fighting in Sarajevo

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina, May 30: Bosnian government and surrounding Serb forces traded mortar, artillery and machine gun fire early Sunday in thunderous volleys that shook the besieged capital city, reports AP.

Western jets enforcing a no-fly zone watched from overhead during the fighting, which broke out before dawn and lasted about four hours before tapering off.

Fighting appeared to take place all along the circuitous frontline that has encircled Sarajevo during almost 14 months of siege.

Serbs on the South side are within 200 yards (180 meters) of Bosnia's parliament building,

and the former Holiday Inn, headquarters of the foreign press corps.

Around the hotel, government and Serb forces used heavy machine guns and anti-aircraft weapons in a fierce duel. Rocket-propelled grenades, mortars and artillery landed near the hotel, Kosevo Hospital and the presidency building.

The main street in front of the presidency was littered with debris. But hospital sources said only two people were wounded because most of the city's 3,60,000 people were indoors when the fighting started.

Bosnian radio said Saturday that Serb forces were using

tanks to attack Gorazde, one of the last pockets of Muslim resistance in eastern Bosnia.

The reports could not be confirmed independently. "We can say that this is the decisive battle and the most difficult one since the beginning of the war," said Ham radio operator Fahrudin Becic in a broadcast from Gorazde transmitted by Bosnian radio.

Serbs took up arms in Bosnia after Muslims and Croats voted to secede from Serb-dominated Yugoslavia in February 1992.

AUN official said Serbs were preventing food and relief supplies from reaching the eastern enclave of Srebrenica.

LTTE attacks army post, kills 5

COLOMBO, May 30: About 300 Tamil rebels, half of them women dressed in blue military fatigues, attacked an army post in eastern Sri Lanka, killing five soldiers, a witness and military sources said today, reports Reuter.

Four soldiers were wounded in Saturday's attack on the 20-member garrison guarding the Muslim village of Jayanthiyaya in the Batticaloa district, military sources said.

One of the injured soldiers, I G Umaratne, said from his hospital bed that about 300 rebels were involved in the attack which broke a month-long lull in rebel strikes.

Violation of security laws

South Korean students to face legal action

SEOUL, May 30: Prosecutors said Sunday they would take legal action against South Korean student leaders who contacted their counterparts in North Korea by telephone in violation of national security laws, reports AP.

The telephone call, made to North Korean students in a Beijing hotel on Saturday, marked the kickoff for a new nationwide militant student organization which demands unification and an investigation into alleged abuses by two former presidents.

Thousands of militant students shouting "Yankes go home" staged violent clashes into the night Saturday after police firing tear gas blocked 40,000 students from marching on the US Embassy.

It was the largest street protest in the capital since President Kim Young sam took office in February.

Reports Sunday said at least 80 riot police and students were injured in the clashes. This brings to at least 300 people the number injured in street violence in the last 10 days.

Protesters said they had planned to deliver a statement to the embassy demanding an apology from Washington for allegedly condoning a government crackdown in the southern city of Kwangju in 1980.

Students and dissidents say former president Chun Doo-hwan and Roh Tae-woo, a general, ordered troops to shoot civilians in Kwangju after seizing power in an army coup.

They have demanded an investigation and are angry at President Kim Young-sam's appeal to forgive those responsible.

By official count, about 200 people were killed and more than 2,000 others injured or wounded in the 1980 Kwangju pro-democracy uprising.



Prince Naruhito and Masako Owada

Radicals threaten attack on royal wedding

TOKYO, May 30: An ultra-leftist group threatened today to launch an armed attack on Crown Prince Naruhito's wedding parade on June 9, reports Reuter.

Kyodo news agency said it had received a letter from the militant Japanese Revolutionary Workers Party (Kakurokyo) threatening to "wage an armed uprising with the aim of devastating the parade."

Police officials have said they expect about 200,000 well-wishers to turn out for the motorcade to catch a glimpse of Naruhito and his bride, former diplomat Masako Owada, after their wedding ceremony.

The couple are scheduled to travel by convertible limousine from the wedding site at the imperial palace to their new home at the Akasaka Palace four km (2.5 miles) away.

In its letter, the radical group claimed responsibility for an attempted attack last week on the home of a retired

diplomat, former Ambassador to Moscow Toru Nakagawa. Nakagawa, who first recommended Owada as possible bride for Naruhito, was targeted for "expediting a politically-motivated marriage," the group said.

Authorities dismantled a crude explosive device found inside a sports bag near Nakagawa's home on Tuesday. Police have begun to step up security ahead of the wedding, checking buses and suspect vehicles in the vicinity of the imperial residences in central Tokyo.

Japan's numerous but tiny radical groups, which oppose the "emperor system" as a relic of pre-1945 militarism, have often stirred trouble without loss of life.

Their most commonly used weapons are fire bombs or simple, crude rockets. The rockets usually consist of spray can tubes filled with petrol, mounted on stick sand propelled by old-fashioned gunpowder.

Armed neo-Nazis protest end of apartheid

PRETORIA, May 30: Hundreds of uniformed and armed neo-Nazis marched through the city center Saturday to protest the end of apartheid and to demand a separate state for whites, reports AP.

Clad in khaki and black uniforms, a column of storm troopers, many armed with guns and knives, paraded with swastika-like flags to the beat of drums as horsemen cantered alongside.

"Kill the blacks," some marchers shouted.

Billed as a major display of strength, the Afrikaner Resistance Movement was only able to muster about 3,000 marchers and supporters from across the country. Units of uniformed women and children, including toddlers, bolstered the turnout of the group, known as the AWB by its Afrikaans initials.

A handful of marchers chased a group of blacks at one point, but the march was peaceful. Heavily armed police

and army troops in battle gear ringed the city center to prevent trouble.

Right-wing leaders denounced government plans to share power with the black majority and hold non-racial elections. They said right-wing groups would fight unless whites are given a separate homeland.

"We won't be the slaves of the South African Communist Party and the African National Congress," a speaker told a rally where families ate picnics and purchased racist publications before the march.

Former army commander Constance Viljoen and other ex-generals who are trying to unite the fragmented right joined the march. But the relatively moderate Viljoen was overshadowed by AWB leader Eugene Terre Blanche.

Terre Blanche took the salute on horseback from marching followers while the ex-generals on foot frantically tried to find places for the ceremony.

Dispute over Black Sea Fleet

Russian officers seek Defence Minister's help to solve crisis

MOSCOW, May 30: Naval officers urged Russia's Defence Minister on Saturday to intervene to resolve the latest flare-up in a dispute with Ukraine over the former Soviet Black Sea Fleet, reports Reuter.

Itar-Tass news agency said 62 Russian officers serving in the 380-ship fleet signed the appeal to Defence Minister Pavel Grachev.

The officers said the two governments should sign accords immediately to determine the status of servicemen in the fleet, a source of tension between Russia and Ukraine ever since the Soviet Union broke up in 1991.

The officers declared their loyalty to Russia and their

readiness "to defend Russia's interests on any territory, flying the St Andrews flag," the traditional Russian naval emblem.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk reached an agreement in the Crimean resort of Yalta last year to keep the fleet under joint command pending its eventual division in 1995.

Until then, vessels should fly a neutral Soviet-era flag in order not to inflame nationalist sensitivities.

But the dispute flared again this month when more than 200 ships hoisted the St Andrews flag in protest the raising of Ukraine's blue and yellow flag by another vessel in the fleet.

Ukraine had accused Russia of stirring the conflict artificially for political reasons. Russian reports quoted defence minister Knostantin Morozov as saying that military units on Ukrainian territory must be subordinate to Kiev.

The Black Sea Fleet is based at Sevastopol in the Crimean peninsula, which was transferred from Russian to Ukrainian jurisdiction under Soviet rule in 1954. Some Russian hardliners say it should now be returned.

Russia's Interfax News Agency said Morozov had ordered the speeding up of preparations to divide the fleet.

The Russian officers, meeting in Sevastopol, complained

that Ukraine's Defence Ministry and naval forces were unilaterally breaking last year's Kravchuk-Yeltsin accord.

Yeltsin acting like a cowboy, says Gorbachev

PARIS, May 30: Former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev said on Saturday he was optimistic about Russia's future but accused President Boris Yeltsin of acting like "a cowboy," reports Reuter.

"I believe that Russia will emerge from the situation successfully but I am very worried because reforms should go faster," Gorbachev told the Franco-German Arte television channel.

Off the Record

Ramos reveals secret of his energy

MANILA: Philippine President Fidel Ramos, who works 16 hours a day, seven days a week, has revealed the secret of his energy: Clean living and corn flakes, reports Reuter.

"I've been eating corn flakes for the past 40 years," he told guests at the opening on Saturday of a 35-million-dollar cereals factory in nearby Batangas city.

A physical fitness buff, the 65-year-old former general keeps hectic schedule that begins at 5 am with exercises. Cabinet ministers get a call from him as early as 6 am, aides say.

"Clean living and a breakfast of cereals ... I make it a point to eat cereals three times a day," Ramos said.

Sylvester Stallone afraid of heights

NEW YORK: Sylvester Stallone, star of the new high-altitude action thriller "Cliffhanger," is afraid of heights, reports AP.

Stallone told Entertainment Weekly magazine that he balked when he came face to face with the 13,000 foot (3,965 meters) peaks in the Italian Alps.

"I went into shock. I panicked," he said in the magazine's June 4 issue.

Despite a reported salary of \$15 million, Stallone said he told director Renny Harlin to "forget it." Stallone wanted to stage stunts in studios.

He remained adamant until a photographer persuaded him, for the sake of a publicity shot, to venture out onto a ledge jutting out 3,000 feet (1,000 meters) above a frozen abyss.

"From that day on I lived in fear," Stallone said. "Every day I knew they'd think of something new and more risky. And they did."

The 46-year-old Stallone said he gradually was able to handle his fears and even mastered the "double dyno," a vertical jump up a sheer cliff face from one hand hold to another.

It was a marked contrast with glum public dealings

LIVERPOOL, England: The estranged Prince and Princess of Wales made a rare appearance together on Sunday at a service marking the 50th anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic, reports AP.

The couple joked and chatted together, a marked contrast with their glum public dealings with each other before they formally separated in December.

They travelled together from the royal yacht Britannia, moored at Liverpool's Pier Head, to the world's largest Anglican Cathedral to honour those who fought in the maritime battle from 1939 to 1945.

"We are met remember the sacrifice of the sailors, soldiers, airmen and merchant mariners of 17 nations, to honour their courage and to remember those who still bear the scars of war," said the Very Rev. Derrick Walters. "We are met to confirm our alliance in the cause of peace."

About 2,500 veterans of the sea campaign were joined by officials including Prime Minister John Major and Defense Secretary Malcolm Rifkind. The couple formally separated on Dec 9 after 11 years of marriage. They divide time with their sons, Prince William, 10, and Prince Harry, 8.

Mrs Somebody Famous

WASHINGTON: Reading her name is like skimming Who: Pamela Digby Churchill Hayward Harriman, reports A. She's spent a lifetime as Mrs Somebody Famous — the woman behind Winston Churchill's son, then a Hollywood producer, then one of the Democrats' great statesmen. Now a widow and 73, she's launching a career of her own. As ambassador to France.

How does a British-born grande dame esteemed for her charm and social savvy become the boss of a US embassy with a staff of 1,000? She took a common route: raising lots of money for the president-to-be.

But there is nothing common about multimillionaire Pamela Harriman, or the way she appeared — POOF! — a fairy godmother for the Democrats in the 1980s. Their lonely decade of need.

The party had lost its Senate majority and a popular Ronald Reagan was in the White House.

"The Democratic Party was just gone, blown out of existence in 1981, and everyone was looking around saying 'What in heaven's name has happened?'" remembers Sen Jay Rockefeller of West Virginia.

Women pay more than men for same goods in US

WASHINGTON: Women in America pay more than men for the same goods and services, from cars to health care to dry cleaning, according to a new book aimed at helping women get more for their money, reports AP.

For example, women buy about half the new cars sold each year, but a white woman would pay about 150 dollar more for the same car as a white man and an African-American woman would pay about \$800 more, according to "Why Women Pay More," published by consumer advocate Ralph Nader's Center for Responsive Law.

"There is an element of suckerism," said book's author Frances Cerre Whittelsey, a former reporter for Newsday and The New York Times.

months, then form a government. Early returns showed a race dominated by the ruling Cambodian People's Party and the opposition FUNCINPEC party. The FUNCINPEC party, which is loyal to former monarch Prince Norodom Sihanouk, has said it favored reconciliation rather than confrontation with the Khmer Rouge. The government has said it would treat the Khmer Rouge as insurgents.

The UN mission on Saturday certified the election as "free and fair."

The government's Prime Minister Hun Sen said he would honor the results. But UN officials and diplomats are concerned that the government, installed by a Vietnamese invasion in late 1978, may not want to transfer power if it loses. It controls about 80 per cent of the country's territory and has about 100,000 regular soldiers and militia.