

MPs ready to accept Aristide as president

PORT-AU-PRINCE, June 15: Conservative Haitian legislators agreed on Monday to recognise ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide as the country's leader, but they granted him so little power that his own backers boycotted the debate, reports Reuters.

The measure would affirm Aristide's presidency under the constitution—but would extend indefinitely his exile, which began when he was overthrown in a September 1991 coup.

The measure would force Aristide to accept all political and administrative decisions taken by the military-backed government since his ouster.

Passed by parliamentarians, the measure would also require him to seek international legitimacy for the arrangement by demanding an end to economic sanctions.

By including lawmakers elected in a January parliamentary election which foreign observers condemned as rigged, the Aristide foes mustered a quorum even though his loyalists boycotted the meeting.

Supporters of Aristide, the only freely elected President in Haiti's history, dismissed the

Indonesia tells Vienna confce No place for the strong preaching to the weak on human rights

VIENNA, June 15: Indonesia told the world on Monday that no country could set itself up as judge and jury in defence of human rights, and warned against any rights crusade as a pretext for political interference, reports Reuters.

Defying calls by the United Nations and the United States for enforcement of rights by international action and sanctions, Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas said there was no place for the strong preaching to the weak.

Most developing nations backed the concept of universal human rights, he told the UN world conference on human rights in Vienna, but they would resist imposed standards.

"In a world where domination of the strong over the weak and interference between states are still a painful reality, no country or group of countries should arrogate to itself the role

of judge, jury and executioner over other countries on this critical and sensitive issue," Alatas said.

Indonesia, current Chairman of the 108-nation Non-Aligned Movement, was the first country to counter the prevailing western view of human rights at the conference.

Alatas said he agreed with the UN Secretary-General and the United States that nations could not hide behind the cloak of "non-interference" to conceal human rights violations.

But he called for understanding for the traditions and social values of developing nations, many of which were endowed with ancient and sophisticated cultures.

US Secretary of State Warren Christopher pulled no punches in his speech to the conference, billed as the biggest gathering of nations on human rights in 25 years.

Rejecting calls from some Asian and Middle East states for watered-down standards, he said the United States "will never join those who would undermine the universal declaration (of human rights)".

Those who desecrate these rights must know that they will be ostracized. They will face sanctions. They will be brought before tribunals of international justice. They will not gain access to assistance or investment," he said.

"We would rather have no agreement than a watered-down or mealy-mouthed agreement," he told reporters.

Tibet's exiled Dalai Lama, initially barred altogether from the Vienna conference centre under pressure from China, won the right on Monday to address a meeting of non-governmental organisations today.

Fellow Nobel peace prize winners boycotted the opening in protest, and activist groups unfurled a banner saying "Save

Off the Record

Don't delay, it's a challenge

HUELVA (Spain): Pope John Paul on Monday attacked profit-oriented economic theories which have led to mass unemployment and the loss of moral values reflected in the abominable crime of abortion," reports Reuters.

Visiting the southern Spanish region that was the point of departure for Christopher Columbus 500 years ago to the new continent, he called for a second evangelisation to restore Christian values.

"We must have a new creative effort to evangelise the world. The challenge is a decisive one that cannot be delayed," he said in the sermon of a mass attended by 10,000 people.

The 73-year-old Pope, who was suffering from fatigue caused by the heat of southern Spain over the weekend, appeared to have regained his strength on Monday.

He read his homily in strong voice as an ocean breeze lowered temperatures that had hit 35 degrees centigrade (95.0 FF) in Seville on Sunday.

Echoing a theme he raised in Seville on Sunday, the Pope said excessive emphasis on profit in economies today was leading to what he called "the tragedy of unemployment."

"The absence of moral values that only God can inspire, is also at the root of economic systems that ignore personal dignity, placing profit as their priority and their only motivation," he said.



Gene may cause depression

WASHINGTON: Researchers reported they have found and mapped a human gene that may play a role in psychiatric disorders including manic depression, reports Reuters.

Writing in the June 15 issue of the proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, scientists at Washington University in St Louis said future studies of the gene may shed light on the biological basis for inherited depression.

The gene they discovered is responsible for a cutting off action by a protein in cells. This protein, called a phosphate cleaving enzyme, governs a complex signal transmission network that exists within cells.

The gene they discovered has the same effect on the body as lithium treatment given to psychiatric patients. Lithium blocks the action of the same protein.

Islamic ban on hairdressers

KUWAIT: Kuwait will start enforcing an Islamic ban on men working as hairdressers for women in beauty parlours next month, a municipality official said on Monday, reports Reuters.

"We will impose fines and close shops if the decree is not respected — no exceptions," said Abdul Aedha Haider.

The ban follows a ruling by the Ministry of Islamic Affairs which says it is against Islam for men to touch women who are not their wives or close relatives.

Haider told Reuters a deadline for compliance with the ban, which was announced by Minister of Labour and Social Affairs Jassem Al-Oun in December expires on July 4.

The six-month grace period was to allow hairdressers to find other work.

"We have not been officially informed. We read about the ban in the papers only," said one parlour manager from Egypt. "I do not think they (male hairdressers) are going to settle for another job. Some of them spent 30 years in the trade."

Haider said he believed less than 10 per cent of beauty parlours would be affected. Most hairdressers in Kuwait are expatriate women from Lebanon, the Philippines and Egypt.

Silicone may tell upon immune-system

PHILADELPHIA: Two medical studies released on Monday suggest cosmetic implant surgery using silicone or collagen may raise the risk of immune-system diseases, reports Reuters.

A study in the annals of internal medicine reported that some women who had received silicone breast implants and complained of rheumatism-like problems showed signs of abnormal reactions in their immune systems.

Another report in the journal, on collagen implants used to treat skin defects and other disorders, found a possibly higher than normal rate of two immune-system diseases among recipients.

However, neither study conclusively shows a link and more extensive research would be needed to prove one, an editorial in the journal said. Collagen corp, which makes collagen implants, also disputed the research and said its products were safe.

The breast-implant study, led by Dr Alan Bridges of the University of Wisconsin Hospital, examined a group of 156 women who had received implants and reported problems resembling rheumatism.

Although only a small minority showed clinical signs that their immune systems had gone awry, the unusual nature of many of those cases prompted the questions over whether the silicone acted as trigger to the illness, the report said.

Manila wants US armed presence in Asia

MANILA, June 15: Philippine President Fidel Ramos on Monday dispatched his military chief on a special mission to the United States to discuss joint exercises and urge Washington to maintain its armed presence in Asia, reports AFP.

Ramos told a news conference that new basing rights will not be taken up in talks between General Lisandro Abadía and his counterpart General Colin Powell after last year's departure of the last US troops from this former colony.

He said he ordered Abadía to express Manila's position that "the US military presence in the Asia-Pacific region is needed to maintain regional stability. This is the consensus in ASEAN."

Ramos was referring to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, which groups Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.

He also said Manila considers its mutual defence treaty with the United States a "pillar" of Philippine security and a "manifestation of continuing commitment of help maintain stability in this region."

"We are not talking about basing here. We are talking about exercises, we're talking about frequent consultations, he stressed.

BRIEFLY

Ukraine DPM quits: Ukraine's Deputy Prime Minister responsible for energy quit his post on Monday as coalminers stepped up strike action, Reuter reports from Kiev.

A statement from President Leonid Kravchuk said "Tersely Yuli Yoffe has been relieved of his responsibilities." But Yoffe told Reuters he had asked to be relieved of his post because nobody listened to him.

"I made several suggestions about how to overcome problems that are now raised by the miners' strike, but my suggestions were ignored," he said.

Miners in Ukraine's largely ethnic-Russian Donbass region began their strike last week to protest against high prices. They called last week for a vote of confidence in the government and demanded that Kravchuk himself resign.

Seoul copter crash kills 5: Five South Koreans were killed and two were injured when a helicopter which was shooting a scene for a film crashed into the Han River which flows through central Seoul, police said, Reuter reports from Seoul.

Five have been, confirmed dead. Two others are being treated in hospital, the official said.

Rescue teams in boats and rubber dinghies pulled the occupants of the helicopter from the river at the suburb of Chamsil, close to the city's Olympic stadium.

The cause of the accident is not yet known.

Reuter newsman held in Gaza: Israeli troops detained a Reuters television cameraman in an occupied Gaza Strip refugee camp on Monday, residents said, Reuter reports from Gaza.

They said cameraman Bassam Abdullah was detained when he arrived at the scene of a fragmentation grenade attack on an Israeli patrol in Rafah camp in the southern strip. Soldiers broke and confiscated his video camera, they said.

The incident took place near Abdullah's home. As Abdullah was led away troops severely beat his sister when she tried to follow, residents said.

The army said it was checking the report.

Cocaine seized in Spain: Spanish police said some two tonnes of cocaine were seized on a ship off the south coast of Spain on Monday, in one of the country's biggest ever drugs hauls, Reuter reports from Madrid.

Coastguards found 72 packets of cocaine, estimated to weigh between 1.8 and 2.1 tonnes, after they boarded the ship sailing under a Panamanian flag in international waters, a police statement said. Police declined to estimate the street value of the drug, saying only it was worth a lot of money.

Police said 18 people had been arrested in connection with the find, including nine crew members aboard the ship, which was being towed to the southern port of Cadiz.

20 die in UP truck mishap: At least 20 people were killed in the Himalayan foothills of India's northern Uttar Pradesh state on Monday when a truck carrying them plunged into a gorge, the Press Trust of India (PTI) said, Reuter reports from New Delhi.

It said six others were critically injured in the accident in Almora, a summer resort popular with tourists.

Symposium on Gulf security: The first-ever international symposium on Gulf security opened in Abu Dhabi on Monday, with participation of 50 experts and officials from the six Gulf Arab states, Xinhua reports from Abu Dhabi.

The meeting is organized by the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London (IISS).

According to the IISS director of studies, John Shipman, the four-day symposium is bringing together academics as well as specialists from the region to review behind closed doors "the changing environment of Gulf security."

The six Gulf Arab states — Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman and the United Arab Emirates — constitute the Gulf Cooperation Council, an alliance created in 1981 for economic integration and collective defence.

Over 50 drown in Lake Volta: More than 50 people drowned when a passenger ship sank on Lake Volta, according to radio reports on Monday, AFP says from Accra.

The reports said 150 people were aboard the ship when it sank on June 10 about 180 kilometers (110 miles) north of Accra. It was unclear whether the remaining 100 passengers had been rescued.

The head of a Fishermen's Association Robert Tefutor, said the wreck was due to the ship's bad condition.

6 found shot dead in Iowa

NORWALK, Iowa, June 15: A 39-year-old woman and five children were found shot to death Monday in a quiet suburban neighbourhood, police said, reports AFP.

State police identified the dead as Mary Jolene Forsythe, her three children, Brian, 18, Nikki, 17, and Jessica, nine, and two other children, nine-year-old Martina Napodano and seven-year-old Helen Napodano.

Officials said the woman's estranged husband, Rick Forsythe, 42, was in critical condition with gunshot wounds. But the nature of his involvement in the grisly incident was not immediately clear, they

Babies of smoker mothers at greater risk of cot-death

LONDON, June 15: Babies who got overheated, those whose mothers smoked during pregnancy and those who weighed less than they should have at birth are all at greater risk of cot-death, a group of researchers said on Monday, reports Reuters.

The scientists also said they had found abnormalities in the brains and internal organs of babies who had succumbed to Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), known as cot-death.

The number of cot-deaths still is far greater than all other causes of death from one week after birth to five years.

Richard Cooke of the Royal Liverpool Children's Hospital told a news conference giving the results of studies on the subject.

At least 500 babies die every year from SIDS in Britain — more than from accidents, leukaemia, meningitis, cystic fibrosis or spina bifida.

SIDS Europe, a coalition of research groups, estimates that 10,000 babies fell victim to cot-death across Europe in 1992.

Figures are hard to establish because cot-deaths are sometimes registered as due to heart failures or other causes and SIDS is not officially recognised in some countries.

Cooke said doctors worried that

parents would become complacent after news, announced this month, that the number of cot-deaths in Britain had halved since doctors began telling them to put babies to sleep on their backs instead of on their stomachs.

But research being done in Britain would help point to the causes of cot-death, he told the news conference, sponsored by the Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths.

"The picture we are building up is one of a vulnerable child... later reacting to circumstances in which he finds himself," Cooke said.

Scientists had found that babies who did not develop properly in the womb, or who suffered trauma during birth, were susceptible to cot-death.

"We now know that if babies become overheated, they have a greater risk of dying," Cooke said.

Dr Peter Fleming, a paediatrician at Bristol Maternity Hospital, said babies' breathing changed when they got too hot.

"If babies are kept cool and the environment is gradually warmed up, what we see is that as the temperature is raised, the control of breathing changes," he said.

"It's not that breathing stops

or becomes shallower or deeper. The variability changes."

Fleming said that babies could be vulnerable at the point when breathing changed.

He said he would soon issue guidelines for parents, and stressed that the overheating usually became a problem when babies were overdressed or swaddled, especially when they had a slight fever from a cold.

Jean Golding, Professor of Paediatric Epidemiology at the Institute of Child Health in Bristol, said she had found more definitive links between mothers who smoke and cot-deaths.

"The biggest target is the smoking mother," she said, adding that smoking was linked with low birth weight, and that mothers who smoked were less likely to breastfeed.

Dick Van Valzen, a pathologist at the Royal Liverpool Children's Hospital, said he had found abnormalities in the internal organs and brains of children who had not grown as expected during pregnancy. Many victims of cot-death showed the same problem.

Cooke said the findings fitted in with research being done in Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

Malawians back democracy

BLANTYRE, June 15: Initial returns from Malawi's economic Capital Blantyre today pointed to a clear majority of voters backing a multi-party democracy for the country, political observers said, reports AFP.

Counting began shortly after analysts estimated that 80 per cent of Malawi's 4.2 million registered voters had cast ballots to determine if the country will have a multi-party political system after 30 years of one party rule under President Hastings Kamuzu Banda.

While preliminary returns here suggest strong support for pluralism, uncertainty surrounds the outcome in rural areas, notably in central Malawi, which has been traditionally loyal to the President.

Complete results are expected later today and will be announced in Lilongwe by Malawi University Vice-Chancellor Brown Chimphamba, Chairman of the National Referendum Commission.

Banda, believed to be in his 90s, was proclaimed life President in 1971 and has ruled the small former British protectorate since independence in 1964.

He was forced to call the referendum under heavy pressure from donor countries protesting by Human Rights violations and reports of torture and political assassination from Amnesty International.



File photograph dated June 12 showing Cambodian Prince Norodom Chackrapong, son of Prince Sihanouk during a press conference Saturday. Chackrapong reportedly fled to Vietnam yesterday, after Phnom Penh authorities informed him he could not carry out his secessionist campaign. — AFP/UNB photo

Clinton nominates Ginsburg as SC Justice

WASHINGTON, June 15: President Bill Clinton on Monday nominated Federal Appeals Judge Ruth Ginsburg to the Supreme Court, an appointment that would make her the High Court's second woman justice, reports Reuters.

Clinton chose Ginsburg, 60, to fill the seat about to be vacated by retiring Justice Byron White.

"This nominee is a person of immense character. Throughout her life she has repeatedly stood for the individual," the President said.

It was Clinton's first Supreme Court nomination and the first by a Democratic president since Lyndon Johnson chose Thurgood Marshall in 1967. Ginsburg, considered a centrist judge who strongly supports abortion rights but has criticised some aspects of the historic Roe vs Wade ruling that established them, was expected to win easy senate confirmation.

That would put her alongside Sandra Day O'Connor, appointed by President Ronald Reagan in 1981, as the only female justice in the history of the nine-member High Court.

Arms sales decline

STOCKHOLM, June 15: Worldwide sales of conventional weapons declined 25 per cent in 1992 compared with 1991, reaching a value of 18.5405 billion dollars, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) reported in its annual report today, says AFP.

The decrease confirms a recent trend in conventional arms sales, which were down 25 per cent in 1991 over the previous year.

The United States maintained its position as the world's leading arms exporter in 1992, accounting for 46 per cent of the market, against 51 per cent in 1991.

Exports from the former Soviet Union continued to fall last year, coming to only 11 per cent of the market, against 18 per cent in 1991 and 34 per cent in 1991 and 34 per cent in 1990.

Members of the European Community boosted their percentage of worldwide sales in 1992 to 26 per cent, up from 20 per cent a year earlier.

China accounted for eight per cent of conventional arms deals last year, according to SIPRI.

European countries were the leading buyers in 1992, responsible for 36 per cent of overall purchases, followed by Asia at 30 per cent and the Middle East at 22 per cent.

The report found that India and Japan each acquired more conventional weapons last year than any single country of the Middle East.

The following table shows the 10 leading arms exporters in 1992, expressed in millions of dollars:

Country	1992	1991
United States	8,429	11,666
Russia/ USSR	2,043	4,448
Germany	1,928	2,530
China	1,535	1,705
France	1,151	820
Britain	952	801
Czechoslovakia	779	74
Italy	335	163
Netherlands	305	365
Sweden	113	101

Over 60 sneak out of Tamil village

COLOMBO, June 15: More than 60 Tamil civilians arrived in an army controlled town in northern Sri Lanka complaining they were living under difficult conditions in Tamil rebel-controlled areas, Military sources said on Monday, reports Reuters.

The men and women, carrying white flags, walked peacefully through an army checkpoint at Vavunya on Saturday and are now staying in a refugee camp.

The sources said that civilians, mostly farmers, had told the authorities that they had no proper food and medicine in rebel-run areas near Cheddikulam, east of Vavunya.

The victims were quoted by the sources as saying they had to sneak out of their villages because the rebels did not want them to leave.

The rebels, fighting for a separate state for minority Tamils, control most of the ground outside Vavunya district.