Many prisoners being shifted to other states

Powell reassures Kuwait's security

KUWAIT, July 12: US Armed Forces Chief of Staff General Colin Powell arrived in Kuwait on Sunday for his first visit to the country he helped liberate from Iraqi occupation in the 1991 Gulf War, reports Reuter. He said in a brief statement

to reporters he would bring greetings from President Bill Clinton and reassurances of US commitment to Kuwaiti security during a meeting with the Emir, Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah.

The General was flanked by two plain clothes US body-

guards carrying assault rifles on arrival at Kuwaiti airport. He was met by Kuwait Armed Forces Chief of Staff General Alí Moumen. "I have been looking forward to this visit for many, many months," Powell

"I have many friends here and I'm looking forward to meeting them - the Crown Prince (Prime Minister Sheikh Saad Abulla Al-Sabah) and the other ministers of government."

Officials declined to say how long Powell would be in Kuwait.

Muslims overflow Kashmir jails

NEW DELHI, July 12: Kashmir's prisons are overflowing with Muslims arrested in connection with a bloody separatist campaign and desperate officials are shifting inmates outside the state, a newspaper

said today, says AFP. All 12 prisons in the state are housing more than their capacity and the authorities have converted several interrogation centres into mini jails, The Times of India reported.

The overcrowding, with new prisoners brought in every day, has put severe strain in jail facilities, with water and medicines constantly in short supply, the Times said in a report from Srinagar, Kashmir's summer capital.

The Kashmir government is short of jails to accommodate the prisoners whose number is swelling every day, the newspa-

The Kot Balwal sub-jail in Jammu, Kashmir's winter capital, was holding 1,200 inmates, double its capacity, it said. The jailors holding recently turned away 90 prisoners for want of

We have been under heavy

strain for the last year, an official of the Federal Border Security Force (BSF), thousands of whose men are battling Muslim guerillas in the Kashmir

valley, was quoted as saying. The official said some prisoners remained in the interrogation centres for months "Because there is no place to shift them. New barracks have been constructed but the shortage of accommodation is still acute".

The Times said several hundred prisoners had been lodged in jails outside Kashmir, India's only Muslim-majority state where the four-year-old campaign for session has left thousands dead.

But other states are not ready to accept our burden beyond a limit, one official said.

The newspaper said most prisons suffered from acute shortages of drugs and medical facilities, and those released complained of torture by interrogators.

"So it is not surprising that militants released after year of detention take up the gun again with a vengeance". The Times

Delhi starts N-plants inspection

NEW DELHI, July 12: Indian nuclear experts are performing a detailed inspection of the country's seven atomic power stations, zeroing in on five of the ageing plants as they look for signs of fatigue or neglect, reports AFP.

The comprehensive inspection follows a March 31 fire at the Narora Atomic Power Station which was described by the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) as the "most serious event" in India's nuclear history.

The Narora fire, which left two people slightly injured, was rated as a three on the international scale of one to seven. Level seven denotes an accident of the magnitude of the Chernobyl disaster.

Officials said inspectors would carry out a minute study of the state of the country's nuclear plants, plagued by shutdowns and accident since they were set up more than two decades ago with American and Canadian help.

"We want to be on the side of caution," said A Gopalakrishnan, Chairman of the AERB, the watchdog agency which last week ordered the temporary closure of India's seven atomic

all previous accidents had not exceeded level one and described the nuclear reactors at the seven stations as "Totally

in the northern state of Uttar deficiencies in the cabling sys-

Two plant workers were exposed to slight doses of radiation but the fire was quickly extinguished and there was no major leak of radioactive mate-

turbines.

seven plants and first tackling the five which have the same turbines," Gopalakrishnan told AFP by telephone from Bombay. where the AERB has its headquarters.

The AERB has ordered one of the two 220-megawatt units at the Madras Power Station (MAPS-1), India's oldest, to shut down on July 31 for an inspection of its turbines, which are similar to those installed at

A probe into the fire at the 440-megawatt plant at Narora Pradesh found that the blaze was caused by fatigue failure of two steam turbine blades and

The AERB Chairman said the inspectors would pay particular attention to the plant

"We are shutting down the

Off the Record

She's great

SEOUL: South Koreans gave First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton have review on Sunday, says Reuter.

Some made the point that a woman's place generally should be in the home. "But Hillary is great, she may not be what we think a first lady should be, but she's great. said one woman.

She was among more than 100 South Koreans who braved driving rain at the US army base in Seoul to catch glimpse of MRS Clinton on Sunday, the second and final day of the US Presidential visit to South Korea.

"Now, I met her, and look I have her signature" a delighted young girl said as she jumped up and down with excitement. MRS Clinton, dressed in a white and blue suit, smiled and shook hands with the crowd as she made her way to a restaurant for a quick brunch with families of American soldiers and

South Korean employees at the Yongsan army base. "It's exciting to meet here. She gives US women hope and courage in this world where sex discrimination still exists," said

Jennifer Kim, a guest at the brunch. "I don't think it's bad for first lady to be strong and clever likes her," said Kim, who was accompanied by her husband and

"I wish our First Lady was more like her," said a young South Korean Woman.

It is not upto Shakespeare's standard

NEW YORK: A New York document expert said he found William Shakespeare's lost play, 'Cardenic,' in the British museum library, Newsweek magazine reported, says Reuter on Monday.

It said in its July 19 edition that the play Shakespeare cowrote in 1612, which was never produced and presumed lost, was identified using handwriting analysis.

Charles Hamilion compared the penmanship in Shakespeare's will with that in the manuscript of an untitled, unsigned 1612 play in the British museum library. The magazine said that literary scholars have insisted that the dram is not up to Shakespeare's standards but Hamilton

said the lettering was the same as his other works. "I wouldn't have any trouble proving in court that this is Shakespeare's handwriting," he was quoted as saying by the magazine.

They smuggle God's message

HONG KONG: Hundreds of Filipinos are involved in smuggling Bibles into China despite bans by Chinese authorities, a local report said on Monday, according to AFP.

Hundreds of Filipinos in Hong Kong are involved in smuggling the Bibles across the border with about 500,000 copies entering the mainland every year, the English-language South China Morning Post quoted a pastor as saying.

He said more than 20 churches in Hong Kong with mainland links were involved because of the heavy demand

However, a spokesman for the Philippine consulate here denied any knowledge that Filipinos were involved in the alleged smuggling. Under Chinese law, no printed material of religious nature should be taken into the country.

A former gangster in the Philippines -- a predominantly catholic nation -- identified by the daily as Alan was quoted as saying that he came to the territory last year after church officials in the Philippines told him he could take God's message to China through the territory.

Alan reportedly said he visited China tow or three times a week, taking 30 to 60 Bibles through Chinese customs.



Kuala Lumpur: A woman resplendently dressed as a daisy waves on July 1 during a floral parade, the highlight of the Malaysian Flora Fest 1993. The festival is aimed at increasing public awareness of Malaysia's wealth of flora and -AFP/UNB photo

One lakh Liberians face starvation

GENEVA, July 12: An aid convoy to help 100,000 Liberians facing starvation could soon be on its way to the wartorn west African state if talks here are successful, a UN spokeswoman said Sunday, reports AFP.

Relief organisations in Liberta launched an urgent appeal on Saturday to help thousands of displaced people chased from their homes by three-and-a-half years of fight-

UN spokeswoman Therese Gastaut said the United Nations was not linking aid to a successful conclusion of the peace talks, which opened here Saturday and are expected to last a week.

She stressed the problem was one of access-and successful talks could open the way for aid to reach starving people cut off in central Liberia.

Until now the 16,000 strong west African peacekeeping force in Liberia, ECOMOG, has banned humanitarian organisations from the area which is under the control of Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front

three Somalis dead.

of Liberia (NPFL), the main Liberian rebel group.

Statistics on the 100,000 displaced people, including nearly 50,000 women and 25,000 children, who are facing "Imminent death" from starvation and disease in the next few days or weeks, were gathered secretly by non-government or ganisations who managed to get representatives into the area.

Gastaut was unable to say if ECOMOG leaders or the Economic Community of west African States (ECOWAS) were ready to lift the embargo on humanitarian aid to NPFL-controlled regions.

The Executive Secretary of ECOWAS, Abass Bundu, is onc of the three international mediators co-chairing the talks with UN special representative Trevor Gordon-Somers and Cannan Banana, former President of Zimbabwe, from the Organisation of African Unity (OAU).

It is the first time the organisations have come together in the search for peace in Liberia in talks, which are being held in the UN building here.

UN troops kill a Somali: A Somali was

killed on Monday by Tunisian UN troops as he tried to infiltrate

the former university campus where US soldiers are based, a

campus, the spokesman said. It was the third such incident

since July 5 involving Tunisian forces, the clashes have left

5, when 24 Pakistani peacekeepers died in an attack blamed on

militiamen loyal to fugitive Somali Warlord Mohamed Farah

Flood takes 60 lives in China:

More than 60 people have been killed in floods in central,

southern and eastern China while drought grips parts of the

northwest, the China daily said Monday, Reuter reports from

Hunan, stranding 391,000 people and ruining more than

646,600 hectares (1.6 million acres) of crops.

said, Reuter reports from Johannesburg.

(UNPROFOR) spokesman Barry Frewer said.

said on Sunday, Reuter reports from Peru.

No other details were available.

because of serious drought.

Sarafevo.

whom he was working.

Saturday night, they said

to 38, with 31 missing and thousands homeless.

Torrential rains killed 26 people in the central province of

In the southern province of Guangxi, rains killed three people. In Zhejiang in the east, the death toll from flooding as risen

But crops in northwest China's Ningxia region are suffering

Mishap claims 19 in S Africa:

Nineteen people were killed on Sunday in a crash involving a

minibus in the town of Standerton on the borders of South

Africa's Transvaal province and the Orange Free State, police

UK newsman dies in Sarajevo:

The body of British journalist, Ibrahim Goksel, was found

Sunday night by French UN troops on the tarmac of Sarajevo

airport, a UN spokesman said yesterday, AFP reports from

Goksel had been shot dead by a sniper, UN Protection Force

He said Goksel was carrying an UNPROFOR press card and

British passport, but it was not immediately possible to say for

13 killed in Peru violence: Shining

Path guerillas attacked a remote hamlet in southeastern Peru,

killing 13 people and wounding several others in the biggest

guerilla attack in the region this year, officials and witnesses

other weapons entered the town of Matucana Alia in Huanta

province, some 400 kms (240 miles) southeast of Lima on

The guerillas overwhelmed the local defence militia with their

superior firepower, leaving 13 of the town's residents dead and

About 20 guerillas armed with machine guns, machetes and

Aideed, 11 more UN troops have been killed and 137 injured.

The victim was part of a group of five who tried to enter the

The United Nations also disclosed yesterday that since June

UN spokesman said, AFP reports from Mogadishu.

prince played the viola at the concert. -AFP/UNB photo power plants. He stressed that West backs Yeltsin to face challenge

BUNFFIF MOSCOW, July 12: Russian President Boris Yeltsin encouraged by support from the West, returns to the political fray in Moscow on Monday to face a major challenge from his country's restless regions, reports

> Reuter. Yeltsin goes into a resumed session of the Constitutional Assembly (starts 1000 GMT) looking for approval of a final draft of a new presidential constitution.

> The 62-year-old leader hopes this will seal his victory against a conservative parliament which he sees as the main obstacle to his plans to reform the economy along market lines and

democratise the country. The 700-member assembly, bringing together regional leaders and social organisations, has twice failed to met deadlines for agreement on a new

Tokyo: Japanese Crown Prince Naruhito (L) and Crown

Princess Masako (R) arrive at a concert on Sunday in Gakus-

huin University, from which he is an alumnus. The crown

In spite of this, before Yeltsin went to Tokyo for last week's meeting of top industrial leaders, his camp predicted a decisive break through on the road to winning a new constitution.

In Tokyo he won support for his reforms in the shape of agreement by Group of Seven (G-7) leaders to a dollar 3 billion programme aimed at helping Russia privatise its communistera industry.

But in the past week his plans to secure quick approval for the law he wants appear to have stumbled over economic rivalry between two administrative tiers of the vast Russian Federation -- the regions and the republics.

Rich regions, angry that

heavy taxes they pay go towards be planning to boycott today's subsidising 20 ethnically-based republics inside the Russian Federation, say they will not sign the draft for a new constitution unless their status is upgraded.

Yeltsin's own home territory of Sverdlovsk in the Urals spearheaded the revolt at the beginning of July when it unilaterally raised its status to that

of a republic. The president told Sverdlovks last week that its proclamation of a Urals republic was "inopportune" and called on the regions to rein in their demands for the time being.

But since then at least three other territories have taken the same tack. And the remote republic of Tuva was reported by Russian television last Friday to

meeting. If the assembly does not agree on a full text of the new constitution the president might

postpone the project and press for early parliamentary elections in October. But the parliament, chaired

by Yeltsin's chief rival Russian Khasbulatov, is likely to resist even this.

Khasbulatov was said by parliamentary officials to be planning to meet the heads of regional parliaments, who will participate in today's assembly meeting, before the plenary

Political analysts expected Khasbulatov to repeat charges that Yeltsin has inflamed tensions between regions and republics by pressing ahead with his plans for a new constitution.

Japan intends to arm itself with N-arms, says DPRK

TOKYO, July 12: North Korea said today Japan was using Pyongyang's suspected nuclear arms programme as a pretext for arming itself with atomic weapons, reports Reuter.

A North Korean Foreign Ministry spokesman, quoted by the Korean Agency, said Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa revealed Japan's intention to arm itself with nuclear weapons by bringing forth a fictitious nuclear threat of the DPRK (North Koreal.

North Korea is said by its foes to be near completing a nuclear warhead and missile that could reach Japan.

North Korea denies developing nuclear weapons but has halted inspections by the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency of two military

Pyongyang said in March it planned to leave the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Last month it agreed under US pressure to suspend the pullout but has given no sign it will yield on inspections.

Delegates from North Korea and the United States are due to meet in Geneva on Tuesday to try to settle the issue. President Bill Clinton, visit-

ing US troops in the demilitarised zone between North and

Guinea Bissau goes to polls next year

LONDON, July 12: Guinea Bissau's President Joao Beranrdo Vicira announced on Sunday that his country's first multi-party elections will be held on March 27 next year, Portuguese catholic radio Renascenca reported, says Reuter.

South Korea on Sunday, warned the North that if it ever used nuclear weapons it would be the end of their country.

At the Tokyo Summit of Group of Seven industrialised countries last week, Japan cited the possible nuclear threat from North Korea and said it would object to an indefinite extension of the NPT. Before the G-7 Summit,

Japanese government sources said that if the North Korean nuclear menace were not removed. Tokyo would reserve the right to acquire a similar capability, although it had no immediate plans to do so.

The continued clamour of Japan over the nuclear threat of the of the DPRK is also motivated by its malicious intention to block the progress of the forthcoming DPRK-US talks at whatever cost ... ," the North Korean statement said.

Miyazawa calls off election campaign

TOKYO, July 12: Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa, his popularity at rock-bottom, called off an election campaign trip because of doubts he would win any votes, a campaign official said today, reports Reuter.

Ostensibly Miyazawa called off a visit to Gifu, central Japan, because he needed to attend to his official duties, according to a spokesman for the governing Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). But an unnamed party worker in Gifu was more can-

give us any votes and it's a headache to mobilise people to listen to his speeches." It was the second time in the two-week campaign for elections on July 18 that Miyazawa has

did, "his appearance wouldn't

One of Japan's myriad opinion polls said only eight percent of voters backed Miyazawa, one of the lowest ratings for any Prime Minister since World

cancelled an appearance.

several others wounded. The victims included three children. Amnesty accuses | Thatcher tries to derail Major's plans to ratify Maastricht LONDON, July 12: Margaret ment inserting the need for a not be an attack on the a rare visit to the Lords to

rights violation Thatcher returns to haunt WASHINGTON, July 12: The Prime Minister John Major Amnesty International has acthis week when the uncused the United States of elected House of Lords votes on whether Britain should hold a referendum on closer ties with Europe, reports In its annual report for 1992,

Reuter. hatcher, who handed over the reins of power to Major in November 1990, has tried to past year, more than in any one derail the government's year since executions were replans to ratify the Maastricht sumed in 1977. Many of the executed pris-Treaty on European Union since the Conservatives won a fourth successive elections in April 1992.

On Wednesday, Thatcher, now a baroness, will try to rally sufficient support in the Lords, parliament's upper house, to pass an amend-

referendum in the bill ratify A defeat for Major would further

undermine his enfeebled authority and hobble the ruling Conservative party's chances of winning a crucial parliamentary by election on July 29. But on Sunday Thatcher was at

speak. That is why I speak very rarely."

Prime Minister. It will be a time."

The Lords, normally a strong supporter of the official network.

Thatcher has consistently stressed the threat to British nationalism posed by the Maastricht Treaty. This touches a chord among Britain's landed gentry, many of whom are expected to make

vote for the Amendment. Government supporters have warned Thatcher she would be foolish to rely on the support of "Backwoods men" to push through her views.

But the government has taken for the debate, indicating its business managers regard the issue as of national imvote if possible.

support the treaty. Thatcher and her "Euro-sceptic" supporters believe Britons would vote overwhelmingly against the treaty in a referendum. Britain has held only one na-

tionwide referendum, in 1975 on whether to stay in the EC. The electorate voted two to one to remain in the community it joined in 1973.

Major has an 18-scat majority. The Commons were strongly against a referendum when the bill was debated for a torturous 200 hours there.

But victory for the 'Euro-sceptics in the Lords may stiffen the resolve of the many anti-European doubters in the lower house - including around 25 conservative rebels - who already have a

chance to embarrass the government on July 26. Just three days before parlia-

ment is expected to go into recess for three months, the Commons will debate the government's opt-out from the treaty's social chapter, which sets a frame work for verse its opt-out on the social chapter. Conservative members of par-

against the chapter. But some have indicated they might vote with labour if it would help them achieve their aim of stopping the treaty.

Mubarak's third term confirmed CAIRO, July 12: President

Hosni Mubarak of Egypt was virtually guaranteed a third sixyear term in office on Sunday after 441 of the 545 members of the lower house of parliament signed a petition supporting him, reports Reuter. The People's Assembly is due

a single candidate for president, who will then be put to the people for approval in a referendum in October. Mubarak needs the votes of two thirds of the total - 303

to meet on July 21 to nominate

Only one other person !

offered himself as a candida

many serious human rights violations, including execution of the mentally fil, reports PTL the world human rights body has said that 31 prisoners were executed in the US during the

oners had received "tnadequate legal representation at their trials, with court-appointed lawyers failing, for example, to present crucial mitigating evidence to the death sentence. including a history of mental fliness or abuse."

ing the treaty.

would be Maastricht, rejecting she was attacking Major. "Certainly not," she told reporters. "Never, never do that. But that is the interpretation put on every time I

pains to insist her target

She said: "If the occasion arises, I should like to speak in the referendum debate. It will furtherance of what I have believed in for a very long

Conservative party line, showed its growing independence last week what it passed a key amendment to a bill setting out Major's privatisation plans for the rail

the unusual step of announcing a "three-line whip"

portance and expect every government supporter to All major parties in parliament

If the amendment was passed, the amended bill would return to the House of Commons (Lower house) where

unified working and social conditions. Labour supports Maastricht but wants to force the government to reliament are ideologically

deputies - to win nominations, and simple majority of votes cast in the referendum to be clected