

# Ukraine dismantling SS-19 N-missiles

WASHINGTON, July 28: Ukraine is dismantling some of its SS-19 nuclear missiles and the United States is ready to provide at least 175 million dollar to help the former Soviet

republic become a non-nuclear state, a US defence official said on Tuesday, reports Reuter. The official, who asked not to be identified, spoke with reporters after Ukrainian Defence Ministers Konstantin Morozov held nearly three hours of talks with Defence Secretary Les Aspin and state department officials at the Pentagon.

# Accord on interim govt in Nigeria

LAGOS, July 28: Nigeria's two political parties agreed on Tuesday on a proposal for an interim government as a solution to the country's worst election crisis in a decade, party sources said.

"They have agreed in principle on an interim government but are still working out the details," House of Representatives member Tokunbo Afikuyomi told Reuters from Abuja by telephone.

Officials of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the National Republican Convention (NRC) continued their meeting on Tuesday night to iron out details of the proposed government, including who will head it and its life-span.

"Each regiment of former Soviet SS-19s has only 10 missiles and would involve only a small percentage of the 1,600 nuclear warheads stationed in the Ukraine. The warheads are assigned to 130 SS-19s, 46 10-warhead SS-24s and to bear-hand Blackjack bombers.

Although the Ukrainian parliament has thus far refused to agree to make the country a non-nuclear state, the US defence official said the United States now hoped to soon begin providing up to 175 million dollar approved by Congress to help Kiev get rid of nuclear weapons on its soil.

# Congress asked for \$ 172.5m to finance programme Clinton unveils plan to crack down on illegal immigration

WASHINGTON, July 28: President Clinton asked Congress Tuesday to help him crack down on illegal immigration but said America would continue to be a safe haven for refugees and a melting pot for many cultures, reports AP.

immigrants and legitimate refugees while keeping out those with no right to be here. "To treat terrorists and



President Clinton

Prompted by hundreds of Chinese boat people and an immigrant sheik linked to the World Trade Center bombers, Clinton said, "We cannot tolerate those who traffic in human cargo, nor can we allow our people to be endangered by those who would enter our country to terrorize Americans."

He added, however, that people from other countries would still be able to pursue "the American dream."

Worked out with representatives of both parties in Congress, Clinton's plan received bipartisan support from members of Congress who attended the White House announcement.

The plan would not shut the nation's borders but would continue welcoming legal

grants who live here honorably and are a vital part of every segment of our society," he said.

The plan, spearheaded by Vice President Al Gore, has two elements:

- New legislation would allow expedited exclusion of undocumented aliens "who do not have credible claims for political asylum," the use of racketeering laws against gangs that organize illegal immigration by sea or by land and increase penalties for alien smuggling.

- An additional \$172.5 million for next year's proposed budget to add up to 600 border patrol agents, enhance the State Department's "lookout" system that lists foreign criminals and suspected terrorists who should be kept out, expand pre-inspection at foreign airport of US-bound passengers and hire more officers to handle the expedited exclusion hearings.

The expedited exclusion would affect asylum claims by 30,000 people caught each

year at entry points with fraudulent or no documents, said officials who spoke on condition of anonymity.

It would not affect the estimated 300,000 who succeed in entering the country illegally or the 80,000-90,000 who request asylum without having been caught, they said.

Expedited exclusions would be designed to take no more than five days instead of the 18 months common now, the officials said. The applicant would be detained during the process.

The Justice Department also is developing a plan to reduce the backlog of 275,000 asylum claims and expand deportation proceedings in prison for alien felons so they can be deported when released.

"It's a good bill, absolutely," Republican Sen Alfonso D'Amato told Clinton after the announcement. D'Amato had severely criticized the government for allowing Sheik Omar Abdel-Rahman to remain free.

# UN team installs 3 cameras at Iraqi missile test sites

BAGHDAD, July 28: A UN team on Tuesday installed three out of six surveillance cameras at two Iraqi missile test sites and praised the Iraqi authorities for their cooperation, reports AP.

The six cameras were to be set up at the Yawm Al-Zim and Rafah sites, around 60 kilometres (40 miles) south of Baghdad, as a final step in the interim solution to a crisis that threatened to unleash US air strikes on Iraq earlier this month.

Bill Eckert, leader of the team of three Americans, said the three cameras would not be activated pending talks on long term monitoring of Iraq's post-war military potential at the United Nations in New York at the end of August or early September.

"Technical cooperation (with the Iraqis) on this job is really excellent," Eckert said. "It said the team still had 'electrical' work to do and he refused to indicate when the experts would be leaving Iraq."

He refused to specify where the cameras were installed.

Meanwhile, Maurizio Ziffero, Italian head of a UN nuclear arms team in Iraq on a routine mission, said Iraq had pledged to provide the United Nations with a list of its suppliers after the start of the New York talks.

"We were told there is willingness on the Iraqi side to open and discuss these files, they asked us to be patient and wait for the start of the talks," Ziffero said.

"There is an expectation from our side that this promise will hold," he added.

# Blast outside US embassy in Lima

LIMA (Peru), July 28: A car bomb exploded outside the US Embassy on Tuesday, wounding two guards and heightening fears of a rebel offensive to disrupt celebrations of President Alberto Fujimori's third year in power, reports AP.

The bombing by Shining Path guerrillas came a day after attacks in Lima killed two people and wounded four. No one was killed by Tuesday's bombing, but guards fatally shot a passer-by they mistook for a guerrilla.

Police said they deactivated several small bombs Tuesday and took down dozens of rebel flags bearing the hammer and sickle that had been set around the capital.



New party leaders Morihiro Hosokawa (R) of the Japan New Party and Masayoshi Takemura (M) of the Pioneer Party meet Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) Chairman of Policy Affairs Research Council Hiroshi Mitsuoka (L) at the LDP Headquarters in Tokyo yesterday. Both leaders rejected to join with the LDP and announced to stay as non-LDP parties. — AFP photo

# Blasts rock Milan, Rome: 5 killed

ROME, July 28: Bomb blasts ripped through downtown Milan and the heart of ancient Rome Tuesday night. At least five people were reported killed in the northern financial capital, reports AP.

The scene of the blast in Milan was near Piazza Cavour, about a half-mile (one kilometer) from La Scala opera house.

Authorities blamed the Milan explosion on a car bomb, and suspected car bombs in the blasts in the capital, where at least eight were injured.

Police blocked off the area to the public to allow ambulances and fire-fighting equipment to get through.

One bomb in Rome heavily damaged St. John Lateran Basilica, the Pope's church as bishop of Rome. The other struck near the ancient forum and the Michelangelo-designed Campidoglio square, the seat of city government.

The explosion was reported to have gone off at 11.15 pm (2115 GMT).

Blasted cars were found near the scene of the explosions. The blasts in Rome were so powerful they shook windows at least 4

State TV said the victims of the Milan blast included three firefighters and a policeman, apparently called to the scene by a telephone warning that a blast would soon go off. A man sleeping in a park also was killed.

At least seven other people were wounded in Milan, none seriously.

# Tigers kill 6 Lankan troops

COLOMBO, July 28: Tamil rebels ambushed a military patrol Wednesday and shot to death six soldiers in the third attack on security forces in five days, military officials said, reports AP.

The number of troops, policemen and Sinhalese villagers killed by the Tamil Tiger rebels since Saturday. The attacks are apparently to mark the 10th anniversary of an anti-Tamil pogrom in which 2,000 people were killed by Sinhalese mobs.

The soldiers were attacked while returning to their camp at Meegagodaella village in eastern Trincomalee district, the officials said. They cannot be identified under briefing rules.

The carnage drew the country into a full-fledged war for an independent Tamil nation spearheaded by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam guerrillas. They want to set up an independent nation in the north and the east where most Sri Lankan Tamils live.

The deaths increased to 69

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# 4000 Iraqi Shi'ites flee to Iran

TEHRAN, July 28: Around 4,000 Iraqi Shi'ite Muslims have fled to Iran over the past few weeks to escape Iraqi army attacks an Interior Ministry officials said on Tuesday, reports AP.

Ahmad Hosseini told the official Irna news agency the refugees had crossed the southern border in the Khuzestan province in the past few weeks.

# Off the Record

## Phone sex calls cost \$1.90 a minute

WASHINGTON: The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) issued new rules Tuesday designed to protect people from huge, unexpected bills from phone sex lines and other 900-numbers that charge per call or by the minute, reports AP.

The government has received complaints from people who are shocked at bills, sometimes for several thousand dollars a month.

The 900-numbers included a wide variety of recorded and live information and entertainment services, but have become notorious for widely advertised sexy talk lines that often charge several dollars a minute.

Under the new rules, people who dial 900-number phone services will be warned of the cost of the calls and will get a chance to hang up before being charged.

## Symbol of courage!

SEOUL: A long-haired young woman, photographer smeared with blood and clinging to a rope, has become a symbol of courage in Korean media coverage of an airplane crash that killed 66 people, reports AP.

The unidentified crash survivor, who appeared to be in her 20s, was shown with her shoes missing, her blue dress billowing in driving rain and win, being airlifted into a helicopter. As she grips the rope with both hands, her arms taut, rescuers cheer her on from below.

Photographs of the rescue dominated front pages Tuesday in virtually every Korean newspaper. Television footage of the woman tumbling into the helicopter has been shown repeatedly.

She was among 44 people who survived Monday's crash of an Asiana Airlines Boeing 737-500, which was trying to land in the southwestern city of Mokpo in stormy weather on a flight from Seoul.

## "Biology doesn't make a family"

SARASOTA, Fla.: Through a veil of tears, a 14-year-old girl switched at birth with another child said she wanted nothing to do with her biological parents, reports AP.

"The definition of a dad to me is somebody that loves me, somebody who's been there for me," Kimberly Nays told Barbara Walters in an ABC-TV special scheduled to air Tuesday night. "Biology doesn't make a family."

On Tuesday, a judge refused a plea by Kimberly's biological parents, Ernest and Regina Twigg, to keep next week's custody-rights trial private. The saga has been the subject of a book and a made-for-television miniseries.

## Sexy policewomen are "bait" to catch rapists

MANILA: Sexy, looking undercover policewomen are walking on the streets of Manila to lure would be rapists, the city's Police Chief said on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

The 50 combat-trained policewomen were "bait" to catch sex offenders after a series of rapes in recent months, Police Capital Command Chief Pedro Sistoza said.

He described the women, each backed up by two plainclothes male detectives, as "young and sexy".

Many of them have been deployed in suburban Markina where there have been 17 recent rapes. Most of the victims were working women attacked while walking home at night.

# BRIEFLY

## US preparing arms control plan:

The United States is preparing an arms control plan that would ban the production of materials used to make nuclear weapons, the New York Times reported in today's editions, Reuter says from New York.

The administration of President Bill Clinton is making plans to propose a worldwide ban on the production of highly enriched Uranium and Plutonium unless it is used for nuclear power and subject to international inspection, the newspaper said.

## Rains take 7 lives in Japan:

Landslides and floods from two days of heavy rain killed seven people and injured five Wednesday in southern and western Japan, police reported, AP says from Tokyo.

The rain flooded more than 1,000 houses and set off 93 landslides, officers added. They said landslides destroyed five homes.

More than 29 centimeters (11.6 inches) of rain from a tropical storm fell Monday and Tuesday in Oita, 810 kilometers (505 miles) southwest of Tokyo on Japan's southernmost main island of Kyushu, weathermen said. After a pause, the rain resumed Wednesday, they said.

## Floods claim 78 in China:

Floods in China's central Hunan province have killed 78 people in the past ten days, Beijing's official Xinhua news agency said Tuesday, AFP reports from Beijing.

Flooding, following storms in the western part of the province, affected 7.5 million people and damaged 400,000 houses, Xinhua said.

Some 70,000 people lost their homes, it said, adding 18,000 Chinese and foreign tourists were stranded but have now been brought to safety.

Flooding killed another 51 people in Hunan between July 1 and 4. In June, 33 people died in floods in the province.

## Pilot killed in US jet crash:

A Pennsylvania pilot was killed in runway collision of two US Air Force F-16 jet fighters in western Korea, US military officials said Wednesday, AP reports from Seoul.

A statement issued by the US 8th Army said Lt. Col Ralph E. Gardner, 38, of Milton, Pa., died Tuesday when his jet collided with another single-seat F-16 during a training mission at Kunsan Air Base.

The other pilot survived the crash and was released after treatment, said the statement. It said an investigation was underway.

## Quake hits near Tokyo:

A strong undersea earthquake with a preliminary magnitude reading of 5.4 on the Richter scale struck at 4:45am near Tokyo Wednesday (1945 GMT Tuesday), AP reports from Tokyo.

Police said there were no immediate reports of damage or injuries.

The Central Meteorological Agency said the tremor was centered in shallow water more than 80 kilometers (48 miles) east of the capital off the Boso Peninsula in China Prefecture (state).

Meanwhile, rescuers continued to search for 42 people still missing since the devastating earthquake that rocked northern Japan on July 12, stirring up tsunami, or tidal waves, and touching off fires and landslides.

## UK vehicle attacked in Bosnia:

A British warrior armoured vehicle was immobilized in central Bosnia Monday with British battalion Commander Alastair Duncan aboard, British officers said, AFP reports from Vitez.

The warrior was disabled by an anti-tank mine. None of the crew was wounded, according to the officers at the British base in Vitez, central Bosnia.

## Tunisia condemns Israeli attacks on Lebanon

TUNIS, July 28: Tunisia joined other Arab states today in condemning Israeli military attacks against Lebanon during the last four days, reports Reuter.

The Foreign Ministry in a statement called for an immediate withdrawal of Israeli troops from south Lebanon.

# US vows to keep peace process alive despite war in Lebanon

WASHINGTON, July 28: Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who curtailed a trip to Asia to confer with President Clinton over new violence in Israel and Lebanon, is headed for the Middle East this weekend with the vow that US peace efforts won't be derailed, reports AP.

He arrived back in Washington early Wednesday and planned to meet first with White House and State Department officials who oversee the Mideast process and then with Defence Secretary Les Aspin and National Security Adviser Tony Lake. It was not clear when he would report to Clinton.

Christopher may revise his schedule slightly, but he intends to stop in Egypt, Israel, Syria and Jordan, with the aim of advancing recessed negotiations over Palestinian self-rule and an Arab-Israeli settlement, his aides said Tuesday.

The negotiations, which

Christopher hopes to get reopened here in August, are the "only structure" that can deal with tensions in the area, Assistant Secretary of State Edward P. Djerejian told the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

The committee Chairman, Rep Lee H. Hamilton, D-Ind., agreed that "only a negotiated settlement between Israel and its Arab neighbours can address the grievances which fuel this cycle of violence in the region."

He added: "All parties who are committed to the peace talks must work even harder to ensure that this fighting does not divert attention from our goal of peace between Israel and its neighbours."

But the militant Party of God, known also by its Arabic name Hezbollah, and other radical groups are determined to undermine US diplomacy, according to US officials.

Hezbollah's attacks on Israeli

forces provoked massive retaliation by Israel on guerrilla strongholds in Lebanon.

Clinton, in a brief session with reporters, said "we're concerned" about the mounting violence in the Middle East. He also praised Syria for showing "commendable restraint."

Six Syrian soldiers died in the fighting and Clinton administration officials feared President Hafez Assad might jump into the fight.

Clinton said he had no reason to believe the peace process was in jeopardy. "I don't think we should let Hezbollah and all these groups that don't want anything good to happen in the Middle East derail the peace process by what they do."

Later, he told a group of Georgia reporters, "they have shown, the people in the Middle East, a remarkable ability to deal with conflict and chaos and not let it get it derailed."



Smoke from Israeli bombardments billows behind houses in Nabatyeh, Southern Lebanon as "Operation Accountability" continues. — AFP photo

# Lawsuit against Clinton's policy on gays

WASHINGTON, July 28: The American Civil Liberties Union filed a federal court suit Tuesday challenging President Clinton's new policy on homosexuals serving in the military. The suit says it violates the constitution's most valued principles by not going far enough, reports AP.

"The central promise of our Constitution is that American citizens should be judged according to their abilities, not their skin color, their gender or their sexual orientation," said William Rubenstein of the ACLU.

"We have one simple goal with this lawsuit — to force the military to safeguard this principle for lesbians and gay Americans," he said.

The ACLU and the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund filed the suit on behalf of seven gays and lesbians in the military.