Parliament limits president's power to name four ministers

JERUSALEM, Aug 12: About Yeltsin firm to hold election in autumn half of the 396 Palestinian deportees still stranded in Southern Lebanon can return to the occupied territories in mid-September, a Defence

Ministry spokesman said today. Between 60 and 80 of the men will have served their ninemonth period in exile on September 17, spokesman Oded Ben Ami told AFP.

And another 121 deportees, who could have returned home by May under a deal brokered by the United State, have now asked to come back. They refused at first insisting that all the Palestinians exiled last December 17 must return en masse, in accordance with UN Resolution 799.

ments granting itself sweeping control over ministries, the govdent Boris Yeltsin announced today that the first legislative ernment and the state. elections in Russia since the Yeltsin did not set a date for

aborted Soviet coup would be the elections but reiterated his held this Autumn whether the forecast that his power struggle hardline parliament approved with parliament would be rethem of not, reports AFP. solved next month, saying "We must be very attentive and "Legislative elections will ready to take decisive measures take place in the Autumn. If the for September." parliament doesn't take the de-"August will be the month to

cision, the president will take it prepare these measures," he himself," Yeltsin said in a said. The Russian president on speech to a meeting of state Tuesday predicted that The fate radio and television managers. of authority in Russia" would be determined next month. The parliament, meeting in special session as Yeltsin spoke,

He also announced today that he had vetoed several bills already approved by Parliament, including a "Hyper-Deficit" budSpring, and had asked the government to draft a new "Pre-

Yeltsin and his supporters have fought for most of the past two years since the failed Soviet coup to forge a new constitution and organize fresh elections likely to purge hardline communists opposed to his reforms from the parliament.

sidential budget."

The president made his announcement hours before he was due to fly to the northern city of Petrozavodsk for talks with regional officials from throughout Russia in an effort to seek compromise on balancing local and federal power in a

The Kremlin began pushing last Spring for early Autumn elections and Yeltsin has stated these could be organized over the head of parliament by his special assembly which endorsed a new draft constitution in early July.

"We are very closely following the development of the situations," Yeltsin said. "We are preparing our actions and they will be applied."

The parliament, however, today overwhelmingly approved amendments to the law on the cabinet which would limit Yeltsin's hand in naming ministers to the four powerful ministries" - Defence, Security.

Interior and Foreign Affairs and extending parliamentary

control over the executive. With about 100 of the total 250 deputies absent from the session, the parliament also approved draft constitutional amendments that would in essence make Yeltsin a figure head and place the government under parliamentary control.

"The country is now living in a state of quasi-coup detat," said Vladimir Isakov, a hardline deputy who wrote a resolution approved in today's session.

Yeltsin has apparently decided to pursue this situation to the end, but society will no longer tolerate dictatorship from any body," he stated.

The draft amendments approved today included provisions under which the legisla ture would have the power to hold votes of confidence at will in the entire government as well as in individual ministers.

"A vote of no-confidence signals their resignation," the draft text stated, adding that if the parliament votes no confidence in the premier the entire government must step down.

The draft amendments. which remain subject to modification, were approved for debate at the next congress of people's deputies due to be held in October.

#### ROK cops 1.0 stop pro-unific ation rally on c ampus

SEOUL, Aug 1 2: Thousands riot police were posted around a university campus Thursday to foi I an outlawed pro-unification rally by radicals and dissidents, reports AP.

Dissidents and radical students have pledged three-day rallies at Younsei University in western Seo al to highlight the August 15 looliday that marks the end of Japanese colonial rule over the Korean peninsula in 1745. Unification has been the most emotional issue for both North and South Koreans since the ir land was divided the same year,

At the gate, a dozen students pitched tents for a hunger strike to protest the government's ban on protests.

# US suspends air service to Nigeria

WASHINGTON, Aug 12: The US government suspended air service Wednesday between the United States and Nigeria because of security problems in the African country, the transportation department said, reports AFP.

The Department said Wednesday that the safety of passengers and crew members could not be assured at Murtala Muhammen International Airport in Lagos, and ordered a half in air traffic by Nigeria airways as well as US-based carriers.

No mention was made of civil unrest in Nigeria, but US officials have expressed concern about violence as a result of the military regime's failure to give up power.

In Nigeria, police stepped up security Wednesday as the country braced for three days of civil disobedience protests called by pro-democracy sup-

Kyodo News agency.

Baroda city.

Reuter reports from New Delhi.

Immigration Division police.

20,000 baht (dlrs 800) each.

said, AFP reports from Arizona.

a spokeswoman for the Sheriff's office.

agency said, AFP reports from Moscow.

for overseeing geological work in Russia.

porters to force the military government from power.

meanwhile approved a cata-

logue of new legislation and

draft constitutional amend-

Lagos was expected to come to a standstill Thursday with millions of residents expected to stay home for fear of a repeat of the bloodshed that marred a similar protest in early July.

The military government has threatened to impose a state of emergency in any part of the country where there is a break-

down of law and order. Elections of June 12 widely believed to have been won by Moshood Abiola.

The European Community and the United States, concerned about instability in Nigerian, have imposed sanctions mainly affecting military

In Lagos, airport officials said Europe-bound flights by Lufthansa, KLM and British Airways for Wednesday were all full and dozens of people were still trying to fight their way

BRIEFLY

Tremor shakes Japan: An earthquake

measuring 4.3 degrees on the open-ended Richter scale oc-

curred near Japan's northern Hokkaido island Thursday,

The tremor follows the major earthquake and ensuing tidal

The epicentre of Thursday's quake was about 20 kilometers

wave which shock northern Japan on July 12 and which

claimed 200 lives with 34 people still missing, according to the

30 feared drowned in Gujarat:

At least 30 people were feared drowned in India's western

Gujarat state on Wednesday when a boat carrying them cap-

sized in a lake, the United News of India (UNI) news agency said.

carrying 35 passengers in the Sursagar lake, in Gujarat's

It said civil desence personnel had recovered 21 bodies.

did not identify them or say what the charges were.

police said Thursday, AP reports from Bangkok.

It quoted government officials as saying the 20-seat boat was

UNI said police arrested two people after the incident, but it

2 arrested in Thailand: Authorities

have arrested two alleged members of a passport forgery gang

that helped send Thai women to work as prostitutes in Japan,

in a raid on a house in Bangkok Tucsday along with a Thai,

Surasak Sakdikarum, 30, said Capt Surasit Sutthipan of the

tip off, seized typewriters, visa application forms, rubber stamps and other evidence. Surasit said other suspected members of

the same gang arrested in earlier raids in the past month had

allegedly bought Karen hilltribe girls from their parents for

4 miners crushed to death: Four

miners were crushed to death when a load of ore fell on them

about 1,220 meters (4,000 feet) underground, the Sheriff's office

free ore in a pass where copper-bearing rock is transferred be-

tween levels of the Magma Copper Company mine, police said.

The accident occurred Tuesday when the fourmen tried to

All the ore fell and crushed the people, said Belia Pessenden,

11 killed in Russian blast: Eleven

workmen were killed in a quarry Wednesday when 280 tonnes

of dynamite blew up for unknown reasons, the Interfax news

Belgoroad as the workmen were laying the explosives, Interfax

added, citing the press office for the state committee responsible

The quarry belongs to the private company Lebedinsky Cok.

5 die in Indonesian boat capsize: At

least five people died and about 20 were missing when an

Indonesian vessel caught fire and sank off the island of

Sulawesi, the official Antara News agency said yesterday, Reuter

Fishermen rescued about 45 people from the stricken vessel, the Waloindi III, which sank on Wednesday.

The accident happened in the south-western region of

Katsuya Todo, a 37-year-old Japanese national, was arrested

The captain said police officers, who conducted the raid on a

Japan's Metrological agency said, AFP reports from Tokyo.

(12 miles) under the sea off Hokkaido's southwest coast.



President Bill Clinton (C) and current US Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell (L) smile on Wednesday as US Army Gen. John Shalikashvili (R), 57, responds to a question regarding the former Warsaw Pact nations joining NATO with, "I have just been nominated for the position of Chairman, not President of the United States." Shalikashvili will succeed -AFP photo Powell who is scheduled to retire on September 30.

#### Murtaza to run as independent candidate

KARACHI, Aug 12: The exiled brother of Pakistani opposition leader Benazir Bhutto will run for election as an independent candidate in the political heartland of her Pakistan People's Party (PPP), a spokesman said on Wednesday, repots Reuter.

Political analysts said Murtaza Bhutto, who fled Pakistan 16 years ago and is wanted there for alleged terrorism, clearly meant to challenge his high-profile sister as political heir to their late father, former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto.

Subak Majeed, a spokesman for their mother Nusrat, said Murtaza would stand in seven Parliamentary and 17 Provincial Assembly constituencies in the family's home province of Sind in southern Pakistan.

Majeed gave no hint of when Murtaza might return to Pakistan from his exile in Syria. "He may come before the elections or during the elections or after the elections," he said.

#### 60,000 Russian troops still in E Germany

BERLIN, Aug 12: Fewer than 60,000 Russian troops are still stationed in eastern Germany - about a sixth of the 1989 total when the region was the old Warsaw Pact's frontline, a German army officer said, reports Reuter.

Major General Hartmut Foertsch told reporters late on Tuesday that there were 58,415 Russian soldiers in eastern Germany at the end of July, down from 380,000 when the Soviet army occupied old communist East Germany.

Russian's withdrawal from eastern Germany was scheduled for completion by the end of 1994 under the terms of a series of agreements that sealed German unification in 1990.

The process was speeded up last year to have a scheduled finish in August 1994 after Bonn promised Moscow additional aid.

#### Thousands of fish float up dead in a Manila lake

MANILA, Aug 12: Hundreds of thousands of fish have floated up dead in nearby Laguna lake, the Philippines' largest, sparking suspicions of chemical poisoning from a factory that dots the shoreline, a legislator who represents the district said Thursday, reports AFP.

The occurrence affected Milkfish and Tilapia farms on the western shore of the lake, adjacent to the industrial southwestern suburbs of Mantla, and if left unchecked could spread south and east, congressman Roy Almoro said in a radio broadcast.

The Laguna lake development authority, which overseas fishing and environmental protection of the 356 square-mile lake said its biologists were investigating the fish deaths and would issue a statement to the press later. Almoro said there was evi-

dence that a "Poisonous chemical or substance was deliberately released " into the lake during heavy rains last week-

## Off the Record Surprise birthclay party

Bill Clinton was given a surprise birthday party by the White House staff on Thursday - a week before he turns 47, reports Reuter. Clinton was lured out of

WASHINGTON: President

the over office under the pretense of attending a staff meeting on the south lawn of the White House. Once he got there, a large

birthday cake stood ready and his wife Hillary and daughter Chelsea, 13, were on hand with the f our tops musical Clinton turns 47 on August 19 but will be away from the

White House on a vacation. In his remarks, Clinton app ealed to his staff to take some

time off as well. His boyhood friend and deputy White House counsel, Vince Foster, killed himself July 20 and in a note found afterward in his briefcas e, foster attributed his mistakes in part to overwork.

"It's been four years and the some since Hillary and Chelsea and I ever went anywhere for n iore than four days, and that was a dumb thing to do," Clinton said.

"So I'm going to take a litt le vacation and I hope all of you will and remember if you're re sted and happy and upbeat, you'll also do a better job for the United States," he said

The four tops sang "sugar pie, honey bun." The White House allowed a television camera and still photographers to record the event but reporters were barred.

#### Mass mouse suicide

BEIJING: Hundreds of thousands of mice drowned themselves in lakes and rivers in northwest China this summer in a mass suicide that may have been triggered by overpopulation, the Xinhua news agency se id Wednesday, reports AP.

Scientists have not found any signs of disease in the mice. and there are no reports, of disease among other animals or people in the region, the o fficial news agency said.

· Herdsmen began finding dead mice in early May in the Altay grassland and nearby parts of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, it said. The numbers grew quickly, and more than 300,000 dead mice were scooped up at just one sluice gate on a river, Xinhua said.

Some dead mice were found on dry ground, however, and it was not clear how they died.

#### They support sex outside marriage

WASHINGTON: American catholics respect Pope John Paul II as :a spiritual leader but disagree with him on issues including abortion, divorce and sex, according to an ABC News-Washington Post poll released on Wednesday, reports Reute r.

The poll was released a day before the Pope visit's Denver to address a youth gathering and meet President Bill

They survey, taken from August 6 to August 8, questioned 1,216 adults of whom 28 per cent said they were raised as catholics. Some 22 per cent still considered themselves catholics.

Of those who are still catholics, 85 per cent said they look up to the Pope as a

moral and spiritual leader, but 78 per cent said they do not believe he is infal lible, a tenet of modern catholicism.

Seventy per cent said they support artificial birth control, 57 pre cent support abortion on demand, 58 per cent oppose the ban on priests getting married, 63 per cent support women becoming priests, 62 per cent oppose the ban on divorces and 56 per cent said they did not support the Pope's opposition to sex outside marriage.

### In search of dinosaur

CHICAGO: The discoverer of the oldest dinosaur fossil known will lead a 2-4-person team on a two-month search of the Sahara, where he hopes to unearth unique species of the ancient reptiles, reports Reuter.

"Africa is the least-explored continent for the story of dinosaur evolution," planetologist Paul Sereno said on Wednesday in a ceremory at the Field Museum here.

Africa was drifting free as an island 100 million years ago, and Sereno said previously unseen species of dinosaurs and

plant life could shed light on the process of evolution. Sereno, a University of Chicago researcher, previously discovered the world's oldest dinosaur, Eoraptor, a small carnivo-

rous beast found in what is now Argentina.

S African polls.

#### Coup plot: 210 arrested in Iraq

reports from Jakarta.

LONDON, Aug 12: An Iraqi opposition group said yesterday that President Saddam Hussein's government had arrested 210 military officers, retired officers and civilians after an alleged coup plot, reports Reuter

Saad Jabr of the Londonbased Free Iraq Council said the arrested men all came from the area around Saddam's home power base of Takrit, 150 km (100 miles) north of Baghdad, and were detained

over the past few days.
"Saddam wants to re-establish his authority and the fear of God he puts into the people,"

# Heavy rainfall in Nepal

KATHMANDU, Aug 12: Fresh heavy rainfalls washed away three week's cleanup work in Nepal as a 72-hour downpour triggered landslides and flooding in the central and lowland regions, a Home Ministry official

said Wednesday, reports AFP. Incessant rain caused the closure of different sectors of the Tribhuban highway, south of here.

The Bhainse-Hetaunda Road was cut near Jogimara and Bulbile. Hetaunda is an industrial township south of Kathmandu.

Flooding early Tuesday washed away the foundations of a British-donated bailey bridge sent from Hong Kong to help move oil tankers along the Tribhuban highway.

Diversion routes constructed at the approach of the Belkhu and Mahadev-Best were also swept away, threatening the batley bridge over the Malekhu river, 60 kilometres (37 miles) west of Kathmandu and disrupting transport services.

dur Deupa said on Thursday, "It will take another seven days to rebuild the damaged portion and diversion routes to help get commercial transport and oil tankers back on the roads. Meanwhile, flood waters that

Home Minister Sher Baha-

30 prisoners

held by LTTE end hunger strike

COLOMBO, Aug 12: Thirty prisoners held by Tamil separatists have given up a hunger strike after two weeks, a military spokesman said on Thursday, reports Reuter.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) have been holding 39 prisoners - 38 policemen and a soldier - in their northern Jaffna peninsula stronghold since June 1990.

The 30 fell seriously ill after a week without food. "We can confirm ... they began taking meals on Wednesday," the spokesman said.

month claimed more than 2,000 lives and displaced thousands. though unofficial sources put the death toll at more than

Deupa described the earlier flooding and landslide as "the worst natural disaster this landlocked Himalayan Kingdom had experienced in 100 years.

inundated areas of Janakpur

township southeast of Kathma-

ndu, on Tuesday and covered

Floods and landslides last

the airport continued to rise.

"Over 134 bridges, including eight major ones, have been washed away and three major highways had been badly damaged by the floods and land slides," Deupa said.

He said reports received by the Home Ministry revealed that more than 600,000 people had been affected and 25,000 houses had been washed away in Rautahat, Sarlahi, Makwanpur, Chitaun, Dhanusha and Malangawa districts - all in the central, lowland Terai region of the Kingdom.



LONDON: Nell Clarke, the hair and colour artist at Madame Tussaud's, gives the finishing touches to the latest wax portrait of Elizabeth Taylor on August 12. It is the third wax model of - AFP photo the star to be exhibited since 1964.

## Sulawest is east of Borneo in the Banda Sea. Hosokawa's remark on World War has triggered a backlash

TOKYO, Aug 12: Prime Minister Morthiro Hosokawa's acknowledgement of Tokyo's World War II responsibilities has triggered a backlash in Japan, fearful of renewed compensation demands from Asia, reports AFP.

Nationalist sentiments are cropping up three days ahead of the 48th anniversary of the end of the War, which claimed 20 million Asian lives while killing three million Japanese soldiers.

The Sankei Shimbun, a nationwide conservative daily, in its editorial today lashed out against moves to "Convict Japan based on onesided interpretation of history."

"We do not want our children to inherit factdistorting historical views," the paper said, argu ing that the former Soviet Union unflaterally attacked Japan and that the War led to Asian lib-Hawkish, members of the Liberal Democratic Party, a conservative party replaced by Hosekawa's coalition early this month, protested Hosokawa's remark in their meeting with chief Cabinet Secretary Masayoshi Takemura Wednesday. The remark was "regrettable," said the group including Ken Harada, who has held such port-

folios as transport and posts and telecommunications. "We cannot accept it taking into account the feelings of the war bereaved." Hosokawa said in his first news conference Tuesday that Japan waged a "war of aggression." "I admit it was a wrong war," he said in what was thus far the most frank acknowledgement

of war atrocities by a Japanese Prime Minister. His coalition government that includes the Socialists, who have been most sympathetic to Asian victims, is reportedly planning to offer a formal apology for the war in a resolution and

But Sankei said a possible apology would fail to quell Asian criticism of Japan, because it 'is frequently used as a card to win political and economic compromise from Japan. "We should not give excessive expectations to

Asian countries," a Foreign Ministry source echoed in the mass-circulating Yomiuri Shimbun, denying Japan would made new repa-

A series of lawsuits have been filed by former comfort women, mostly Asians who were forced to offer sex to Japanese soldiers during the war. demanding compensation from the Japanese government.

Tokyo's recent confession to drafting the sex slaves has widened compensation demands including that from a Philippine Senator who

called on Japan to write off all debt and build a "Comfort women highway.

Takemura, the right arm of Hosokawa, ap peared to be against changing the government policy that war reparations have been fully paid. "The issue of compensation is generally over," he said in an interview with Yomiuri. The government is nevertheless studying

measures to subdue Asian anger, perhaps a fund for the comfort women, while keeping its doors open to court battles by individuals.

The gradual opening of government eyes to its militarist past is widely believed to reflect Japan's growing to its economic strength.

Japan needs the consent of Asian neighbours to expand the activities of its troops in UN peacekeeping operations, seen as a prerequisite to win a permanent seat on the UN Security

#### in jeopardy DURBAN, South Africa, Aug

12: President Frederik de Klerk said that South Africa's first non-racial election, scheduled for April next year, was in jeopardy because of ongoing black township violence, reports AFP. Addressing a meeting of his

ruling National Party (NP) in this east coast city late Wednesday, de Klerk said the government intended taking a firm stand on the continuing conflict, which claimed 580 lives in July alone.

The levels of violence and intimidation will have to be drastically reduced before any general election takes place,"