

### Massive crackdown on Manipur insurgents

IMPHAL, Jan 4: The army has begun a massive crackdown on armed insurgents and anti-Socite ongoing Kuki-Naga ethnic conflicts in the five hill districts of Manipur since Saturday last, according to highly-placed official sources.

### Iran calls for truce in Kabul

TEHRAN, Jan 4: Iran has called for a truce in Kabul to allow some of the wounded to be evacuated to hospital in the Islamic republic, the official news agency Irna reported today, says AFP.

A Foreign Ministry spokesman, quoted by Irna, said Iran had asked the Red Cross to send a plane to fly out the wounded from Kabul, the main battle ground in fighting between Afghan factions since Saturday.

The Islamic republic is ready to admit some of the wounded for medical treatment, he said. Irna also said that a leader of a pro-Iranian Afghan Mujahideen group, Hezb-i-Wahdat, denied early reports from Kabul that it was taking part in rebel attacks on presidential forces.

Ayatollah Abdel Hassan Fadhel told Irna that Wahdat was "strictly neutral."

reports PTI. The sources said that troops supported by para military forces had moved into the interior hill areas and launched combing operations at different places besides searching "suspected areas" in an attempt to track down underground activists.

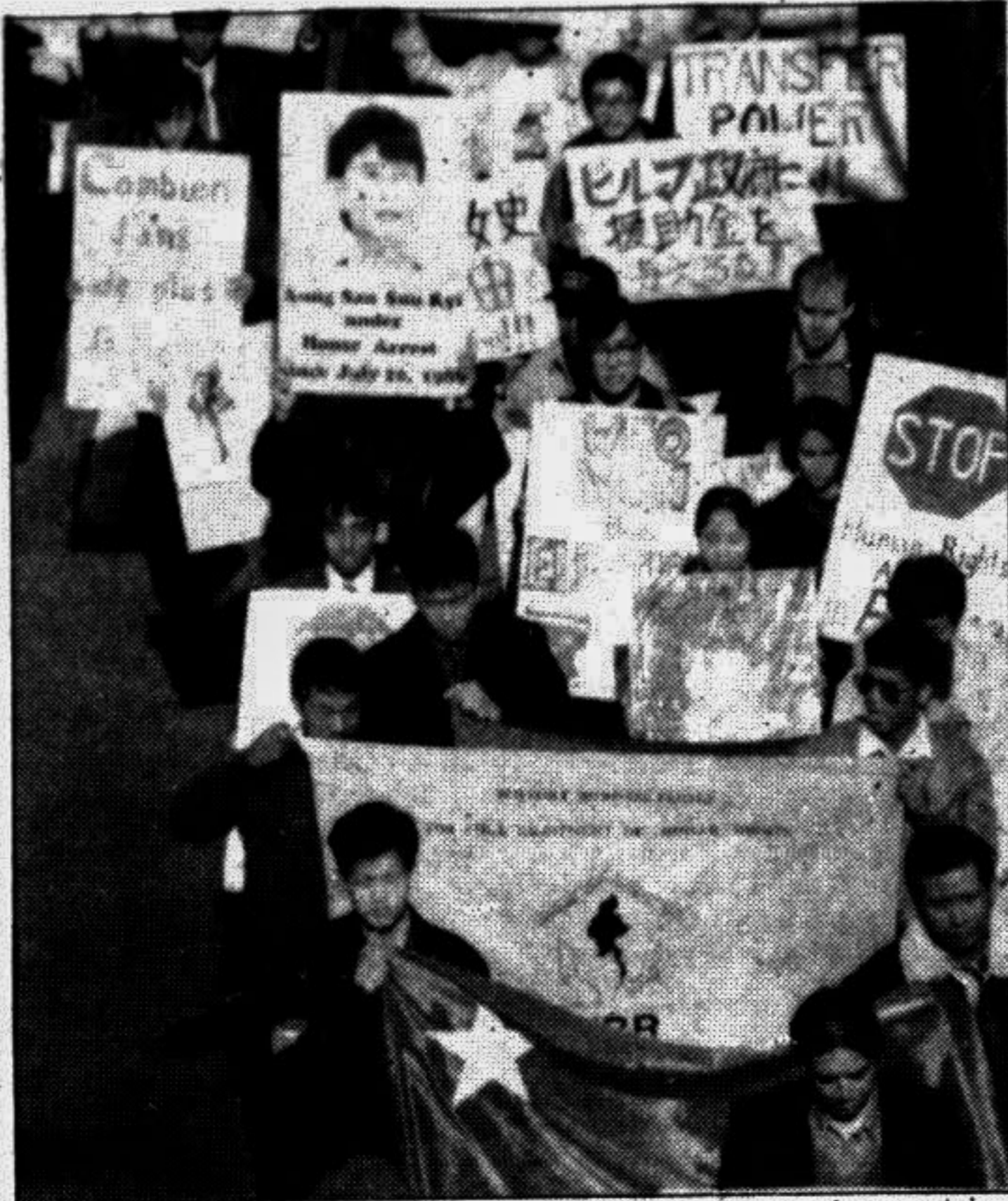
Sources said security forces launched frisking and checking of passers-by at several places to intercept the movement of armed insurgents and more security personnel were rushed to places where insurgents or anti-social elements were reportedly taking shelter.

The continuing Kuki-Naga clashes have claimed over 400 lives in the past two years besides burning over 400 houses, and the previous five-party Congress (I)-led government had "utterly failed" to either control the situation or protect innocent lives, intelligence sources said.

Li Gen S Malik, corps commander (north eastern region) and Maj Gen S C Chopra, GOC Manipur sector, were supervising the combing operations and had instructed the troops to protect the peace-loving citizens, the sources said.

Meanwhile, security forces have sealed exit routes of the under ground members.

## Tokyo rally demands immediate release of Suu Kyi



Some 40 Myanmar nationals living in Japan along with Japanese supporters hold placards as they march during a protest against the Myanmar government Jan 4 in Tokyo. —AFP photo

TOKYO, Jan 4: Some 40 young Myanmar people and other nationals held a rally here today demanding the release of Myanmar opposition leader and 1991 Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi, reports AFP.

After the rally at a Tokyo park, the demonstrators, including some from Australia, Japan, New Zealand, Philippines and the United States, marched five kilometers to hand in a petition to the Myanmar embassy.

"We request that the Japanese government the international community and the United Nations use their influence to release Aung San Suu Kyi and all other prisoners of conscience immediately and unconditionally," rally organisers said in a joint statement.

The rally was staged jointly by the International Network for Myanmar Relief, the Myanmar Youth Volunteer Association and the Myanmar Relief Centre Japan. It marked the 46th anniversary of Myanmar's independence from Britain.

Aung San Suu Kyi has been under house arrest in Yangon since 1989 when the country's military rulers refused to ac-

knowledge her democratic alliance's seeping general election victory.

The Myanmar military regime, known as SLORC (State Law and Order Restoration Council), is holding onto power illegitimately, the statement said.

The rights of Myanmar people are denied and they are harassed and abused by the military everyday, it said.

"Because of the lack of order and freedom, even their right to basic economic development is denied. And they are not free to resist the military's pillaging of their land and environment," it said.

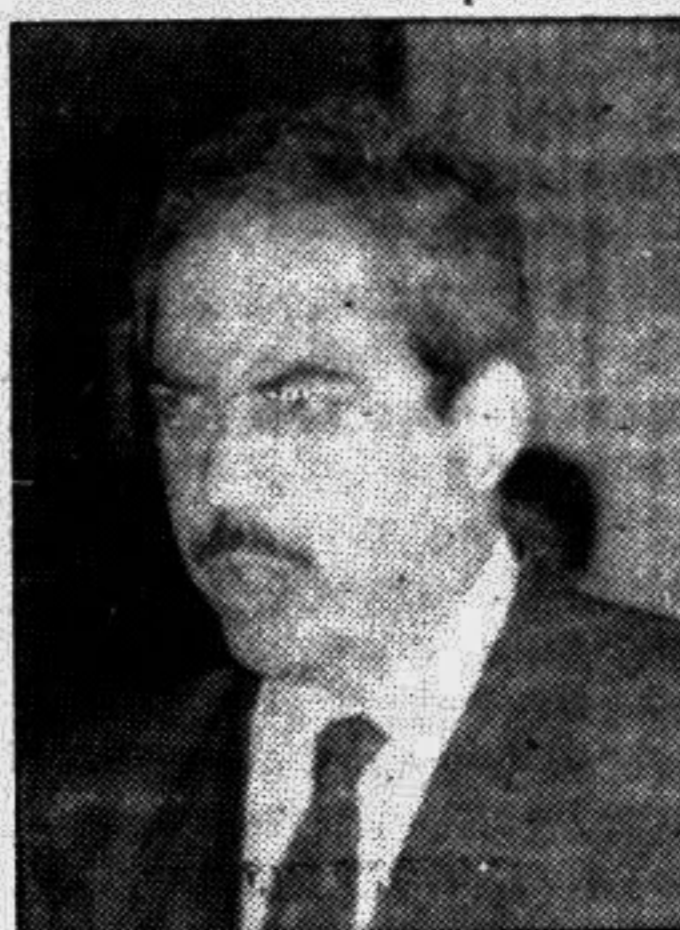
The statement said the international community and the United Nations should initiate moves to transfer power to the democratically elected civilian government in Myanmar.

Sanctions, including an arms and trade embargo, should be imposed on SLORC if it fails to cooperate with the United Nations' mandate and the international community, it said.

The statement demanded that SLORC's membership in the United Nations be terminated.

## Murtaza Bhutto refused permission to visit father's grave

KARACHI, Jan 4: Murtaza Bhutto, jailed brother of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, was refused permission today to visit his father's grave in northern Larkana, reports AFP.



Murtaza Bhutto

A special court rejected his plea for a parole. The judge decided his application had "no merit," court sources said.

Murtaza had asked to be allowed to attend the 66th birth anniversary celebrations of his late father Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who was hanged by the military authorities in 1979.

Murtaza has been in jail since early November on charges of terrorism and sub-

version which carry the death penalty on conviction. His mother Nusrat Bhutto has already left Larkana but said she will not visit her husband's grave. She said she had not been issued a pass to go to the grave site.

But the Sindh provincial government maintains that she does not need a special pass even though the authorities have restricted access. They fear clashes stemming from differences within the Bhutto family.

Benazir Bhutto replaced Nusrat as chairman of the ruling Pakistan People's Party last month, despite her mother's claims that Zulfikar Bhutto made her life president of the party.

Benazir Bhutto is already at her family residence in Naudero, some 17 kilometres (10 miles) from Larkana for the ceremonies.

### Jakarta to try for UNSC seat

JAKARTA, Jan 4: Indonesia will put forth its candidacy for non-permanent membership in the UN Security Council to replace outgoing Pakistan, Foreign Minister Ali Alatas said today, reports AFP.

## BRIEFLY

**Sikh militant killed in Punjab:** A hardcore militant and self-styled "Li Gen" of "Babbar Khalsa International" Sukhdev Singh Alla. Sukha was shot dead by security forces in an encounter near village Ranike under Ghanrinda Police Station Monday night, PTI reports from Amritsar.

According to police, Sukha was involved in about 100 killings in Punjab.

One general purpose machine gun with two drum magazines, two H E-3 hand grenades, ten metres of copper wire, two stick bombs, eight detonators, 145 empty and 50 live cartridges were found from the spot.

### Mahathir to visit Philippines:

Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad will pay an official visit to the Philippines from February 3 to 6 this year, the presidential palace announced Monday. Xinhua reports from Manila. This will be the first time that a Malaysian Head of Government goes on an official visit to Manila since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 1964.

Mahathir was here in December 1987 for the summit of the Association of South East Asian Nations, but it was not an official visit.

### Violence claims 11 in Turkey:

At least 11 people were killed in the latest round of clashes between Turkish security forces and Kurdish separatists, news reports said Monday, AP reports from Ankara.

Rebels of the Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, attacked Dikogaz village in southeastern Turkey with rockets, killing five, including two children.

One person died when rebels raked a coffee house in Incek village with automatic weapons fire.

Security forces killed five rebels in clashes in Mardin and Siirt provinces, the reports said.

### 100 Iranians back from Iraq:

About 100 Iranians residing in Iraq have returned home via Iran's southwestern province of Khuzestan during the past nine months, the Iranian official news agency IRNA reported Tuesday. Xinhua reports from Tehran.

An informed source was quoted as saying that the returned Iranians are of the 5,000 Iranian Arabs in Khuzestan province kidnapped by Iraqi forces at the beginning of the Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988).

### Teresa joins prayers:

Mother Teresa was much better Tuesday and joined morning prayer with the nuns at her missionaries of charity, PTI reports from Calcutta.

Doctors had checked her and said she was "perfectly all right," sources at the missionaries of charity told PTI.

The octogenarian Nobel laureate fell ill during Sunday prayer at the St Mary's Church.

### ROK Speaker to visit China:

Speaker Lee Man-sup of South Korea's National Assembly will make a one-week visit to China, his aides said Tuesday. AP reports from Seoul.

Lee's visit, scheduled to begin Thursday, will be at the invitation of Qiao Shi, chairman of the standing committee of China's National People's Congress.

Lee will be the first South Korean parliamentary Speaker to visit China since the two countries established formal diplomatic relations in 1992.

## Hosokawa says he won't resign or dissolve Diet

TOKYO, Jan 4: Japan's Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa said today he would not resign or dissolve the powerful lower house for general elections even if his political reform plan was not approved by parliament this month, reports AFP.

"I do not have a thought at all of parliament dissolution or of a mass resignation of the cabinet," Hosokawa was quoted by press reports as saying at a news conference in the western Japan prefecture of Mie.

He said his administration would make every effort to get the reforms through the Diet, or Japan's parliament.

Four political reform bills are now before the upper house of parliament after have been approved by the lower house.

However, the influential opposition Liberal Democratic Party and the Japan communist party remain firmly opposed to the measures.

in a desperate effort to win parliamentary approval of the reforms. Hosokawa extended the extraordinary parliament session, due to have ended on December 15 to January 29.

Shortly after coming to power last August, Hosokawa said he would take "political responsibility" if the bills had not won final parliament approval by the end of 1993.

In December, he reiterated that he was ready to take responsibility if he failed to get the bills through the Diet during the current, extended session.

Speculation has increased that Hosokawa and his cabinet could be forced to resign, or he could be forced to dissolve the 511-member lower house in January for general elections.

The Prime Minister was in Mie to pay a traditional New Year's visit to the Shintoist Ise Shrine.

## 'Jews less worthy than Russians' Zhirinovskiy claims war reparations from Germany

MOSCOW, Jan 4: Russian ultra-nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy said Jews were less worthy than Russians to receive war reparations from Germany, reports Reuter.

Zhirinovskiy, in a German television interview conducted in Moscow, argued that Russians deserved compensation because their country had played a leading role in defeating the Nazis and lost more than 20 million people in World War II.

"If Germany is ready to pay Jews for everything they suffered in World War II, why shouldn't Germany pay Russians first of all," he told RTL television in remarks broadcast late on Monday.

It wasn't the Jews who smashed the German army — it

was the Russian army that entered Berlin. Therefore it's the Russians who must be paid first of all if the German people and the German state are ready to pay compensation for the outcome of World War II. This is what we are talking about.

"What has this to do with Jews? War was declared between Germany and Russia, and the state of Israel didn't exist on the earth at that time."

Zhirinovskiy, whose far-right Liberal Democratic Party emerged as the largest single parliamentary faction after a shock triumph in last month's elections, protested at the German authorities' decision to deny him a visa to visit the country.

## Shalikhshvili against use of force in Bosnia

PARIS, Jan 4: The conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina cannot be resolved by military means, chairman of the US joint chiefs of staff John Shalikhshvili said in an interview broadcast here Monday, reports AFP.

General Shalikhshvili told France 3 television there had been an argument among any military officials whether there could be a military solution to the 21-month conflict but he said he was positive now that there was none.

Speaking in English with a French voice-over, Shalikhshvili said no one should have a bad conscience for not finding a settlement. Europeans and Americans should rather be round of the way they intervened in the conflict at various levels notably by ferrying humanitarian aid to the war-torn country.

A German newspaper at the weekend said Zhirinovskiy, in an outburst at Sofia airport, had threatened the destruction of Germany.

But the LDPR leader told RTL he was a friend of the German people and believed in "An alliance with Germany for ever."

## Prison riot leaves 100 dead in Venezuela

MARACAIBO, Venezuela, Jan 4: Inmates shot and stabbed each other and set fire to a vastly overcrowded prison in western Venezuela. At least 100 people reportedly died in the riot, reports AP.

The melee Monday at the National Jail of Maracaibo was reportedly subdued about four hours after it broke out, said police in Maracaibo, 440 miles (710 kms) west of Caracas. Authorities said they did not know what set off the riot.

Television news footage showed bloody, moaning prisoners being led from the jail, or carried out on stretchers. In the background were armed, helmeted soldiers and drifting smoke from burning buildings.

The national news agency Venpres put the death toll at 100 or more. Ramon Ortiz Torres, a duty officer for the National Guard that quelled the riot, told the Associated Press the estimated 150 deaths, but said the death toll could change because bodies were still being pulled out.

It was not immediately known if any guards or other prison workers were among the casualties. Phone calls placed to city hospitals, the morgue and the jail were unanswered and

spokesmen for the National Guard and local firefighters declined comment.

"We've got five bodies here and there's another 40 to 50" at a police station waiting to be identified, a doctor at the local morgue, Nelson Bonilla, told the Associated Press in a telephone interview.

He said: "Apparently, a group of prisoners attacked others. They mutilated them, butchered them with knives, lynched them, cut their heads off... Some of the remains are only fragments."

Tallies for the wounded ranged from 50 to 200.

Many prisoners were transferred to other jails, the governor of Zulia state, Lolita Aniyar de Castro told reporters.

The prison was built to hold 800 inmates but has about 3,000, according to Panorama. The last major prison riot in Venezuela occurred at Reten de Catia prison in Caracas during an attempted military coup in November 1992. The death toll from the three-day uprising was 46, the Justice Ministry reported.

At least one prisoner dies each week in Venezuela's 33-prison system.



Indian movie star Sunjay Dutt, accused in connection with the deadly chain bombing that shook Bombay in March 1993, is led to court Jan 3 during the first day of the trial involving some 140 suspects in Bombay. The trial was put off as the court turned out to be too small to hold so many people. —AFP photo

## Jews pray for demise of peace deal

JERUSALEM, Jan 4: About 10,000 Jews thronged Judaism's holiest site Monday and prayed for the demise of the Israel-PLO accord, saying they were appealing to God since Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's government has ignored them, reports AP.

In the Gaza Strip, Israeli soldiers shot and killed three Palestinians aged 18, 19 and 21, including one they mistook for a gunman when he played with a plastic pistol, Arab reports said.

Israel and the PLO meanwhile remained at an impasse over how to implement the accord for autonomy in Gaza and the West Bank region of Jericho. An Israeli official told The Associated Press that Rabin's confidence in PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat has been dramatically shaken by Arafat's rejection of agreements reached at talks in Cairo last week.

Israel contends an agreement was reached for shared control of border crossings,

while the PLO maintains only understandings were reached. The official, speaking on condition he was not further identified, said Rabin from now on would not longer agree to verbal agreements.

Relying on writing will, however, slow the peace process considerably, the official said.

The thousands of people who streamed to the Wailing or Western Wall, the last remnant of the ancient Jewish temple in Jerusalem's old walled city, heard two hours of prayers punctuated by the wails of shofars or ram's horns. It was one of the biggest crowds there in years.

The prayers were both for more rain — it has been a dry year — and against the agreement for Palestinian autonomy.

A heavy police detail was on hand including special anti-terrorist squads. Roads in the old city were shut to traffic to avoid violence at the often tense site. The Wailing Wall adjoins the Temple Mount, or Harem

camp when undercover Israeli soldiers disguised as Arabs drove by. Apparently thinking he held a real weapon, they shot and fatally wounded him.

Parid Khalil Sharawi, 19, was also struck by a bullet and killed in the Shati shootings, the reports said.

The army said its troops in Shati opened fire on three Palestinians, one armed with a Klachnikov assault rifle, killing Assad. It said it was not clear if the teen-ager was one of the three. It had no information on Sharawi.

In the Jebaliya camp, Khader Rehan, 21, was fatally wounded when soldiers responded with gunfire to a hail of stones, Arab reports said. The army said soldiers shot Rehan when he tried to throw a brick at them.

Israeli authorities, meanwhile, said they were holding a PLO dissident as a suspect in the weekend slayings of two Israeli drug addicts in the Tel Aviv area.

## Israel, PLO trade blame for failure to resume talks

JERUSALEM, Jan 4: Israel and the PLO traded blame for the failure to restart talks on their peace deal, and Israeli soldiers shot dead three Muslim activists on Monday in fresh bloodshed in the occupied Gaza Strip, reports Reuter.

PLO negotiator Nabil Shaath said late on Monday Foreign Minister Shimon Peres was holding up suspended talks on implementing an Israeli troop pullout from occupied lands by placing preconditions.

Peres said the Palestine Liberation Organisation had gone back on its word on understandings which he said were agreed last week.

Still, a flurry of furtive contacts hinted at slow progress back to the talks, which Israeli ministers have likened to haggling in a bazaar. The sides had planned to resume talks early this week, hoping to nail down details of the withdrawal from Gaza and

the West Bank town of Jericho that was to have begun last month.

Tuesday army radio quoted unnamed Israeli officials as saying no renewal of negotiations could be expected this week.

With Israeli troops still in place in the Strip, clashes between the army and stone-throwing opponents of the accord left three Gazans dead, local hospitals and military sources said.

Residents said the dead were supporters of the Muslim militant group Hamas, which strongly opposes the pact.

The one-day toll was among the highest since the peace deal was signed in Washington in September.

The latest snag is over whether talks last week in Cairo aimed at jump-starting the withdrawal had ended in agreement, Israel said yes, the PLO said no.

## Off the Record

### 'Sperm donor must pay child support'

INDIANAPOLIS: A man who agreed to father a child for a fellow teacher must pay 100,000 dollars in child support despite the woman's written promise not to seek money from him, an appeals court ruled, reports AP.

The Indiana Court of Appeals said Francine Todd had no right to sign away her daughter's right to financial support from her father, Edward Straub.

It is apparent that our legislature has created a strong current public policy with the object of protecting the rights of children from the whims of their parents and the power of the state," Judge Stanley Miller wrote in Thursday's 2-1 ruling.

The elementary school teachers were dating when Todd asked Straub to father her child. Straub agreed if Todd promised in writing she would never seek financial aid from him.

The relationship continued three years after their daughter, now 5, was born. It ended after Todd sued for child support.

"We know of no medical requirements — or of any sperm donor programme — that continues to give insemination injections after the donee becomes pregnant," Miller wrote.

Straub's lawyer, S Frank Mattox, said the couple's agreement should be binding.

"There is an unqualified constitutional right for a single woman to have a child," he said.

### Japanese seek spiritual escape from hard times

TOKYO: Recession-weary Japanese sought a spiritual escape from hard times, flocking to Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples in record number over the nation's three-day new year holidays, reports Reuter.

A record total of 85.4 million people visited Shinto and Buddhist sites over the holiday, the national police agency said Tuesday.

The total was up by 540,000 people from last year, an agency official said, adding that fair weather and a prolonged recession drove more Japanese to make new year pilgrimages this year.

Meiji Shrine in Tokyo attracted the most visitors with 3.48 million, followed by Narita Shinshoji temple near the capital's airport with 3.1 million, and the Kaasaki Daishi temple south of Tokyo with 3.09 million, the official said.

### Punishment for stealing rare carpet pythons

JOHANNESBURG: Swedish tourist Joachim Bjorn Westlin, 24, was fined 2,500 rand (738 dollars) Tuesday for stealing two rare carpet pythons from Hartbeespoort dam snake park north of here, public SABC Radio said, reports AFP.

Westlin had on Saturday scaled a wall at the park before breaking a glass cage and taking the snakes, a breeding pair. According to snake park curator Jack Scales, Westlin had targeted the most expensive snakes in the park and had tried, but failed, to steal other expensive snakes.

"He knew how to handle the snakes", Scales said in a newspaper interview.

"Carpet pythons are extremely rare, not only in South Africa but all over the world," he added. "It is an endangered species and has to be kept in a climatically-controlled cage".

Westlin appeared in the magistrate's court in Brits, near Hartbeespoort dam, and was given the option of a three-year jail sentence.

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