

Lanka offers talks with LTTE

COLOMBO, Feb 6: The Sri Lankan government has offered to hold talks with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) without the precondition that rebels should lay down their arms, reports Xinhua.

PLO-Israel talks in Cairo today

Arafat reluctant to meet Peres

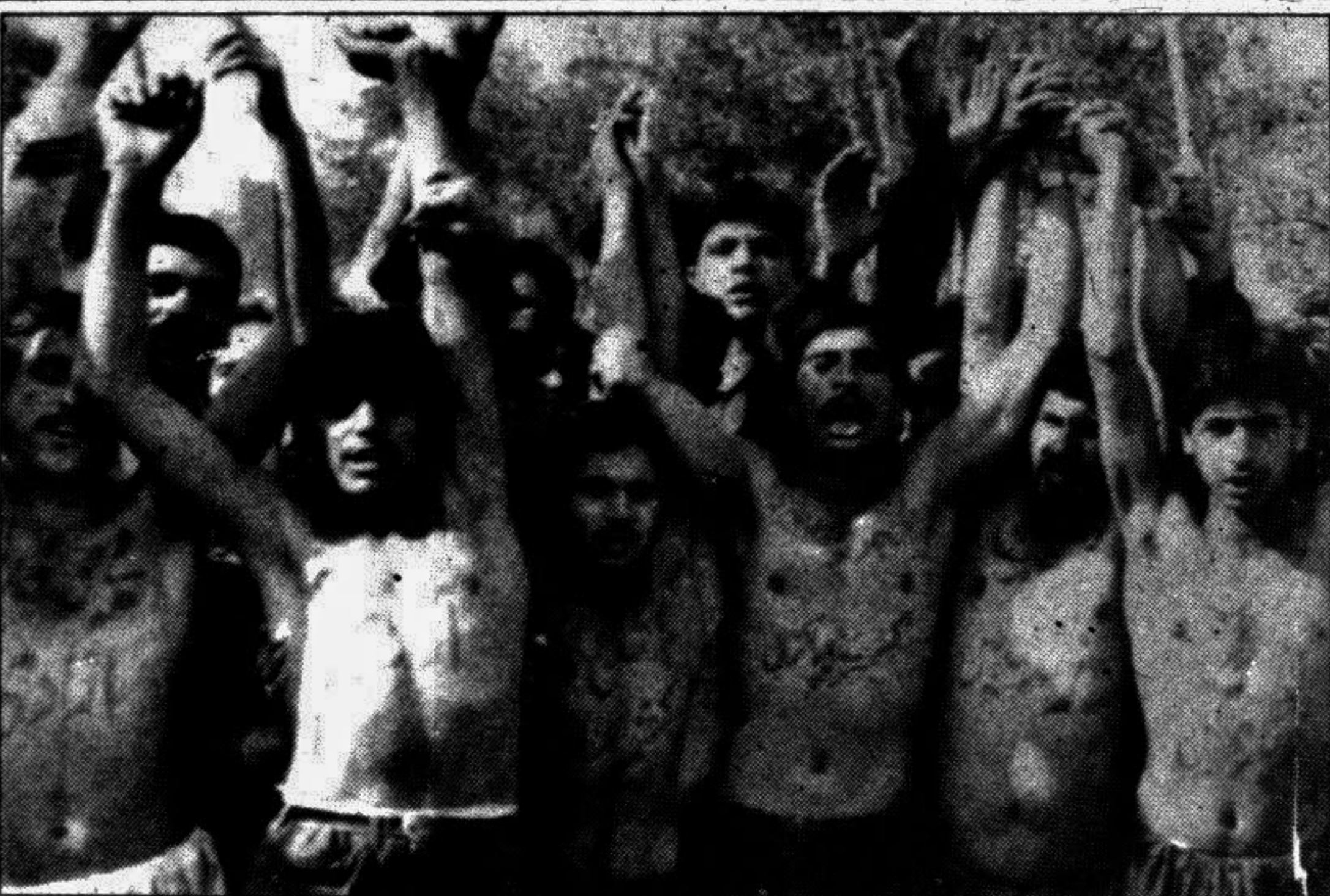
CAIRO, Feb 6: PLO chief Yasser Arafat is reluctant to meet Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres here tomorrow without the promise of a final deal to launch long-delayed Palestinian autonomy, his advisers say, reports AFP.

China's Daya Bay N-plant worries Hong Kong

HONG KONG, Feb 6: Premier Li Peng opened China's largest nuclear plant Sunday, a project that has spread anxiety in Hong Kong because it is only 50 kilometers (30 miles) north of this crowded British colony, reports AP.

UK smuggled radioactive debris in 1950s?

LONDON, Feb 6: The British government smuggled radioactive debris from hydrogen bomb tests in the 1950s back to London in diplomatic bags carried on ordinary passenger airlines, the Observer newspaper said today, reports Reuters.



Kashmiri activists display anti-Indian slogans painted on their chests during a nation-wide strike held in solidarity with Muslim militants in Indian-held Kashmir on Saturday. Slogans read: 'Kashmir will become part of Pakistan' and 'we will die for Kashmir'. - AFP photo

Protest against French laws on immigration

PARIS, Feb 6: Several thousand people marched across Paris on Saturday to protest against the centre-right government's tough new laws on immigration, reports Reuters.

Off the Record

Hysterectomy for hygiene

NEW DELHI: Hysterectomies performed on up to 11 mentally retarded women for 'hygienic' reasons have sparked an ethical row in the western Indian state of Maharashtra, Indian press reports said Sunday, reports Reuters.

West warns Russia against renewed imperialism

MUNICH, Feb 6: The West warned Russia against renewed imperialism on Saturday as top western defence and security specialists gathered for a conference here, reports AFP.

just given him an assurance on this point, President Yeltsin expressly confirmed this in a letter to be a few days ago, the Chancellor revealed.

Bottles as invitation

SHANGHAI: Children in East China's Shanghai city have sent dozens of bottles into the East China sea as invitation to whoever the receiver is, to join the '94 international children's culture and art festival due to be held here in July, reports Xinhua.

BRRIEFLY

NASA won't release satellite

NASA postponed the release of an experimental satellite from the space shuttle Discovery on Saturday after a fault with a computer was discovered, AFP reports from Houston.

Houphouet-Boigny dead

President Felix Houphouet-Boigny lay in state in his birthplace of Yamoussoukro on Saturday night after a smooth final journey over the 260 km (160 mile) highway he built from Abidjan, Reuters reports from Ivory Coast.

Costa Rica begins voting

Costa Rica elects a president Sunday after one of the closest campaigns in modern history, choosing between a free-market economist and the son of a revered political patriarch, AP reports from San Jose.

Togo goes to polls

Some two million voters have been called to the polls yesterday in the first round of legislative elections to elect 81 deputies to Togo's national assembly, AFP reports from Lome.

26m to be infected by AIDS

A staggering 26 million people worldwide would be infected by the dreaded AIDS disease by the turn of the century, according to estimates drawn by the World Health Organisation (WHO), PFI reports from New Delhi.

Rao returns to Delhi

The Prime Minister, P V Narasimha Rao, returned to New Delhi yesterday morning after a six-day visit to Switzerland and Germany, PFI reports from New Delhi.

Many Asians in UAE embrace Islam

ABU DHABI, Feb 6: Domestic workers from the Philippines, Sri Lanka and other Asian countries working in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), are discarding their traditional dresses and make-up and putting on Muslim gowns and head covers as hundreds of them convert to Islam every year, reports AFP.

Over 100 feared drowned in China

BEIJING, Feb 6: More than 100 people are dead or missing some four days after a collision between a tug and a passenger boat on the Yangtze river in southwest China, Xinhua news agency reported, says AFP.

A kiss is not just a kiss

LOS ANGELES: A kiss is not just a kiss. Not when it involves Roseanne Arnold and Mariel Hemingway, reports AP.

British minister apologises

LONDON, Feb 6: Prime Minister John Major said Saturday that Cabinet Minister Michael Portillo had apologised for accusing foreigners of corruption and the matter was "finished," reports AFP.

World leaders condemn bomb attack on Sarajevo market

WASHINGTON, Feb 6: President Bill Clinton on Saturday led an international outpouring of outrage and horror at a mortar bomb attack on a crowded Sarajevo market that killed at least 66 people and wounded 197, reports Reuters.

Secretary Douglas Hurd condemned the brutal killing of civilians in Sarajevo, adding it underlined the urgency of finding a peace settlement in Bosnia.



Handwritten identifications are placed on the chest of two corpses lying in the morgue of Sarajevo's Kosevo hospital on Saturday. - AFP photo

Zhirinovsky promises to back Serbs

MOSCOW, Feb 6: Russian maverick nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovsky promised Yugoslavia's Serbs his backing on Saturday, comparing proposals for air strikes against Serbian positions to actions carried out by Nazi leader Adolf Hitler, reports Reuters.