

# BRIEFLY

## UN population award for Mubarak:

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Turkey's Family Health and Planning Foundation were named winners Thursday of the 1994 U.N. population award. Reuter reports from United Nations.

The prize, whose recipients each receive a 10,000 dollar cash award, a gold medal and a diploma is presented annually to an individual and an institution for outstanding contributions to the awareness of population question or their solutions.

The laureates are selected by a committee of 10 U.N. members elected by the U.N. Economic and Social Council.

## Tareq Aziz may visit NY:

Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz will probably come to New York at the end of March to talk to UN arms officials, according to a spokesman in the U.N. commission dealing with disarming Iraq, Reuter reports from United Nations.

He said Aziz was likely to be in New York for weapons talks, anticipated in late March. But no date has been set.

Iraq and the United Nations intend to discuss progress on installing a long-term monitoring programme to ensure Baghdad does not require weapons of mass destruction.

## 12 die in West Bengal road mishap:

Nine children and three adults were crushed to death when a refuse truck overturned in eastern India, police said yesterday, Reuter reports from Calcutta.

The driver lost control of the vehicle as he arrived at Bhadua in West Bengal state on Wednesday night.

The victims, most of them aged between eight and 15, were so-called rag-pickers waiting to sift through the rubbish for wood and scrap metal to sell for extra family income.

## Prince Edward to visit Indonesia:

Britain's Prince Edward will make a two-day private visit to Indonesia next week, the British Embassy said Friday, AP reports from Jakarta.

The embassy said Edward, the youngest son of Queen Elizabeth II, will formally open the new British International School during his visit on March 5.

## Cambodia joins anti-polio drive:

Officials launched a campaign Friday to eradicate polio from Cambodia, where the crippling an often fatal disease afflicts hundreds of children a year, AP reports from Phnom Penh.

Premier Prince Norodom Ranariddh started the campaign by giving an oral dose of the vaccine to a child at a park. "We, Cambodians must contribute to wipe out this disease from our country and from the world in the near future," Ranariddh said.

The United Nations Children's Fund says that no polio cases have been recorded in the Western hemisphere since 1991. In the Eastern hemisphere, it still paralyses more than 100,000 children a year, but remarkable progress has been made because of the vaccine's greater availability, the fund says. It hopes to eradicate the disease by the year 2000.

## Strike paralyses Guwahati:

Shops, schools and offices closed Friday in the northeastern city of Guwahati after a separatist group called for a 36-hour strike to condemn the killing of five rebels by the army, AP reports from Guwahati.

At least 100 members of the All Assam Students Union guerilla group have been detained by police since the group said the army shot the five guerillas at pointblank range Tuesday.

The army hasn't denied the shooting, but said it occurred during a gun battle with rebels in a nearby game sanctuary. The strike comes during a public outcry against alleged human rights abuses by security forces in Assam state. In the past few months, the army has renewed its offensive against the guerillas, who have been fighting for a sovereign state for 15 years.

## Somali attacks relief plane:

A Somali fired an automatic rifle at a cargo plane running aid flights in southern Somalia on Thursday, slightly injuring one crewman, the Lutheran World Federation reported, AP says from Nairobi.

About nine bullets struck the plane on a dirt runway at Saco Huen, about 180 miles (290 kms) southwest of Mogadishu, where it was delivering building materials for a school, said Bob Koepf, the charity's coordinator.

The plane was taking off as the gunman emptied his rifle at the aircraft, then fled into the bush.

## Nine inmates killed in Salvadoran prison riot

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador, Feb 25: Nine inmates were killed, most of them beheaded, and four were injured in a two-day prison riot sparked by inmates recently transferred from a dangerous Salvadoran prison, penal workers said Thursday, reports Reuter.

Justice Ministry officials gave no casualty figures but workers at the Santa Ana Penal Centre 40 miles (65 km) west of San Salvador said the riot began Wednesday after some of the recent transfers knifed two prisoners to death.

Prison workers told reporters that all seven of the inmates who were killed Thursday and the four injured had come from San Francisco Gotera Prison, where 27 people were killed last November in a bloody riot.

The fight was started by inmates who were previously at San Francisco Gotera, a prison worker said.

The fighting ended Thursday after United Nations

officials joined the mediation efforts by Justice Ministry officials. The UN workers are in El Salvador to monitor a peace process set out in a 1992 treaty that ended a 12-year civil war.

A Reuter photographer saw seven bodies — six of them headless — being taken out of the institution after the riot was quelled. The photographer also saw four injured people who were removed from the prison.

A local radio reporter said a guard described a grisly scene earlier at the Santa Ana Centre, where a prisoner exhibited severed heads at the prison gate and warned authorities that more people would be killed if they tried to storm the prison.

Soldiers and police were set to reinforce the guards and help remove the dead and injured from the prison, which houses 632 inmates, including former soldiers and officers.

# Stalemate in PLO-Israeli talks on four sensitive issues

CAIRO, Feb 25: PLO and Israeli negotiators, hammering out details of their accord on Palestinian self-rule, have reached a stalemate on four sensitive security and civilian issues and left them to their leaders to resolve, PLO sources said on Thursday, reports Reuter.

They said the issuing of Palestinian passports and postage stamps — seen by Israeli negotiators as symbols of "statehood" — had been referred to PLO leader Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

Rabin and Arafat would also have to decide on the strength of the Palestinian police force and the size of the autonomous West Bank area of Jericho.

The sources said Israel is still resisting any sign of state-

hood by refusing to accept that Palestinians have their own passports and postage stamps in the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

"They see them as a sign of an independent Palestinian state but it is a national identity. Even colonies like Hong Kong have their own passport and postage stamps," one PLO source said.

The two sides are negotiating interim arrangements for limited Palestinian self-rule but the PLO has made no secret that its ultimate aim is a Palestinian state.

The PLO sources said Israeli troops began three or four weeks ago evacuating and dismantling some military posts, and moving out documents in preparation for the withdrawal.

Five Palestinian police officers were in Jericho and Gaza

to pave the way for the deployment of the Palestinian police once the Israeli troops begin withdrawing, they added.

The PLO wants a 10,000 strong force. Rabin said he was willing to countenance a force of about 8,000.

Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation missed the deadline for Israel to start withdrawing more than two months ago and the Palestinians now say they hope to have a deal by the end of the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan — about March 12.

April 13 is the date set for Israel to complete its troop withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho under a peace accord signed between the two in September. The PLO hopes now the same date would witness the pullout of the first

Israeli soldier.

But the Palestinian sources said the withdrawal would have to wait completion of the more complex economic talks taking place now in Paris between the PLO and Israel.

Israeli and PLO negotiators who met in Cairo this week reported progress on the major security disputes that have held up the Israeli troop withdrawal.

Shaath said agreement was reached on the deployment and the positioning of the Palestinian police which will be charged with keeping order when Israeli troops withdraw.

Both sides were still at odds on terms of the release of up to 9,000 Palestinian prisoners, one of the sticking points holding up implementation of self-rule in Gaza and Jericho.



President Fidel Ramos (L), his predecessor Corazon Aquino (C) and Manila Archbishop Cardinal Jaime Sin (R) join hands Feb 25 in a ceremony commemorating the 8th anniversary of the overthrow of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos. All three played a key role in the popular revolt that toppled Marcos. — AFP photo

# Bosnia, Russia to figure in Clinton-Major talks

WASHINGTON, Feb 25: Bosnia and Russia will top the agenda when British Prime Minister John Major meets with President Bill Clinton on Monday, officials here said Thursday, reports AFP.

The two men will have plenty of time to talk about these and other issues, as Clinton has invited Major to spend the night at the White House, the first time a British premier has stayed at the US presidential residence since Winston Churchill.

Clinton has also arranged to meet Major in the steel town of Pittsburgh, where his

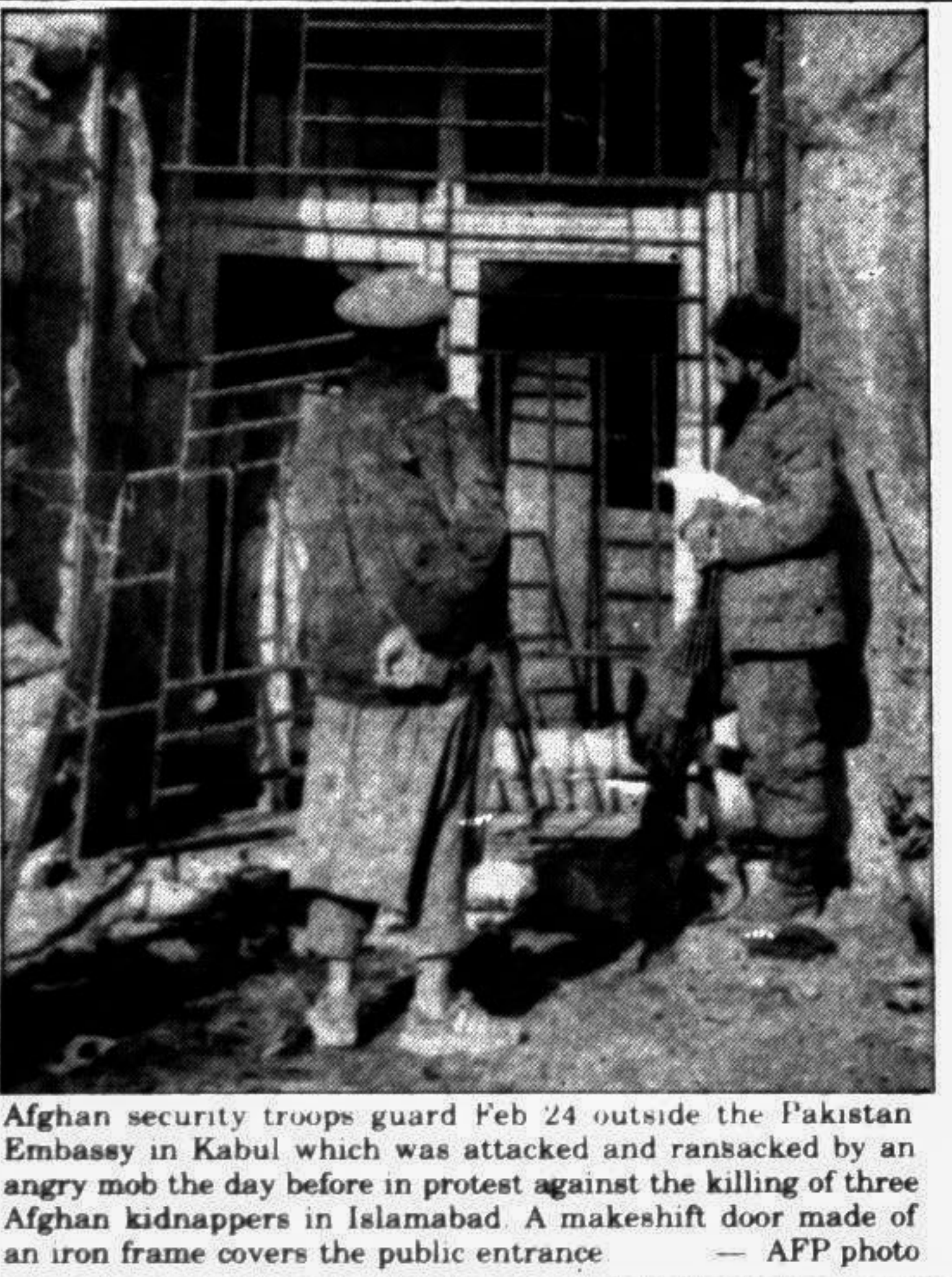
grandfather once helped build blast furnaces and his father spent much of his childhood, fulfilling a promise made by the US President during the Group of Seven summit in Tokyo last year.

Officials of both sides deny that there is any need for fence-mending, but the Clinton-Major relationship got off to a rocky start because Major's Conservative Party came out in support of George Bush in the 1993 election which Democrat Clinton went on to win.

More recently there was the case of Gerry Adams, head

of political wing of the Irish Republican Army, whom Clinton decided to give a visa to enter the United States after a 20-year ban over the protests of London and some of his own cabinet.

But a British diplomat here said Thursday that "that is behind us now," while John Tefft, Director of the Northern European Affairs office at the State Department said that while there were "differences of view, my own sense is that some of the articles in the press perhaps exaggerated," the problem.



Afghan security troops guard Feb 24 outside the Pakistan Embassy in Kabul which was attacked and ransacked by an angry mob the day before in protest against the killing of three Afghan kidnappers in Islamabad. A makeshift door made of an iron frame covers the public entrance. — APP photo

# Pak troops trade gunfire with Afghan assailants

ISLAMABAD, Feb 25: Pakistani security forces exchanged gunfire with unidentified Afghan assailants at the Torkham Border Post, as Islamabad temporarily closed its embassy in Kabul, officials said today, reports AFP.

Two rockets were fired Thursday by unknown attackers from Afghan territory on a Pakistani customs post, slightly injuring two security personnel and damaging the building.

The Pakistanis returned automatic weapons fire across the border.

According to the Pakistani press, the rockets were fired at the post shortly after the customs officials turned back some 400 Afghan refugees from the border.

Other reports said the attack was in response to the closure of Pakistan's embassy Wednesday in the besieged Afghan capital where rival Mujahideen forces have been fighting each other since January 1.

The decision to close the embassy was based on safety

# 2 top Kashmir militants arrested

SRINAGAR, Feb 25: Two top officials of the most powerful militant group in Kashmir were captured Friday by Indian forces, reports AP.

Ghulam Nabi, leader of the Hizbul Mujahideen in Srinagar district, and Abdul Qume, a battalion commander, were caught in S M H F hospital, where they were meeting with doctors.

The arrests were a setback for the Hizbul Mujahideen, a pro-Pakistani rebel group that has more weapons and men than any other insurgent group fighting for independence in Kashmir.

# Floods kill 50 in Peru

LIMA, Feb 25: Heavy rains and flooding killed 50 people, left 5,500 families homeless and caused dollar 50 million in damages to roads and crop land across Peru this week, officials said Thursday, reports Reuter.

# Mandela asks supporters to stop chasing De Klerk

KIMBERLEY, South Africa, Feb 25: African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela called on supporters Friday to stop chasing President F W de Klerk from black areas, saying the ANC could win April's election without help from hecklers, reports AP.

But he also appeared to chide De Klerk, saying: "South Africa has got robust politics, and sissies should not address political meetings."

If you involve yourself in politics, you must be prepared for anything," the black leader told reporters upon arriving at Kimberley's airport for a four-day campaign trip.

Later, Mandela spoke to a cheering crowd at a hospital in Kimberley, his first stop. His ANC is expected to easily win April's national election, but the campaign has been tainted by clashes between supporters of the ANC and de Klerk's National Party.

On Wednesday, de Klerk was forced to cancel rallies in black townships after he was hit by a rock and virtually run out of the first township he



visited. A woman was shot to death, allegedly by his Party supporter, Wednesday night when supporters of Mandela and de Klerk clashed at the site of one of the cancelled rallies.

# 41 hurt as CPM activists clash with police in Delhi

NEW DELHI, Feb 25: Communist protesters fought pitched battles with Indian riot police on Thursday after their march on parliament in protest at economic reforms was foiled, reports Reuter.

Police said they used 48 canisters of tear gas, deployed water cannons and detained more than 3,000 protesters who tried to break through a cordon around New Delhi's parliament house, currently in session for a crucial budget.

A spokesman for the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPM) said protesters were beaten with long bamboo canes known as lathis and 22 were seriously injured.

Police said 19 of their own men were hurt.

Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao's 31-month-long economic liberalisation programme has shed socialism

for a free-market economy.

"Rao is leading us into a debt trap," said CPM Delhi secretary Joginder Sharma. "We must stop him before he takes us all with him into the deep abyss of perpetual beggary."

The CPM and three other left-wing groups taking part in Thursday's rally say Rao's reforms have been dictated by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

Rao's Congress Party accuses the CPM of mismanagement in its 15-year-rule of West Bengal state. Two people were killed and several injured when a Congress rally turned violent on Tuesday in the state.

Congress retaliated by calling a 10-hour-strike across the state on Thursday. The strike stopped trains and disrupted business but most shops remained open in Calcutta, residents said.

# Off the Record

## Ex-prisoners break into jail to have party with pals

ADELAIDE, Australia: Two former prisoners broke back into jail to have a party with the friends they left behind, reports AP.

The former male prisoners of Northfield prison returned with a woman around midnight but were arrested Friday after guards found there were three more inmates than there should have been.

The two men, who had only been released from Northfield the day before, scaled the prison fence to break in and say "hello to a mate," said the chief of correctional services, Sue Vardon.

She said the prison was low-security and there was no need to increase security because guards discovered the peculiarity.

The three people, all in their early twenties, have been charged with unlawful entry.

## 'Smoking an adolescent addiction'

WASHINGTON: Most smokers in the United States are hooked by the time they are 20, and quitting can be just as hard for teen-agers as it is for adults, the surgeon general said Thursday, reports AP.

"Smoking is not just an adult habit. It is an adolescent addiction," Dr. Joycelyn Elders said as she released a 314-page report on Congress on the dangers that cigarettes and other forms of tobacco pose to young people.

The 23rd surgeon general's report on smoking was devoted entirely to the topic of adolescent tobacco use and how to prevent it.

Elders said more than 3 million U.S. adolescents smoke cigarettes and 1 million use smokeless tobacco.

Elders said the report documents that the average age when smokers try their first cigarette is 14.5 years, and more than 70 per cent of daily smokers first smoked by age 18.

## Dying woman emits mysterious fumes

RIVERSIDE, Calif. Like characters in a science-fiction thriller, doctors treated the autopsy as if they were embarked on a mission into the unknown: airtight suits, two-way radios, gas masks, oxygen tanks, even a practice run, reports AP.

Pathologists took extraordinary precautions Thursday as they tried to figure out why a dying Gloria Ramirez gave off ammonia-like fumes potent enough to knock out the emergency room crew treating her.

Doctors planned to work 40 minutes at a time under a specially constructed dome designed to catch escaping fumes during the autopsy. They were to be the only people allowed in the building during the procedure.

"We're dealing with an unknown right now," said Dan Cupido, chief deputy coroner for Riverside County.

Shortly before 10 p.m. a pair of industrial hygienists in shiny yellow airtight suits entered a sealed area and opened the special casket holding Ramirez's body.

## ROK President ready to sit with Kim-II-Sung

SEOUL, Feb 25: South Korean President Kim Young-Sam said here today he was ready to meet with his North Korean counterpart Kim Il-Sung if it would help solve the impasse over Pyongyang's nuclear ambitions, reports AFP.

I will push forward talks with Kim Il-Sung if that would be helpful in blocking North Korea's nuclear weapons development, Kim told a press conference held to mark the completion of his first year in office.

Asked if that meant he would meet with the aging leader from the communist North — even before nuclear transparency was ensured, Kim replied simply "yes."

## Gamsakhurdia buried in Grozny

MOSCOW, Feb 25: Burial services for the late Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia, were held Thursday in Grozny, capital of the Russian Caucasus republic of Chechnya, Itar-Tass reported, says AFP.

Gamsakhurdia, who reportedly committed suicide in west Georgia on December 31, was laid to rest near the home where he lived in exile after being ousted from power in January 1992.

Chechen President Djokhar Dudayev attended the ceremony along with family and supporters of the former president who were denied a request to bury Gamsakhurdia in his native Georgia.

# Spy row: Russia asks US not to return to cold war gestures

MOSCOW, Feb 25: Russian newspapers ridiculed US response to a spy scandal Thursday as "hypocritical" and praised their own intelligence service for recruiting a major agent, reports AP.

The government, which said the espionage case must not sour US-Russian relations, left unanswered an American demand to recall the officials involved.

President Boris Yeltsin's spokesman, Vyacheslav Kostikov, asked the Clinton administration not to return to Cold War gestures and rhetoric.

of an international partnership for peace," Kostikov said in a statement late Thursday.

Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev said Washington and Moscow should "continue co-operation and not attach an improperly high significance to this issue."

CIA counterintelligence officer Aldrich Ames and his wife were charged Tuesday with conspiracy to commit espionage. The two accused of selling US secrets to Moscow for 1.5 million dollars face a possible life sentence if convicted.

Some US officials say Ames alleged betrayal led to the deaths of at least two former Soviet officials who had spied

for the United States. The New York Times reported that at least 10 Soviet citizens were killed.

Foreign Intelligence Service spokesman Yuri Kobaladze told The Associated Press the reports were "speculations."

"I remember that before Ames, the deaths were attributed to somebody else, and then Howard, for instance," Kobaladze said in reference to Edward Lee Howard, a CIA officer who defected to Moscow in 1985. "There will be a lot of speculation about this case."

There have been cases of intelligence officials who have spied for the United States and were unmasked and sen-

tenced to death by firing squad," Kobaladze said.

Asked whether there have been 10 such cases, he answered: "Certainly not."

Izvestia, a leading Russian daily, said Thursday that even if Ames was a spy, angry US statements "testify to how hypocritical the anger is."

"Russia has no less right to act secretly in the United States than America does for espionage in Russia," Izvestia wrote.

Some Russian observers have suggested that Ames' sudden exposure after a two-year FBI and CIA investigation was timed to punish Russia for its diplomatic success in Bosnia. Circumventing NATO, Russia persuaded Bosnian Serbs to withdraw heavy weapons from around Sarajevo and avert the Western alliance's threatened air strikes.

Kozyrev's deputy Sergei Lavrov said he hoped there was no connection between the timing of the spy case and the