Tension grips Korean peninsula

US considering options to

counter DPRK's threat

China urges N-powers not to strike first

GENEVA. Mar 25: China will not be the first to use nuclear weapons against other countries and urges other nuclear powers to do the same, a Chinese representative said here no Thursday, reports Xinhua.

Hou Zhitong, head of the Chinese delegation to the conference on disarmament in Geneva, told the conference that "China has never shirked its responsibility for promoting nuclear disarmament."

It "has always stood for the fundamental objective of early realisation of the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons and has made unremitting efforts and important contributions in this regard."

"It is know to all that since the first day when at came into possession of nuclear weapons, the Chinese government has solemnly declared to the world its unilateral commitment of not being the first to use nuclear weapons at any time and under any circumstances," Hou added

agenda.

He pointed out, "China has on many occasion strongly appealed to other nuclear weapons states to undertake similar commitments and to conclude an international convention to this end".

He said that in order to WASHINGTON, Mar 25: The promote the process of nu-United States is considering clear disarmament and realise the goal of preventing nuclear war, the Chinese government has recently taken further initiatives. On December 23 last year,

the Chinese government formally proposed to the United States, the Russian Federation and other nuclear weapon states that negotiations be started among the five nuclear weapon states to conclude a treaty on the non-first use of nuclear weapons.

"It is the view of the Chinese government that under the present international situation, the condition is ripe for the five nuclear weapon states to negotiate and conc clude such an international treaty." Hou said.

other options beyond the deployment of Patriot missiles in South Rorea to counter the threat of North Korea's nuclear programme, President Bill Clinton said Thursday, reports

"The situation in Korea is serious and we have responded in a serious way," Clinton said of the crisis sparked by Pyongyang's refusal to allow inspection of sites feared to be involved in the production of nuclear arms.

He told a news conference that the Patriot anti-missile, missiles he agreed to send to South Korea were for purely defensive purposes and added, "we will make further decisions as we go along."

The President did not elab-

orate but Defence Secretary William Perry said earlier Thursday the White House was considering strengthening its military presence if necessary in South Korea, which has

some 37,000 US troops. Clinton, meanwhile, stayed non-commital on a Russian call for an international conference on the Korean conference, taking note of the idea but saying only, we'll see what happens

The State Department said earlier it would consider the plan but added that the United States preferred to see the problem resolved by the UN Security Council.

The US President reiterated that Washington wanted a "good, normal relationship" with the North Koreans, who have failed to comply with inspection requirements of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

He said the United States was consulting the South Koreans, Chinese, Japanese, Russians and others in the hope the matter can be resolved.

"But the choice is really up to North Korea. Will they be isolated from the world community, or will they be a full partner?

Another report from Seoul adds: North Korea said today that tensions on the Korean peninsula were becoming "more grave" by the hour and said it would hold Washington responsible if "the situation develops to an irrevocable

The verbal broadside, carried by Pyongyang's mouth-

Hebron where a Jewish set-

tler killed 53 Palestinian wor-

itary operations against the

soldiers and the (Jewish)

settlers," another slogan read.

had received numerous warn-

ings over the past few days of

"Be prepared for more mil-

Security agents said they

Even abroad, Maariv re-

ported, security was being

beefed up at Israeli embassies;

at offices of the El Al, the na-

tional airline; and at syna-

The newspaper said the at-

tacks were planned for the

Passover holiday which begins

Saturday night and lasts for

eight days. Israelis traditionally

spend the spring holiday out-

doors and touring the country.

Peled advised Israelis "who

valued their safety" to avoid

" I don't advise going to

Israel radio said forces

Hebron or (the West Bank

town of Ramallah) during the

along the border were also

placed on high alert, and that

some troops serving in south

Lebanon were transferred to

the occupied territories to bol-

ster forces there. All leaves

had been cancelled, the daily

Ydiot Ahronot said.

holiday," he said on Israel radio.

hot spots.

Police commissioner Rafi

shipers on February 25.

piece, the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) monitored in Tokyo, came as South Korea's Defence Minister Rhee Byoung-Tae said the North had put its troops on heightened alert status.

Rhee stressed, however, that the South's monitoring had detected no signs of preparations for war, and said he believed the alert was taken to match a similar one put into effect in the South Wednesday.

Quoting a Rodong Shimun Shimun newspaper editorial, it said Pyongyang was "not afraid on any kind of sanctions," referring to UN discussions on the possibility of imposing sanctions to try to nudge the North into accepting new inspections of its suspect nuclear facilities.

Wijetunga

defeated in

local polls

sident Dingiri Banda Wijetu-

nga suffered 'a humiliating electoral debacle Friday in

southern Shri Lanka and in-

COLOMBO, Mar 25: Pre-

stopped short of threatening a curity reasons after it was anstate of emergency, reports After a meeting with

African National Congress President Nelson Mandela, De Klerk announced a twinpronged political-military initiative for Natal, saying "It is our duty to ensure free and fair elections" in the southern province that includes Buthelezi's Kwazulu homeland.

PRETORIA, Mar 25: Pres-

ident Frederick De Klerk on

Thursday said he would send

military reinforcements to the

Zulu stronghold of Natal but,

in a veiled warning to Zulu

The death toll in Natal rose to 94 Thursday in the six days since Zulu King Goodwill Zwelthini proclaimed the province's "sovereignty" and his opposition to South Africa's first all-race elections on April 26-28.

Mandela, meanwhile, wrote to Zwelithini to propose a "private" meeting next week to discuss "the future of the Zulu monarch and the

Kwazulu Kingdom." A historic first meeting between the two was scheduled for March 18 in Ulundi, the Kwazulu capital, but was leader Mangoshuthu Buthelezi, postponed by the ANC for se-

> nounced that it would be a public affair. . The developments occurred as Pretoria deployed troops to secure strategic locations in two other homelands - Ciskei and Lebowa - plunged into by mutinous confusion security forces uncertain of their future as the election

At a press conference here, De Klerk ruled out an ouster of Butheleze - as has been the case with the Bophuthatswana homeland's Lucas Mangope and Ciskei's Oupa Gqozo - saying there were " various possible steps I can take."

"I don't want to go into details," he said, "but there is an act of parliament which authorises the government.

CIS gets UN observer status: The General Assembly decided without a vote Thursday to grant UN observer status to the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), linking most of the now-independent republics of the former Soviet Union, Reuter reports from United Nations.

But several countries, including the United States, in welcoming the decision, stressed that this did not imply entrusting the CIS with responsibility for peacekeeping operations, particularly in the territory of the former Soviet Union. Other bodies with UN observer status include the European Union, the Arab League and the Organisation of African Unity.

Israeli troops kill 4 in Hebron: Israeli troops firing rockets blew up Arab apartment buildings in Hebron killing at least four Muslim guerillas during a two-day siege which ended on Wednesday, Israeli security sources said, Reuter reports from Hebron.

Five Israeli soldiers were wounded in the operation to capture wanted Palestinians holed up in several buildings in the West Bank city, where a Jewish settler massacred some 53 Muslims in a mosque last month. Israeli army sources said

The operation, which Palestinians said began at midnight on Monday, came as crucial talks between Israel and the PLO restarted in Cairo. A Palestinian demand for international protection for the 110,000 Arabs in Hebron was on the

Mishap claims 15 in Jakarta: A minibus skidded off a road in east Java and plunged into a deep ravine, killing all 15 people on board, press reports said yesterday, AFP reports from Jakarta.

The minibus, carrying a newly-wed couple and 13 of their relatives, plunged into a 200 metre (668 foot) deep ravine in the Munjungan mountain Wednesday as the driver appeared to have failed to negotiate a sharp bend at high speed, the Suara Karya daily said

All 15 people died on the spot, the daily said, adding that the group had intended to visit the parents of the groom who had just married four days previously.

Shooting in Russian missile site: A Russian soldier guarding a nuclear missile site at Barnaul in Siberia shot and killed several fellow guards and then hid in a car near strategic missiles, the Itar-Tass news agency said on Thursday, AFP reports from Moscow

The base commander argued with the soldier from the Caucuasian republic of Daghestan for three hours before finally persuading him to surrender his Kalashnikov assault rifle. the agency said, giving local newspaper Altaiskaya Pravda as its source.

The soldiers were unable to fire back as instructions categorically forbid firing towards the nuclear missiles "no matter what the situation, even attack by a subversive enemy group." The bullets could puncture the missiles "fuel tanks and cause an explosion," the agency said.

Mandela cancels campaign rally: African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela canceled several campaign appearances on advice from his doctor after contracting laryngitis, the ANC said Friday, AP reports

from Johannesburg. For several weeks, since the ANC kicked off is campaign for April's election, Mandela has maintained a punishing schedule of public rallies and private meetings. The 75year-old ANC president, who is expected to become South Africa's first black president after the April 26-28 vote, was barely audible at a brief news conference. Thursday night and said he had a bad cold.

Synagogue firebombed in Germany: Arsonists firebombed a synagogue in northern Germany early Friday, police said. The attack damaged the synagogue's offices but caused no injuries. AP reports from Luebeck Germany.

The attack at 2:30 am was quickly noticed by neighbours. and families living over the synagogue offices fled the building. Firefighters extinguished the fire before it spread to the synagogue hall

The attack appeared to be the work of right-wing radicals Thousands of neo-Nazi attacks in Germany over the past three years have included vandalisation of Jewish cemeteries, but attacks on synagogues have usually been limited to graffiti.

least 30, reports AP.

Security Force that its troops

fired in self-defence after be-

ing fired on themselves is un-

as saying there were no gun-

men in the crowd, of 3,000

Muslim demonstrators at

Bijbehara in the northern

ing the shootings by the

Border Security Force were

barbarous, deliberate, we

planned, unprovoked and

tails of the Indian government

The BBC gave no other de-

It quotes the report as say-

state's Kashmir Valley.

indiscriminate.

The BBC quotes the report



Lankan opposition leader and former Prime Minister Sirima Bandaranaike, 77, addresses an election rally in the southern town of Matara March 21. Her party swept back to power in the southern provincial council March 24 election seen as a trend setter for the December - AFP photo Presidential election.

Israeli army, police on alert to prevent Arab attacks

HEBRON, Occupied West Bank, Mar 25: Israeli army troops poured into the occupied territories and police went to high alert elsewhere Friday as Arabs threatened vengeance attacks during the Passover holiday, Israeli media reported, says AP.

Palestinians in the Israeli-

occupied Gaza Strip and West Bank, as well as in Arab east Jerusalem, began observing a three-day general strike Friday to mark a month since the Hebron mosque massacre.

"Let the world know there will be no peace after the massacre," read on slogan spray painted on a wall overnight in

squads of Arab gunmen plan-Myanmar minorities for ning a massive attack against Israelis in the country or in the occupied territories, the semi-autonomous states daily Maariv reported Friday.

BANGKOK, Mar 25: Myanmar's ethnic minorities demanded at a military-organised national convention in Yangon that the country be divided into semi-autonomous states under a central government, Myanmar radio reported today, says Reuter.

"Self-administration by the ethnic nationalities with the supervision of the central government is the most important principle for the country. Kachin representative Swan Thu Naw was quoted as saying at Thursday's meeting.

But rebel sources were pessimistic about the convention's outcome. "It is a scheme planned by SLORC (the military junta) to prolong their power," a Karen source told Reuters.

The State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC). Myanmar's ruling military junta, initiated the convention in January 1993 to draft a new constitution and pave the way for democracy. Some 663 delegates attended Thursday's

meeting, the radio said. But the convention has made little progress since SLORC leaders introduced two principles that prolong military rule, a Yangon-based diplomat told Reuters in a telephone interview.

"One principle was that the military must have the prominent role the country's administration and the one other stresses that Myanmar must be one state" the diplomat

SLORC ignored the results of 1990 elections where the National League for Democracy (NLD) won a landslide victory. It has systematically eradicated all forms of opposition. jailing thousands of prodemocracy demonstrators and politicians.

Aung San Suu Kyi, leader of the NLD and winner of the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize, has been detained under house arrest since July 1989.

ports AFP.

definitely extended a curfew in the region as the opposition won a key local council, re-The opposition People's Alliance (PA) led by former Premier Sirima Bandaranaike

polled 550,512 votes at Thursday's southern provincial council election to win control of local administration. The alliance won 32 seats in the 55- member adminis-

tration while the UNP took the balance 23 after polling 443,423 votes in the election conducted under proportional representation. Wijetunga's UNP lost al-

most all the small electoral units in the three districts of Galle, Matara and Hambabtota. Some 73 per cent of the 1.5 million electorate had turned out to vote.

The election was held only in the southern province but it is seen as an important rehearsal for presidential elections in December.

Liz undergoes hip replacement surgery



LOS ANGELES. Mar 25: Actress Elizabeth Taylor underwent hip replacement surgery as planned and the operation went smoothly, her doctor said Thursday, reports Reuter.

"There were no surgical complications," Doctor John Moreland said in a statement issued the day after surgery.

He said patients who undergo the procedure normally stay in hospital for a weekend recover fully within three to six months.

Off the Record

De Klerk vows to ensure

fair polls in Natal

Women subconsciously control sexual response

LONDON: Women subconsciously control their sexual response to determine who fathers their babies and when, British researchers reported on Thursday, says Reuter.

Biologist Robin Baker and colleagues at Manchester University studied theories that women subconsciously but physically control reproduction by determining whose, and how many, sperm compete for an egg. They do this by timing their orgasms and by expelling ex-

cess sperm. Baker told a conference of the British Psychological Society. "The female definitely has the upper hand," Baker said in a telephone interview. "She is making the subconscious judge-

ment." Baker studied information from 35 couples who volunteered for an intimate study, and used data from a poll of more than 3,500 women.

They found that women tended to expel sperm from their partners when they were in a monogamous relationship. Baker said his studies indicated this was because sperm are more likely to inseminate an egg if there are fewer of them in the women's body.

The women were able to control how many sperm remained in their bodies in part by controlling their orgasms.

Snoring can make men fat

LONDON: Snoring can make men fat and impotent, British doctors reported on Thursday, says Reuter.

· They said sleep apnoea, a form of snoring that disturbs sleep, reduced secretion of the male hormone testosterone. .Dr Christine Vesselinova-Jenkins of London's Lister Hospital and colleagues studied men suffering from sleep ap-

She told a conference at the London clinic that the men's disturbed sleep patterns also seemed to disrupt production of growth hormone, deficiency of which could cause obesity.

"Severe snoring and shortage of dreaming sleep are responsible for erection failures of an organic nature," a statement from the London Clinic said.

Sleep apnoea stops the flow of air at the nose and mouth. The reduced flow of oxygen reduced testosterone secretion, Vesselinova-Jenkins found. Sleep apnoea has also been linked with increased death

rates from hart attacks and strokes. It can also affect a child's performance at school and cause marriage break-ups because of heavy snoring and disrupted sleep. British doctors warned last year that sleep apnoea could

cause accidents and deaths, especially among sleepy truck

Woman fired for her mustache

TYSONS CORNER; A woman and her former boss say they were wrongfully fired because she has a mustache, and he didn't make her get rid of it, reports AP. Licia Joy Galinsky, 30, and her former supervisor, Roy A

Peterson, filed the complaint Thursday with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. The complaint is against both the Ritz-Carlton Hotel and

the pair's employer, an audio-visual services company that has a contract with the hotel. Hotel officials did not comment because litigation was likely, they said, and the audio-visual company, Atlanta-based

Total Audio Visual Services Inc. was not reachable late Thursday. Galinsky said she was willing to dye or shave the mustache to save her job, and did dye it a month ago. But she was fired anyway because of a request by Ritz-Carlton, she said.

She also said she had mixed feelings about the pressure over her facial hair. "I am proud of my mustache," Galinsky said. "It has been

painful and embarrassing to me that someone took away my job based on looks rather than merit." A February 22 memo sent to Peterson by Ritz-Carlton offi-

cials altered the hotel's personal appearance standards "to specifically deem as unacceptable the matter of facial hair on female employees." Peterson said the company fired him for mismanagement

because he "should have known that there was a problem with Galinsky's mustache."

Bodo rebels kidnap tea estate owner

NEW DELHI, Mar 25: Tribal rebels have kidnapped the owner of a tea plantation in the far eastern Indian state of Assam, three weeks after the release of another tea executive abducted by a separate militant group, reports AFP.

Sashi Baruah, owner of the Bhergaon Tea Estate, was kidnapped by militants of the Bodo security force in the teagrowing state yesterday, the Press Trust of India said. The security forces have

launched a massive hunt for the tea plantation proprietor. the news agency said. Baruah's kidnapping comes

three weeks after the March 2 release of Tata tea executive Bolin Bordoloi, who was held for 11 months by members of the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA).

Assam's 840 tea plantations produce around 23 million kilograms (50.6 million pounds) of tea a year.

Indian troops fired on Muslims in **Kashmir without provocation: BBC** LONDON, Mar 25: The BBC

said Friday it has obtained a Talmeez Ahmed, a spokesman for he Indian embassy, or confidential Indian government report which says Indian High Commission in London. said in an interview with the security forces fired without provocation on Muslims in BBC that he could not confirm Kashmir in October, killing at the contents of the government report but that in BBC World Service radio general security personnel said the report states that a who break the law are punclaim by the Indian Border

> Ahmed blamed Pakistan of supporting terrorist activity in Kashmir, over which the two countries have been wrangling for nearly 46 years and have fought two wars.

Ahmed said in the interview: "We are ourselves committed to upholding human rights. We have instrumentalities and institutions in our country that uphold human "We find it strange that cer-

tain countries whose own hu-

man rights record is extremely

dubious have been espousing

the cause of human rights in

"What we would like to call upon the international community to do is to very strongly and very directly challenge Pakistan and expose its support to terrorist activity."

A report by the Londonbased human rights group Amnesty International in December accused Indian security forces in Muslim-dominated Kashmir, where Muslim guerillas have been waging a secessionist campaign for more than three years, of appalling human rights abuses. But Amnesty said they were virtually immune from prosecution.

Pakistan in December accused india of stepping up attacks on civilians in Kashmir

The Indian government reported in January that more than 8,000 people have died in fighting in Kashmir since the Muslim guerilla campaign there started.



Ernesto Zedillo (L) coordinator of the political campaign of Luis Colosio for the Mexican presidency helps carry his casket March 24. Colosio was assassinated at a campaign rally March 23 and Zedillo is considered to be one of the front-runners for the candidacy of president.

US operation in Somalia ends MOGADISHU, Mar 25:

Major-General Thomas Motgomery, commander of the US operation in Somalia, flew out of Mogadishu today, ending the 15-month US mission to the blighted horn of Africa country, reports Reuter. Dressed in full combat gear.

Montgomery boarded a military helicopter and flew to a US warship lying offshore. "We are very pleased with

what we have done, we know there are hundreds of thousands of Somalis alive because of what we did," he told reporters shortly before leaving the bombed-out capital. US marines covering with-

drawal of the last US servicemen began boarding helicopters and hovercraft in the last stages of "operation quickdraw", ending the military operation aimed at protecting delivery of humanitarian supplies but which resulted in heavy combat and deaths of some 30 US troops last year.