

## International

Rao accepts Clinton's invitation to visit US

## Talbott won't force India, Pakistan to sign NPT

ROK to buy N-material from India

NEW DELHI, Apr 8: India made a deal Friday to sell 23 million dollars, worth of heavy water to South Korea for a nuclear reactor it is building, a news agency reported, says AP.

This is the first major sale of nuclear material by India, which has been under pressure from Western nations to open its atomic power plants and laboratories to international inspection.

The shipment of 100 tons of heavy water will begin in 1997 under supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Press Trust of India said, quoting unidentified government officials.

The deal was signed in the Korean capital, Seoul, by P R Prabhakara, additional Secretary in India's Department of Atomic Energy, and Sohn Bong-U, Vice President of the Korean Electric Power Company, PTI said.

Heavy water is required for nuclear reactors, which burn natural rather than enriched uranium.

Korea plans to use the Indian heavy water for a 600 megawatt power plant that is being built with Canadian assistance.

India's state-owned nuclear establishment includes eight heavy water manufacturing plants producing 685 tons of the material each year. Five of these heavy water plants have been built without international assistance.

NEW DELHI, Apr 8: The US Deputy Secretary of State, Strobe Talbott, today ruled out forcing India and Pakistan to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty but said Washington would take bilateral and multilateral steps to cap the nuclear and missile proliferation in South Asia, reports PTI.

Addressing a press conference at the conclusion of his three-day visit here, Talbott admitted that the US had met with some degree of skepticism from both India and Pakistan on its proposals. He, however, said the US would pursue them as this would be a promising way of ensuring security of the South Asian region.

Talbott, who drove straight to the press conference after an hour-long meeting with the Prime Minister, P V Narasimha Rao, said both India and the US had taken some solid steps in turning a new leaf in their relationship.

He also said that Rao had accepted the US President Bill Clinton's invitation to visit the US. The dates for the visit would be finalized through diplomatic channels.

Replying to questions, Talbott said there was no plan for Pakistan in the US policy. He said the word tilt belonged to the vocabulary of Cold War era. The Cold War was over and the US was keen

to cultivate good relations with both India and Pakistan.

Talbott did not agree with a questioner that the supply of F-16 fighter aircraft to Pakistan would fuel an arms race in the South Asian region.

He contended that a one-time partial exception to the Pressler Amendment envisaged the supply of 38 F-16s to Pakistan only if Islamabad accepted a verifiable cap on the production of weapons-grade material.

Talbott said India and Pakistan already possessed high performance aircraft. The real problem is of nuclear proliferation.

On the Kashmir issue, the US Deputy Secretary of State said Washington hoped that India and Pakistan would be able to resolve the matter themselves in accordance with the Shimla Agreement.

He adds: The United States is undeterred by the cool reception it has received for its proposal to cap Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme in exchange for warplanes. Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott said Friday.

The proposal is the first step in long-term US strategy that envisions a parallel deal with India and a regional conference, including China, to reduce the risks of nuclear war in the volatile Indian subcontinent, officials said.

The revival of a proposal for a multilateral forum on non-proliferation came up in Talbott's talks with Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao, while willing to participate alongside the United States

and Russia, was not willing to discuss dismantling its own nuclear arsenal which India sees as a threat.

Indian officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said New Delhi would now recon-

sider a conference if it can be linked to eradicating nuclear weapons worldwide.

In Islamabad, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto said Thursday she will refuse to cap Pakistan's programme unless India makes comparable guarantees. India objects to the plan, arguing that the delivery of F-16s will tilt the military balance.

Talbott has not yet sought an end to India's production of weapons-grade material. But published reports, partially confirmed here, said Washington will offer India a similar deal to fall on deaf ears with security forces bracing for the conflict to flare once more.

The chances of peace looked as distant as ever with Major locked in a war of words with Sinn Fein President Gerry Adams, leader of being "evasive and wholly inadequate."

Major's Downing Street office took the unusual step of publishing a letter sent by his private secretary Roderic Lyne to Adams that put paid to any chances of direct talks until the IRA lays down its arms for good.

Rejecting Sinn Fein accusations, he said: "You are wrong to say the government have caused a stalemate."

Irish Foreign Minister Dick Spring echoed Major's calls for a permanent ceasefire in the conflict. More than 3,100 people have been killed in the 25-year battle by the IRA to oust Britain from Northern Ireland.

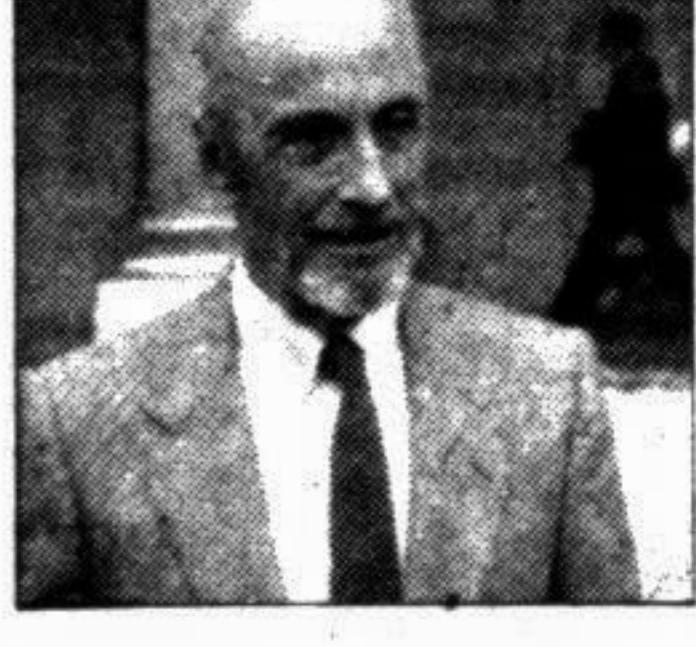


US Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott (R) shakes hands with Indian Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao on Friday in New Delhi.

— AFP photo

## BRIEFLY

## Mitterrand's aide commits suicide:



An aide of French President François Mitterrand, François de Grossouvre, committed suicide on Thursday in his office at the Elysee Presidential Palace, Elysee Presidential Palace, Elysee officials said, Reuter reports from Paris.

De Grossouvre, 76, an old friend of Mitterrand, was in charge of hunting grounds belonging to the presidency. Officials did not say how or why he killed himself.

**CIS summit on April 15:** A summit of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) will take place in Moscow on April 15, Itar-Tass news agency reported, quoting Russian President Boris Yeltsin's press service. Reuter reports from Moscow.

It said the main items on the agenda would include the implementation of a treaty of economic union and issues of political and military cooperation.

**US army secy to visit ROK:** US army secretary Togo West is scheduled to arrive in South Korea this week as a part of a familiarisation tour of the Pacific area, US army officials said yesterday. AFP reports from Seoul.

The officials said West would meet with all major commands of the 36,000 US troops based in South Korea, and because it was simply a familiarisation tour would not make contact with the media.

No further details of the visit were immediately available.

**Poland seeks EU membership:** Poland formally applied for full membership in the European Union Friday. AP reports from Athens.

"I brought a letter which expresses Poland's will to join the European Union," Foreign Minister Andrej Olechowski told reporters.

He added that Poland's Parliament had voted unanimously to request membership in the EU. Poland's application came one week after Hungary also asked for full membership.

**Journalist held in Egypt:** Egyptian police arrested a journalist from the opposition newspaper Al-Wa'ad on Thursday for violating a news blackout on Muslim militant activities, the newspaper said. Reuter reports from Cairo.

Hanan Fahmy, a spokeswoman at the Liberal newspaper, said state security officers took Mohammed Zaki to their headquarters at 4 am. She said police had beaten him up.

Police were not immediately available for comment.

**14 Filipinos feared drowned:** About 14 fishermen in the central Philippines were feared drowned when typhoon Owen struck the country this week, the state-owned Philippine News Agency (PNA) said yesterday. Reuter reports from Manila.

Francisco Abella, lone survivor of 15 fishermen aboard the wooden-hulled tagbilaran liner, was quoted by the PNA as saying Owen sank the ship.

"Waves from the typhoon battered the boat, which keeled over and then sank," he said.

**Russian officer killed:** A Russian officer was killed when a mine blew up a army vehicle near Tajikistan's troubled border with Afghanistan, military officers said yesterday. Reuter reports from Dushanbe.

The officers, who declined to be identified, said an armoured personnel carrier transporting troops from a unit of Russian border guards was blown up late on Thursday evening.

"The name of the dead man is not released yet," an officer said. There was no information on whether there were any wounded.

## Chinese diplomat goes to Sikkim

NEW DELHI, Apr 8: A New Delhi-based Chinese diplomat has gone to the eastern state of Sikkim with a nephew of exiled Tibetan leader Dalai Lama and held talks with Tibetan monks, Da Daily said today, reports AFP.

The unidentified second secretary's April 1 arrival in the hill resort of Kalimpong in the Company of Gyalo Dhondup, the Dalai Lama's nephew, has "raised many eyebrows," the Indian Express newspaper said.

The Chinese diplomat met with some Tibetan monks, it said, without giving details in a report titled "Chinese envoy in Sikkim for secret parleys."

Many here viewed it as a new era in Japanese politics.

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But in the rough-and-tumble political world, Hosokawa's inexperience quickly began to show.

The Liberal Democrats, in their new role as opposition, kept up a constant barrage of criticism, undercutting him at every turn.

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Women weep while the corpse of a senior guerrilla leader is taken for burial on Wednesday in northern Kashmir state. The body of Ghulam Nabi Mir, a leader of the pro-Pakistani Hizbul Mujahideen, was handed over to his relatives by the Border Security Force after being shot while allegedly trying to escape from a top-security camp.

— AFP photo

## The meteoric rise and fall of Hosokawa

prime minister in history.

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The Liberal Democrats, in their new role as opposition, kept up a constant barrage of criticism, undercutting him at every turn.

Hosokawa was too distracted by the political

infighting to turn full attention to Japan's battered economy, sunk in its worst recession since World War II. Economic stimulus plans was received with little enthusiasm in business circles.

Trade issues grew more and more urgent as the Clinton administration turned up the heat over Japan's huge surplus. A February summit with Clinton, which was supposed to have been a triumphant diplomatic debut, turned sour when the two could not come to terms on trade.

In recent months, Hosokawa had appeared increasingly isolated. In the labyrinth of coalition politics, his allies had their own agen-

das. Even Hosokawa's chief spokesman was a frequent critic.

Earlier this week, two politicians he dined with said he had told them he felt like quitting. Hosokawa denied making the remark, but the stress was clearly taking its toll.

"He often says to me, 'There's really no freedom at all,'" his wife, Kayoko, told a magazine that hadn't even hit the newsstands when the resignation word came.

Pressure had been steadily mounting over questions surrounding Hosokawa's personal finances. Debate over the scandal had paralysed business in Parliament for more than a month, keeping legislators

from approving a budget for the fiscal year that started last week.

Even so, Hosokawa's popularity remained much higher than that of his predecessors. Prime Minister Kichiro Miyazawa's approval ratings plunged down into the single-digit range before he finally accepted his fate.

Hosokawa said he hoped that by stepping down, he could help restore the public trust in politics.

But expectations for Hosokawa's government were so high that the disappointment will be equally deep. It may be a long time before the Japanese people again greet a new leader with such hopes.

## Russia's Prosecutor General resigns

MOSCOW, Apr 8: Russia's outgoing Prosecutor General Alexei Kazannik, who has been trying to leave his job for over a month, resigned for a second time in the parliament's upper house on Friday. Itar-Tass news agency said, Kazannik's first resignation — which he said was a protest that President Boris Yeltsin had leaned on him to bend the law — had given Russia's Conservative-dominated parliament an excuse for a long-drawn-out battle of wills with the President.

But his second resignation has finally put a stop to the fuss and repeated parliamentary debates. Federation Council (upper house) Speaker Vladimir Shumeiko said.

## Major rejects direct talks with IRA

LONDON, Apr 8: British Prime Minister John Major on Thursday rejected a new call for direct talks with the leader of the IRA's political wing who said the guerrilla group's three-day truce would not be extended beyond the weekend, reports Reuters.

Urgent pleas from the Dublin government for the Irish Republican Army to prolong its ceasefire in the northern Ireland conflict appeared to fall on deaf ears with security forces bracing for the conflict to flare once more.

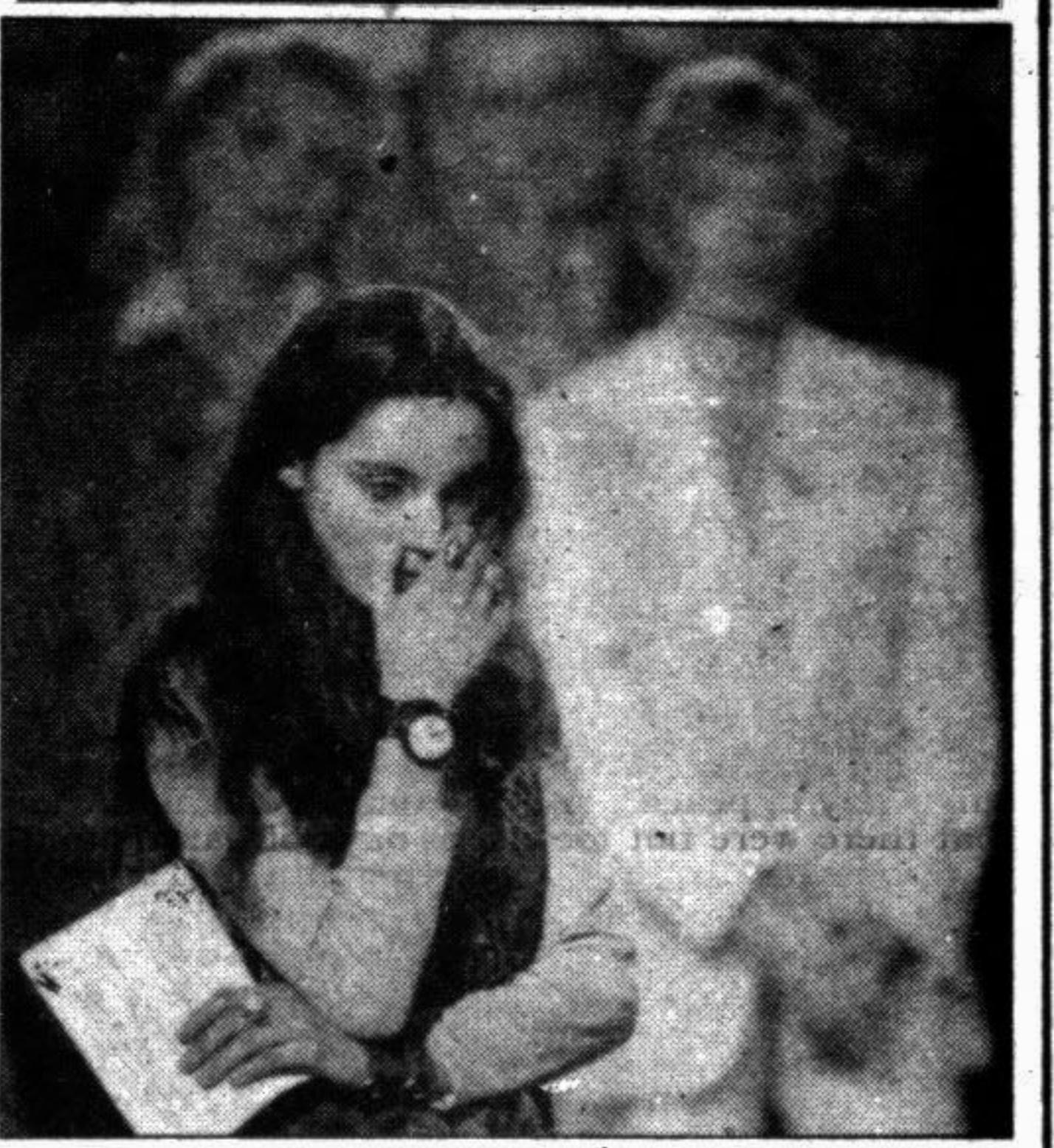
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Irish Foreign Minister Dick Spring echoed Major's calls for a permanent ceasefire in the conflict. More than 3,100 people have been killed in the 25-year battle by the IRA to oust Britain from Northern Ireland.

## Off the Record



A young HIV positive woman stands pensive after opening the TV anti-AIDS programme lasting more than four hours on all seven national French TV channels, both publicly and privately-owned, on Thursday.

— AFP photo

## Russian jailed for selling human flesh

MOSCOW: A Russian who stole human flesh from a morgue where his wife worked and sold it as cooking meat to buy wine was sentenced on Thursday to two years in jail, Itar-Tass news agency reported. says Reuter.

Yuri Lukin, a doorman at the railway hospital in the central Russian town of Saratov, pleaded guilty after stealing the remains from the morgue at the hospital last November 12.

Lukin earned a shot of vodka that day when he helped a nurse carry a corpse to the morgue, Tass said.

He drank the alcohol, but wanted more. He went to his wife for drinking money, but couldn't find her. So he went to the hospital refrigerator where preserving liquids and body parts were kept, stuffed some of them into plastic bag and went to a nearby market to sell them as steak.

One woman who testified at the trial said she bought meat from him for just 1,200 roubles (then about 1 dollar) — an unusually cheap price. Lukin spent the money on wine and drank it.

His customer, meanwhile, rushed back to work to brag about the bargain she had just picked up. But when she showed the parcel to her suspicious colleagues, Tass said, it was clear something was wrong. Apart from surgical sutures binding together a wound, there were human hairs growing from it.

Police were alerted, carried out quick checks, established the flesh was human and arrested Lukin.

## Rats have rights!

TORONTO: A giant white mouse, chanting 'rats have rights,' was arrested for mischief Thursday after disrupting an international conference on animal genetics, reports Reuter.

The suspect, who turned out to be animal activist Susan Kranjc in furry disguise, was among 30 demonstrators who stormed into a Toronto hotel conference room to condemn scientific experiments on animals.

Kranjc, a member of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, was released without charge.

"There was a suggestion that we get a piece of cheese and lure her away and when that didn't work she was arrested."