

## BRIEFLY

## 'Summit of Americans' Dec 9-10:

The 'summit of the Americas' that President Clinton is hosting in Miami later this year will take place December 9-10, the White House said Friday. Reuter reports from Washington.

The summit, announced by the president in early March, is intended to help the nations of North and South America and the Caribbean region coordinate strategies for economic growth and development, defence, strengthening democracy, protecting the environment and alleviating poverty.

All of the heads of state in the hemisphere except for those in power in Cuba and Haiti have been invited to attend.

## Avalanche kills 20 in Ecuador:

About 20 rescue workers were buried Friday by an avalanche in central Ecuador that struck while they were searching for the victim of another avalanche last week, a civil defence spokesman said. Reuter reports from Quito.

They were part of a search party of 60 that was combing the Cachi Canton Pujili area, 60 miles (100 km) south of the capital Quito, when a wall of snow fell on them, spokesman Elsi Andrade said.

## Bush may visit Seoul Apr 16:

Former US President George Bush is expected to visit Seoul next week to attend a conference of the Pacific-Asia Travel Association (PATA), an official at the host PATA Korea committee said yesterday. Reuter reports from Seoul.

"Bush will visit here on April 16 and stay for three days," the official said.

Bush will pay a courtesy call on President Kim Young-Sam and make a keynote speech at the opening session of the 43rd PATA meeting, scheduled from April 18 to 21.

## 13 killed in Indian road mishap:

Thirteen persons, including three women and two children, were killed on-the-spot and six injured when a van, in which they were travelling, collided with a truck near village Lingri, about 40 km from Jabalpur, yesterday evening, police told PTI.

The injured were admitted to the medical college hospital in Jabalpur, they said, adding that high police officials have rushed to the mishap site.

## Blasts kill 2 in Colombo:

Two people were killed and about 14 injured on Friday when four bombs exploded in luxury hotels in the Sri Lankan capital and at a beach outside the city, police said. Reuter reports from Colombo.

Police said they suspected Tamil rebels fighting for an independent state in the north and east of the island.

More than 30,000 people have died in ethnic violence since 1983 when the rebels stepped up their campaign for independence.

## West Bengal minister dead:

The West Bengal Forest and Environment Minister, Dr Ambarish Mukherjee, died of cancer at SSKM Hospital here early this morning. He was 67. PTI reports from Calcutta.

Mukherjee who was suffering from lung cancer was admitted to SSKM Hospital in February last. Earlier he was taken to London for treatment last year.

## Guatemalan peace talks in Oslo next month

OSLO, Apr 9: Representatives of Guatemala's government and leftist guerrillas will hold peace talks in Oslo next month in a bid to end their 33-year conflict, a Norwegian official said on Friday, reports Reuter.

Deputy Foreign Minister Jan Egeland said Norway, which won a diplomatic triumph last year by secretly brokering a historic peace accord between Israel and the PLO, had been involved in behind the scenes contacts with both sides.

The peace talks would be held under United Nations

## Clinton denies policy differences on Bosnia

MINNEAPOLIS, Apr 9: President Clinton denied Friday that there were policy differences over Bosnia between his State and Defence Department chiefs, who had sent mixed signals on using force, reports AP.

Clinton, in Minnesota to promote his health-care plan, told reporters that talk of a policy gap between Defence Secretary William Perry and Secretary of State Warren Christopher was "a great overstatement."

Christopher on Thursday called for the quick dispatch of hundreds of UN peacekeepers to Serb-encircled Gorazde in eastern Bosnia and vowed to have NATO air power defend them if they are attacked.

Earlier in the week, Perry and Gen John Shalikashvili,

## Indian communist leader Rajeswar Rao dies

NEW DELHI, Apr 9: India's one of the top Communist leaders, Chandra Rajeswar Rao died in the southern city of Hyderabad Saturday after a protracted illness, United News of India reported. He was 80, says AP.

Rao, no relation of Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao, was the general secretary of the Communist Party of India for about three decades, until he gave up the job due to declining health in 1990.

Physicians found he was suffering from tuberculosis. He was admitted to the Nizam, Institute of Medical Sciences last month and was put on artificial respiratory support system on Sunday. But his condition deteriorated and doctors pronounced him dead Saturday.

Rao, son of a rich farmer, became a card-carrying communist at the age of 17.

## French troops land at Kigali to evacuate foreigners

## Rwandan rebels attack govt troops defying ceasefire

MULINDI (Rwanda), Apr 9: Rebels launched new attacks Saturday against government troops in Rwanda, where hundreds have been killed in two days of ethnic slaughter. France sent troops to the capital of Kigali to prepare for evacuations, and more than 300 US Marines were standing by, reports AP.

The new fighting came less than 24 hours after the United Nations announced security forces in Rwanda had named an interim government and agreed to a cease-fire with the rebels in a bid to restore order to Kigali.

But a rebel leader said they were never consulted about any cease-fire. "We are not aware of any such deal, so this is a continuation of the war," said Vice Chairman Patrick Mazimhaka of the Rwandan Patriotic Front in rebel-held Mulindi.

Distant shelling could be heard from the rebel camp at Mulindi, 45 miles (70 kms) north of the capital. A UN observer, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the rebels were attacking on three fronts.

Gen Paul Kagame, chairman of the rebel high command, said they were fighting the hard-line presidential guard, blamed for much of the bloodshed since the deaths of the presidents of Rwanda and Burundi in a plane crash Wednesday.

"We appeal to all Rwandans to help fight this clique, including government soldiers who may want to join us," Kagame said Saturday on rebel radio Mwabura.

Another rebel commander, Theogene Rudasingwa, said the Rwandan Patriotic Front was trying to advance on Kigali to reinforce 600 rebels, mainly Tutsis, battling the Hutu guard

and government troops.

The ruling Hutus and the minority Tutsis have fought for decades.

The guard and the rebels were not involved in the selection of the new government, according to a UN statement issued in New York.

The violence that has left hundreds dead — including the acting prime minister, about 20 priests and nuns and dozens of aid workers — began after the presidents of Rwanda and Burundi were killed Wednesday in a plane crash.

Wounded and dead from just two days of fighting "can be counted by the thousands," said Dr Pierre Harze, a spokesman in Paris for the humanitarian organisation Doctors Without Borders.

"There are a huge number of bodies in the street," The report came from staff members in Kigali, he said.

Some 280 French paratroopers landed at Kigali airport at dawn Saturday to prepare for "an eventual evacuation" of the 600 French citizens in Rwanda. Another 120 soldiers were to arrive Saturday afternoon, French military chief Adm. Jacques Lanxade said.

But officials had yet to give the evacuation order, a French Foreign Ministry spokeswoman, Catherine Colonna, said.

About 330 US Marines were sent to the neighbouring country of Burundi in case an evacuation of US citizens from Rwanda becomes necessary, US Navy Capt. Gordon Peterson, said Saturday from US-European command headquarters in Stuttgart, Germany. The Marines come from a force of 1,200 based on four Navy ships off the coast of Somalia.

## UN sanctions against Libya to continue

UNITED NATIONS, Apr 9: The Security Council decided Friday to continue sanctions against Libya because of its refusal to surrender suspects in the bombing of Pan Am flight 103, reports AP.

The Boeing 747 exploded over Lockerbie, Scotland, in December 1988, killing 270 people.

The council first imposed the international travel and military exports embargo in April 1992.

The United States has pressed for the extradition of the Libyan pair to be tried in a US or British court.

The sanctions are reviewed every 120 days and the council had been expected to continue the sanctions.

## 3 die in Georgian train bomb blast

TBILISI, Apr 9: Three people were killed when a blast ripped through a passenger train in southern Georgia today, the Interior Ministry said, reports Reuter.

The train, on its way from Tbilisi to the Armenian capital Yerevan, was standing in the station at the border town of Sadakhlo in the early hours of the morning when the explosion occurred.

Two men and a woman died and a child was seriously injured in the blast, which sparked a blaze that destroyed three carriages.

Interfax news agency quoted the ministry as saying it was likely the blast had been caused by a terrorist act.

## Two Shanghai dissidents held

SHANGHAI, Apr 9: Police detained two prominent Shanghai dissidents and a number of others were feared held shortly before the visit to the city today by French Prime Minister Edouard Balladur, dissident sources said, reports Reuter.

Bao Ge was taken away by police early on Saturday morning and Wang Fuchen was detained on Friday evening, the sources said.

The sources said a handful of other local activists were missing and feared to be in police detention.

Bao was detained for 24 hours on March 21 during a visit to Shanghai by Japanese Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa. He has been prominent in demanding compensation for Chinese victims of Japanese wartime atrocities.



South African President Frederic de Klerk (C) is seen with African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela (L) and Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini at a press conference held in Skukuza late Friday after talks aimed at bringing an end to the bloodshed in Natal. — AFP photo

## No breakthrough in South African peace summit

SKUKUZA (South Africa), Apr 9: South Africa's peace summit broke up on Friday night with no breakthrough agreement to allow Zulu rejectionists to take part in the country's first all-race elections this month, reports Reuter.

The meeting between President F W De Klerk, ANC leader Nelson Mandela, Inkatha Freedom Party chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi and Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini was called in a bid to end violence threatening free and fair elections.

Clearly tired and disappointed after seven hours of talks at a remote game lodge deep in the bush, the four leaders tried to appear positive but were unable to report solid progress to all-inclusive elections.

"We are unable to place before you any tangible result of these discussions," Mandela said at a news conference.

But, assessing further the results of the day, the African National Congress president said: "Although what we expected as not materialised, we feel confident... we have laid the basis for further discussions before the day of the election and after."

A joint statement after the summit in the Kruger National Game Park made no mention of the April 26-28 poll for a national assembly and nine new provincial legislatures.

But Zwelithini, Monarch of South Africa's 8.5 million Zulus, said: "I won't advise my followers to vote in the elections. I won't advise them if

this matter is not settled."

Buthelezi conceded Inkatha had failed to put off the polls to end more than three centuries of white domination, and rejected a post-election government of national unity in which Inkatha was not represented.

"To say there should be a government of national unity... which we are not part of is a misnomer," he said.

"There cannot be a government of national unity in which quite a large segment of the population of South Africa are not represented."

## Riyadh forbids political activities during Hajj

RIYADH, Apr 9: Saudi Arabia warned Friday that it would strictly forbid political activity during this year's pilgrimage to Mecca and urged Muslim countries to respect quotas on the number of pilgrims, reports AP.

"It is forbidden to distribute political photographs, books or documents and to participate in political gatherings or demonstrations," the Pilgrimage Ministry said in a statement carried by the Saudi press agency.

Some two million Muslims make the pilgrimage to Mecca, which is to be held this year at the end of May.

The Ministry of Pilgrimage Affairs and Waqaf (religious endowment) also urged Muslim countries to respect quotas allowing 1,000 pilgrims for everyone million inhabi-

tants to make the pilgrimage, or hajj.

The Organisation of the Islamic Conference set the quotas in 1988.

The ministry statement outlined in minute detail condition for entering, staying in and leaving Saudi Arabia.

Riyadh last month confirmed it had cancelled measures that had allowed Iran to almost double its quota of 60,000 pilgrims since 1991. The exception had been granted after the two renewed diplomatic ties broken for three years.

Iranian officials reacted angrily to the strict enforcement of its quota. The Saudis said they had not choice to do so if all Muslims were to get a chance to make the pilgrimage.

## Pak Jamaat accuses army of meddling in politics

ISLAMABAD, Apr 9: The leader of Pakistan's most well-organised fundamentalist party has bitterly attacked the country's powerful army for alleged meddling in politics, newspapers reported today, says AFP.

Qazi Hussain Ahmed, speaking in Lahore on Friday after being sworn in as chief of the Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) for a third five-year term, blamed the army for political instability in Pakistan.

Ahmed said the army held real power in Pakistan and was responsible for the political crises and mid-term changes of government in 1990 and 1993, and called on politicians to quit feuding with one another and identify the real "destabilising" factor.

The speech amounted to rare open criticism by a top JI leader of the army, which has ruled Pakistan for more than half of the country's 46 years.

Ahmed had resigned in January amid a dispute with

more conservative colleagues over his populist campaigning during the October election, in which the JI failed, but he was reflected by the party in February.

Referring to the current visit of US Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott, who is hoping to persuade Islamabad to agree to a verifiable freeze on its nuclear programme, Ahmed said Pakistan needed a nuclear deterrent against India.

The JI leader said a nuclear Pakistan could take a stronger stand in its dispute with India over Kashmir and be "more helpful" to the Kashmiri freedom struggle in the Indian-held part of the Himalayan territory.

Ahmed said the nation would hold army generals responsible for any compromise on Kashmir or the nuclear programme, which he said would be impossible without the military's consent.

## Off the Record

## Male friend helps Diana buy shirts at Marks &amp; Spencers

LONDON: The Princess of Wales was helped out by a friend on Thursday when a department store told her it did not accept any credit cards apart from its own chargecard, reports Reuter.

Princess Diana tried to use a standard credit card to buy two men's shirts at a Marks and Spencers branch in the Wiltshire city of Salisbury, west of London, a store spokesman said.

But the estranged wife of Prince Charles, heir to the British throne, fell foul of the chain's card policy.

London's Evening Standard newspaper quoted shop assistant Karen Sturgess, who served Diana, as saying: "I told the Princess the store did not accept credit cards. She said, 'I don't know what I am going to do'. She looked disappointed."

She then said, "don't you take credit cards?" and I said "no we don't". Happily for the Princess, one of her male friends

said "I'll pay and stepped in," Sturgess told the newspaper.

The Prince of Wales, who is trying to polish up his public image, damaged by the breakdown of his marriage, spend Thursday in the south coast town of Portsmouth at a passing out parade for naval recruits and visiting chronically ill teenagers in a hospital ward.

## Benazir releases rats into Murtaza's cell?

KARACHI: Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's jailed brother Saturday accused his sister's government of releasing dozens of rats into his cell, reports AP.

"Believe me, I have killed 21 rats in the last few days," Murtaza Bhutto, 39, told reporters at the Sindh High Court.

He is in jail on charges of terrorism and of hijacking a Pakistan International Airlines jet in 1981. Benazir's government arrested him when he returned to Pakistan last November, ending nearly 16 years in exile.

Benazir was not immediately available for comment. The prime minister has been wrangling with both her brother and her mother, Nusrat Bhutto, for several months in a widely publicised family feud.

As well as the rats, Murtaza accused the government of cutting his water supply and torturing him.

Nusrat Bhutto was at her son's side throughout the press conference.

## Children play with live WWII bomb for 15 yrs

LONDON: Five children played games with a rusty old piece of metal for 15 years, little knowing that the object they were toying about was a live World War II bomb, reports Reuter.

June Salter of Highbridge in the southwestern English county of Somerset let her children throw the club-shaped device around in the garden and even bring it into the house after they found it in a field beside a river.

But on Thursday her son Julian, now 24, took it to the town's museum which was holding a World War II exhibition. On Friday, a visiting expert recognised it as a live mortar bomb, dubbed the "Hedgehog" and used as an anti-submarine device.

"It had been in the fields and was all rusty. I thought it was filled with concrete," Salter, 60, told Reuters. "It had been thrown about. It could have blown the house up."

Bomb disposal experts decided the device contained an explosive charge but did not have a detonator they took it away to render it safe, museum officials said.



Models wear designer bicycle clothing with racing helmets during the Norma Kamali Fall '94 fashion collection Friday in New York. The shows will run through April 13. — AFP photo

## Myanmar FM invited to ASEAN meet

MANILA, Apr 9: Myanmar's Foreign Minister U Onh Gyan has been invited to the July ministerial meeting of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Philippine foreign secretary said Saturday, reports AP.

The invitation to the ASEAN meeting, to be held in Bangkok, Thailand, would mark a major overture to a country which has been spurned for years because of its crackdown on human rights.

Secretary Roberto Romulo made the statement after returning from a three-day visit to Myanmar, where he met with Gyan and other junta officials.

Romulo said that during the meeting with Gyan, the Myanmar leader promised to "favourably consider the strengthening of regional linkages."