

Peres pledges 'supreme effort' for accord with PLO

JERUSALEM, Apr 28: Israel will make a "supreme effort" to reach an accord with the PLO to launch Palestinian self-rule and then focus on peace with Syria, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said today, reports AFP.

Jewish settler gets life-term for killing Arab

JERUSALEM, Apr 28: An Israeli court sentenced a Jewish settler to life in prison Thursday for murdering a bound and blindfolded Palestinian in a West Bank settlement, reports AP.

North Korea won't allow IAEA to take N-samples

SEOUL, Apr 28: North Korea says it will permit international inspectors to be present when it refuels a nuclear reactor but that it will not allow them to take samples, a South Korean report said Thursday, says AP.

to talks with the PLO. "We want to reach an overall settlement which takes in Syria and we see a peaceful future with Damascus", the minister said.

Peres was expected to meet PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat today in the Egyptian capital and pledged "a supreme effort to bring the (Cairo) negotiations to an end".

The Peres trip, which coincides with a visit to Cairo by US Secretary of State Warren Christopher, is to prepare for the signing by Arafat and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of an accord to implement autonomy in the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho.

"It may take a week or even more", Peres said. "We have to sign the agreement to change the situation on the ground so that the Palestinians have a territorial reality. Otherwise terrorism will go on", he warned.

Peres, Arafat, Christopher and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak could all meet together, according to an Egyptian official.

OIC wants to participate in Bosnia peace talks

UNITED NATIONS, Apr 28: The countries of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), urging an end Wednesday to the UN arms embargo on Bosnia, said they should have a role in new peace talks on the former Yugoslavia, reports AFP.

But in a statement released by the OIC at UN headquarters in New York the Muslim countries said such a conference must not be "utilized by the Serbs as a cover to execute or legitimize their war objectives and annexationist designs."

The contact includes Iran, Malaysia, Pakistan, Senegal, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Tunisia, and Turkey.

Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati addressed the Council after the OIC contact group met and charged there was a strong bias against Muslims in the Security Council.

"If this aggression remain unchecked, smaller and weaker states will lose confidence in the stability of the United Nations to collectively safeguard their security, sovereignty and territorial integrity."

tion plan provides the only appropriate basis for a negotiated settlement and a lasting peace," said Karolos Populias, the Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs, who spoke for the EU.

Sihanouk urges Khmers to attend peace talks

PHNOM PENH, Apr 28: Cambodian head of state King Norodom Sihanouk has appealed to Khmer Rouge rebels to confirm that they will attend peace talks scheduled for next month, reports Reuter.



Norodom Sihanouk government army and the Maoist guerillas in Cambodia's war-battered northwest.

and national reconciliation from the 2nd until the 7th of May, Sihanouk said. Sihanouk issued the appeal in a letter to Khieu Samphan dated April 27 but made public by the Royal Palace on Thursday.



US President Bill Clinton (L) and First Lady Hillary Clinton (2nd L) are joined by four former presidents and their wives April 27 during former President Richard Nixon's funeral in Yorba Linda, California. (L-R) President George Bush and Barbara Bush, President Ronald Reagan and Nancy Reagan, President Jimmy Carter and Rosalynn Carter, President Jerry Ford and Betty Ford.

Sharif refuses to accompany Benazir to SA

ISLAMABAD, Apr 28: Pakistan opposition leader Nawaz Sharif has refused to accompany Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto to South Africa for the oath-taking ceremony of the first democratically elected president of that country, reports Xinhua.

In response to Benazir's invitation letter dated April 22, Nawaz Sharif said he was willing to nominate a member of the parliament from his Pakistan Muslim League to join the Pakistan delegation to South Africa for the ceremony to be held on May 9 to 11.

ROK students stage anti-US rally: 20 held

SEOUL, Apr 28: Some 20 South Korean students were arrested today when they marched to the US embassy in central Seoul, demanding that Washington stop deploying new weapons in the south, reports Reuter.

Tory Party sinks to its lowest rating

LONDON, Apr 28: The British Conservative Party has sunk to its lowest rating since the party swept to power in 1979 and languishes 21 points behind the Labour opposition, according to a Mori poll in the Times, today, reports AFP.

Dozens killed as rival Yemeni troops clash near Sanaa

SANAA, Apr 28: Dozens of people were killed in fighting between northern and southern forces near the capital on Wednesday, exactly a year after Yemen's first elections since unity, the Defence Ministry said, reports AFP.

It also blamed President Ali Abdallah Saleh, a northerner, saying he made a strong speech against his rival, Vice President Ali Salem AOL-Baid, who is based in the southern city of Aden.

of lowering tensions in Yemen, accompanied by US and French military attaches, was touring northern and southern barracks in Amman.

BRIEFLY

Arafat arrives in Cairo: PLO leader Yasser Arafat arrived in Cairo yesterday for meetings with US Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. Reuter reports from Cairo.

Blast claims 7 Vietnamese: Seven Vietnamese, two of them children, were killed when a bag of old artillery shells exploded on a bus, an official newspaper reported yesterday. Reuter reports from Hanoi.

Gunmen kill two in Karachi: Two people were shot dead by unidentified assailants in Karachi on Wednesday, in a continuing wave of incidents of violence in the city, police said, AFP reports from Karachi.

One shot dead in West Belfast: One man was shot dead and another injured late Wednesday near the peace line between Catholic and Protestant districts in Springfield Park, West Belfast, police said, AFP reports from Belfast.

7 killed in US plane crash: Seven people were killed as a small plane crashed at Sikorsky Airport in foggy weather late Wednesday night, the airport manager said, AP reports from Stratford.

Pakistan may buy British choppers: Pakistanis considering buying used helicopters from the British navy for its own naval forces, Defence Minister Aftab Shaaban Mirani said yesterday, AFP reports from Islamabad.

Iran conducts major naval exercise

NICOSIA, Apr 28: Amid growing concern about its military buildup, Iran's navy conducted a major exercise Wednesday in the strategic Strait of Hormuz and the southern Gulf, reports AP.

The official Islamic Republic News Agency reported that the weeklong exercise, codenamed "Thamen al-a'Imma" after a Shi'ite Muslim Saint, began Tuesday.

It is the latest in a series of intensive Iranian war games in the Gulf in recent months as Tehran strives to rebuild its navy, which emerged from the 1980-88 war with Iraq in poor shape, with submarines, fast missile craft and a marine commando force.

The centerpiece of the maneuvers by the navy and the Revolutionary Guards Corps' naval arm was the deployment and use of anti-ship missiles.

MOSCOW, Apr 28: President Boris Yeltsin signed a political truce Thursday with many of his opponents, including extreme nationalist leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy and the leader of the revived Communist Party, Gennady Zyuganov.

Among those still boycotting, however, were two of Yeltsin's most bitter rivals, former Vice President Alexander Rutskoy and former parliament speaker Russian Khasbulatov. Both were jailed for inciting riots last October but were released two months ago under a parliamentary amnesty.

Today, an historic event is taking place at St George's Hall, Yeltsin declared as more than 100 signatories sat at long tables lining the giant white hall in the Grand

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The Tory rating of 26 per cent (compared with 28 last month) is not only lower than during previous mid-term setbacks, but is also a drop from the plateau of the previous 11 months when the Tory rating was stuck around 28-29 per cent.

Moreover, with only 20 per cent of the public satisfied with Prime Minister John Major's performance and 75 per cent unhappy, dissatisfaction has risen to the record levels of last summer.

Off the Record

Miss Russia kept in windowless room for 15 hours

MANILA: Thai authorities held Miss Russia in a windowless room for 15 hours during a stopover in Thailand, Miss Universe contest organisers said today, reports Reuter.

"Southside Strangler" executed on the basis of DNA evidence

JARRATT: Serial killer Timothy W. Spencer, the first person convicted of murders on the basis of DNA evidence, was executed late Wednesday after a last flurry of appeals failed, reports AP.

Man kills 19 guests for not being invited to the marriage

NEW DELHI: A man killed 19 wedding guests by setting them ablaze because he was furious at not being invited to the marriage, newspapers reported here Thursday, says AFP.

Syria, Russia sign military cooperation accord

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Yeltsin, opponents sign political truce

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