

BRIEFLY

King Hussein to visit US: King Hussein will visit Washington in the second half of June, said Information Minister Jawad Anani on Monday following a Cabinet session. Xinhua reports from Amman.

During his coming visit to Washington, King Hussein is expected to have a medical check-up and hold talks with US President Bill Clinton and other senior officials on the latest development in the Middle East, including the peace process and bilateral ties, Anani said.

Meanwhile, the information minister told a press conference that the Jordanian and Israel negotiators will hold unofficial talks Monday on border demarcation and water resources.

Architect Burle Marx dies: Internationally recognised landscape architect Roberto Burle Marx died Saturday of cancer in Rio De Janeiro, Globo Television reported. He was 84. Reuter says from Brasilia.

Burle Marx, during a 60-year-career, designed 1,500 public gardens and parks in more than 20 countries around the world. He was designing, at the time of his death, a park for the Malaysian government, Globo said.

The son of a German immigrant, he designed gardens and parks in Brasilia, Sao Paulo and at Rio De Janeiro's famed Copacabana Beach.

Truck mishap claims 25 in Peru: At least 25 passengers were killed and five others wounded when a pickup truck fell off a cliff in the sacred valley of the Incas on Friday, police sources said. Xinhua reports from Lima.

The sources said that the pickup flipped over and rolled 300 metres down an embankment between the peasant communities of Idello-Quello and Maska Friday afternoon.

According to initial investigations, more than 30 passengers were travelling abroad the vehicle from the district of Pisac to the community of Cuyo Grande in the sacred valley of the Incas.

Republican nominates North: Iran-contra scandal figure Oliver North won the Republican nomination for the US Senate Saturday at a convention of Virginia Republicans defeating former US Budget director James Miller.

North will run in the November 8 election for the seat now held by democratic Senator Charles Robb, who is expected to win renomination against lesser-known challengers in a Democratic primary on June 14.

8 Palestinians held in Gaza: Israeli soldiers arrested eight Palestinians on Saturday near the Jewish settlement of Netzarim in the autonomous Gaza Strip, Palestinian sources said. AFP reports from Gaza City.

Seven of the eight arrested after a stone-throwing incident were released after Palestinian police intervened, the sources said.

But the Palestinian authority's Justice Minister Freih Abu Mideen condemned the army for detaining the eighth man, Mideen said: "They do not have the right to arrest anyone in this enclave and they should hand back the prisoner."

N Yemeni planes bomb Aden's oil refinery

ADEN, June 5: Northern Yemeni planes today bombed Aden's oil refinery, setting a storage tank on fire, a Southern military statement said, reports Reuter.

Southern anti-aircraft fire shot down one of the raiding planes, it said.

The refinery, located in the little Aden suburb about 20 kilometers (12 miles) from the centre of the secessionist capital, has been a constant target on Northern planes in the war which started on May.

Refinery officials put its current production at 70,000 barrels per day (BPD). It was producing about 110,000 BPD at the start of the war.

AFP adds: Yemen's civil war will drag on for 100 years if the international community recognises the breakaway Southern state, a Northern Yemeni diplomat warned today.

Chaleb Al Jamil, Yemen's ambassador to Saudi Arabia, told the Kuwaiti daily *Al-Sayassa*: "If the Arabs and the world want Yemenis to continue slaughtering each other for 100 years, they only have to recognise the secession" of the self-declared Yemen Democratic Republic.

"We will then be two countries and for decades we'll devote ourselves to war, instead of development", he said, adding both sides would use oil revenues to buy arms.

Southern leaders declared the independent republic on May 21, but it has yet to be officially recognised by any country.

Yemen's affairs, which are strictly local, should not have been brought before the Security Council, he said.

Meanwhile Southern Yemeni forces have recaptured a village on the main road to Aden seized by Northern troops earlier this week, witnesses said today.

Piles of bodies lay buried under thin layers of earth in Saba, the witnesses said.

Southern troops patrolled Saba village and shell-ravaged surroundings 18 kilometres (12 miles) north of Aden after taking control in what appeared to have been fierce fighting.

It was not immediately clear when the southerners had moved in and the atmosphere was tense, the witnesses said. Sporadic Northern tank-cannon fire landed nearby.

A small Northern advance party entered the village two days ago after slipping behind Southern defence lines about 35 km (25 miles) north of the port city.

UNITA attacks Angolan city: 8 killed

LUANDA, June 5: UNITA rebels attacked the northern Angolan city of Malange on Saturday and engaged defending government forces in fierce fighting, state media and independent sources said, reports Reuter.

"UNITA... attacked and shelled Malange this morning", state television said. State radio said eight people had been killed.

A relief agency source in Luanda said UNITA fighters attacked before dawn and moved into outlying suburbs, but were pushed back by government troops.

State radio said fighting continued during the day but added that markets in the town were open with people buying food.

The source said late on Saturday morning that government aircraft were bombing the central UNITA-held city of Huambo.

"They are bombing now, as we speak."

Angolan government radio said in a despatch monitored by the BBC that UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) suffered heavy casualties.

"UNITA left several dead bodies behind as others fled in disarray," the report said.

Foreign aid workers were evacuated from the central government-held town of Cuito,

Launching of 'Prithvi' a new phase in arms race: Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, June 5: Pakistan today condemned India's test-firing of an indigenous short-range missile, accusing New Delhi of escalating the arms race in South Asia, reports AFP.

"By test firing the missile, India has brought all major Pakistani cities under its range," a foreign office spokesman was quoted as saying in *The News*, a major Pakistani daily.

"It is a new phase in the arms race in South Asia... It will now unleash a missile race in the region," he added.

The Defence Ministry in New Delhi revealed Saturday that India's armed forces had carried the first user-trial of the Prithvi missile near the east-coast state of Orissa.

The test, in defiance of US pressure on India, followed repeated Pakistani demands for India to scrap its missile programme.

The Pakistani Foreign Office spokesman told *The News* that an Indian deployment of the new missiles would "shorten the warning time of any surprise attack against Pakistan down to a few minutes".

India and Pakistan have fought three wars since their independence in 1947. Two involved control of the frontier region of Kashmir, which remains a flashpoint between the two nations.

The surface-to-surface Prithvi missile has a range of 250 kilometers (156 miles). It is capable of carrying a payload of one tonne, including chemical warheads.

In talks with US leaders last week, Pakistani President Farooq Ahmed Leghari spoke of the "dangers" of a South Asian missile race, saying deployment of such weapons would pose a "threat to a number of countries" in the region.

Another report says: India has released five Pakistani fishing launches along with 83 crew members seized about 10 months ago, an official said here today.

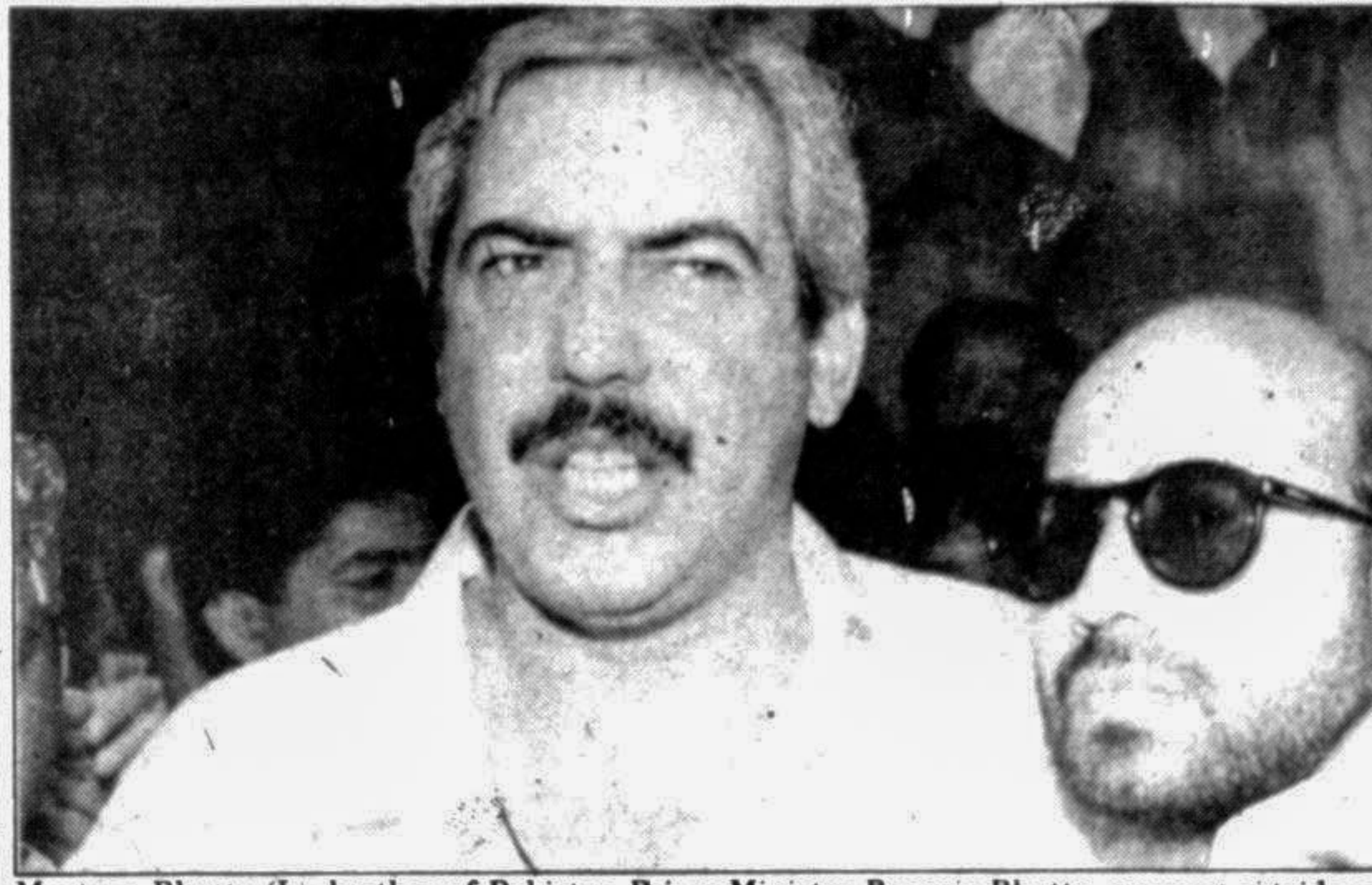
They reached here on Thursday after their release by Indian authorities on May 30, official news agency APP reported.

Haji Wali Mohamed, manager of Fishermen Cooperative Society said the condition of both the boats and crew members were good.

He said that in lieu of their release Pakistani authorities had also released 13 Indian fishing launches along with 83 crew members.

He said that India had also released 27 crew members of two other Pakistani launches, but they were stuck up as their boats engines were inoperative.

He appealed to the Indian coastal authorities to handover the crew members along with their launches to Pakistani maritime security agents to bring them back to Karachi.



Murtaza Bhutto (L), brother of Pakistan Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, appears outside a Karachi anti-terrorist court yesterday. Murtaza, who was held on charges of anti-state activities, was granted bail. He was arrested on November 4, soon after his return from 16 years of self-imposed exile, for allegedly plotting acts of sabotage. — AFP photo

Two top Kashmiri militant leaders call off fast

SRINAGAR, India, June 5: Two Kashmiri militant leaders called off a fast they had started to demand the merger of rival guerrilla groups, following assurances by separatist politicians they would work for it, their spokesman said today, reports Reuter.

He said Yasin Malik, president of the separatist Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) and Bashir Ahmed Butt, the group's general secretary, were given a glass of orange juice by a leader of Kashmir's Hurriyat (freedom) Party on Saturday, hours after they began their protest.

Hurriyat, in a message conveyed by senior party leader Maulvi Abbas Ansari as he offered the orange juice, assured Malik that the party would try to patch up differences among the various guerrilla groups and bring all militants together.

Artillery battles near Kabul

PESHAWAR, Pakistan, June 5: Artillery battles raged on Saturday in a strategic Afghan valley near Kabul where forces led by Afghan Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar launched an assault on positions held by President Burhanuddin Rabbani, reports Reuter.

Rabbani's jets launched bombing raids on positions held by Hekmatyar's Hezb-I-Islami party in the south of the Tagab valley, 64 (40 miles) northeast of the Afghan capital. Afghan party officials of both sides said in the neighbouring Pakistani city of Peshawar.

The latest battle for possession of Tagab erupted on Thursday with an artillery offensive, led by tanks and heavy machine guns, by Hezb-I-Islami fighters northward up the valley, much of it held by Rabbani's forces.

Rabbani's forces retaliated with bombing raids, Hezb-I-Islami officials said.

Neither side was able to give figures for casualties.

Hekmatyar, battling for months to try to topple his arch-rival the President, last clashed with Rabbani's forces in the Tagab valley — famed for its pomegranate orchards — in four weeks of fierce battles last December.

"We want to advance to capture Tagab so that we can fire on Baghrum air base," one Hezb official said in Peshawar.

Iran, Syria ask Hezbollahmen to stop firing missiles at Israel

BEIRUT, June 5: Iran and Syria are seeking to prevent a full-blown war between Israel and Shiite Muslim guerrillas in south Lebanon after the deadly Israeli air raid in a year, sources said Sunday, reports AP.

Official Lebanese sources said Syria, Lebanon's main power-broker, and Iran, the patron of Shiite fundamentalists in Lebanon, advised Hezbollah militants to stop firing missiles at Israel.

The sources said they had no word on a response from Hezbollah, or Party of God. But they noted there had been no missile strikes on northern Israel since Friday morning.

Up to 50 people, most of them young Shiite guerrilla trainees, were killed Thursday in the Israeli air assault on a Hezbollah training-base near Lebanon's border with Syria.

The death toll from the air strike was the highest from a single air raid since Israel's weeklong air, sea and artillery blitz last July in which 147 people were killed and 500 wounded.

That onslaught was halted by a US-brokered truce that included an agreement that Hezbollah would refrain from firing rockets on Israel's northern flank.

Hezbollah's attacks Thursday and Friday caused no casualties or serious damage in Israel or in the self-styled "security zone" in south Lebanon.

But Israeli government and military leaders branded the attacks a violation of the US-sponsored understanding and threatened severe reprisals if the missile attacks continued. Israel rushed tank and artillery reinforcements to the border region.

Since then, there have been minor skirmishes between Hezbollah and Israel's South Lebanon Army-surrogate militia in which three guerrillas were killed.

Syria has 40,000 troops deployed in Lebanon, ostensibly as peacekeepers to prevent a resumption of Lebanon's 15-year civil war, which ended in 1990.

Assad's government is Iran's main Arab ally, even though Tehran bitterly opposes the US-sponsored peace process.

Syria allows the Islamic guerrillas to operate in areas under its control in east Lebanon as a means of putting pressure on the Arab-Israeli peace talks.

In the wake of the latest missile strikes, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin appealed to the United States to pressure Syria to curb Hezbollah.

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Off the Record

Hot dogs and leukemia—the fatal connection

WASHINGTON: Preliminary studies by university of southern California researchers have linked hot dogs to the increased risk of childhood leukemia, reports Xinhua.

The three studies involving a total of 621 cancer victims indicate that children who eat more than 12 hot dogs per month have nine times the normal risk of developing leukemia.

In addition, the studies also suggest that children born to mothers who eat at least one hot dog per week during pregnancy have double the normal risk of developing brain tumours.

The findings are presented in a cancer research journal, cancer causes and control, published Sunday by the Harvard University School of Public Health.

The trigger for the cancers, the researchers say, might be the nutrients used to preserve processed meats. The chemicals are converted in the body to highly carcinogenic nitrosamines.

The 'darling' of Darjeeling

DARJEELING, West Bengal: Young, beautiful, charming and fascinating, the popularly called "toy train" — the darling of tourists — is seen chugging up and down the Darjeeling hills, nestled in the foothills of mighty Himalayan ranges, stopping the heartbeat of many a tourist, reports PTL.

One of the most valuable and enviable asset of the Northeast Frontier (NF) railway, the "toy train" is the cynosure of all eyes and retain its original glory and grand splendour, even after more than 100 years of its existence, says the NF railway general manager, A N Sinha.

Even today, the Darjeeling Himalayan railway with its centuries old steam locomotives, running on the two feet gauge line, still going strong and popular among tourists, serve more as a tourist attraction rather than catering to the transportation needs of the people of Darjeeling, Sinha told journalists recently.

There is a proposal to reduce the time taken by toy trains covering a distance of 88 km between the new Jalpaiguri railway station and the Darjeeling railway station (situated at an altitude of 2043.60 metres above sea level), from eight hours and 30 minutes to about five hours, he said.

5000-yr-old idol of Durga unearthed

KATHMANDU: Workers in Nepal found an ancient Hindu statue and stone inscriptions believed to be more than 5,000 years old, on the site of a temple, the RSS news agency reported Sunday, says AFP.

The idol of the Goddess of power, Durga, and the stone tablets came to light on the site of temple southwest of here while renovation work was being carried out on another temple on the site.

Iraq orders amputation of hand for robbery

NICOSIA, Cyprus, June 5: Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, who last week named himself prime minister to combat crime and economic problems, ordered that robbers and car thieves be punished by amputating a hand in accordance with Islamic law, reports AP.

Iraq, while predominantly Muslim, is a secular state. But Saddam since last year has been waging a spiritual and religious campaign that has included making teaching of the Koran compulsory for schoolchildren. The punishments Saddam ordered Saturday are employed by Sharia, or Islamic law.

People convicted of the offences would have a hand amputated at the wrist, according to a decree signed by Saddam and broadcast on Iraqi radio, Iraq's governing Iraqi revolutionary Command Council.

Should the thief be again convicted of the same crime, the left foot will be amputated at the ankle, according to the broadcast monitored by the British Broadcasting Corp.

Offenders will be executed if found to have carried a weapon during the crime or if someone was killed during the robbery or car theft, according to the broadcast.

Amputations will not be carried out if the value of the stolen property is less than 5,000 dinars (16,000 dollars at the official rate or 11.90 dollars on the widely-used black market), if the robbery takes place between a husband and wife or close relatives, or if the offender is a minor, it added.

Crime and official corruption have soared as Iraq's economy has crumbled under the weight of UN sanctions imposed after Saddam invaded neighbouring Kuwait in 1990.

Last year, 36,000 cars were stolen and few recovered, according to newspaper accounts.

The sanctions ban most trade with Iraq, depriving it of much-needed oil revenue.

Baghdad contends the sanctions, which have impoverished the nation of 18 million people, are responsible for the deaths through hardship of more than 400,000 people, mostly children and the elderly.

Since reclaiming the post of prime minister May 29, Saddam has made several moves meant to rein in Iraq's problems, including harsh warnings to his government against sloth.

On Saturday, he empowered Baath Party officials to close shops and arrest shopkeepers who raise prices above those set by the government.

Celebrities, veterans remember where they were on D-Day

ABOARD THE QE2, June 5: What were you doing on D-Day? Aboard the great liner bound for Normandy with nearly 1,000 US and Canadian veterans, some old friends from English towns that hosted them and assorted media and show biz celebrities, the question rang out more often than bells chiming the ship's watches, reports AP.

And with Spitfires, Hurricanes and P-47s lumbering in a nostalgic salute through the gloom of rain clouds over the Channel off Southampton, the answers — sad and funny and sometimes shockingly stark — echoed the unforgettable excitement of that longest remembered day.

Bob Hope, between rehearsals for the big D-Day anniversary show to be performed on deck under the QE2's funnel, recalled that 50 years ago he was broadcasting live the last Peppercorn radio show of the season from California's Van Nuys Air Force Base before an audience of P-38 pilots, who would soon be joining some of the veterans aboard as replacements for buddies shot down in flames.

The script was loaded with jokes about Shicklgrubber, Army food, Air Corps brass and the shortage of girls. An announcer kept interrupting with bulletins about the Normandy invasion and then came Gen Dwight Eisenhower's historic D-Day message.



The Allied staff: Front row (L-R): Tedder, Eisenhower, Montgomery. Back row (L-R): Bradley, Ramsey, Leigh Mallory and Bedell-Smith.

Dame Vera Lynn, the "sweetheart of the forces," whom blimpish BBC brass once tried to silence because they thought her sentimental songs of loneliness like "Bluebirds Over the White Cliffs of Dover" might lower the morale of fighting men, knew "the invasion was on."

She was on the last leg home from entertaining British troops in the Far East and India when her seaplane out of Gibraltar skirted the edge of the great invasion armada stretching across the Channel. She whispered a prayer for "her boys," the RAF crews who

still stand at attention when she promises "We'll Meet Again."

Walter Cronkite was a young wire service reporter who, late on the eve of D-Day, had resigned himself to spending another day in a Fleet Street office "writing the main roundup story." Then Capt. Hal Leyshon, an Air Corps press officer, and an occasional carousing buddy, came knocking at the door of his London digs.

off they went in the middle of the night to Molesworth air base. The mission was to go in at low level on a B-17 Flying Fortress and bomb behind the Normandy beaches.

"How could I resist? Why, he even promised if I got back at all I'd be in the office before the official D-Day announcement was made," Cronkite recalled over a cup of coffee.

Capt Robin Woodall, master of the QE2, was a 10-year-old schoolboy in the blitz-battered north of London on his way to school when he saw the planes go over with the white invasion stripes painted on their underwings, some pulling gliders. "I was a great plane spot-

ter as were all kids then, but I didn't know it was D-Day," he recalled in his sea cabin just prior to setting off from Southampton.

Andy Rooney was a correspondent for the US Army newspaper Stars and Stripes aboard a coastal steamer that left Bristol several days before the invasion. "We knew something was going on because of all the ships out there, but didn't know it was D-Day," the veteran CBS correspondent recalled over breakfast in the QE2's lido lounge. On D-Day plus four, Sgt Rooney climbed down a cargo net into a landing craft and upon disembarking "immediately headed for

Cherbourg, because that's where the story was by then." He remembers that his newspaper on June 6 headlined the liberation of Rome.

Irving Ostov, from Daytona Beach, also flew D-Day missions in Leaky Lane, his P-47. "On the first mission we were supposed to protect the Navy ships blasting away at the beaches, but they didn't seem to like that idea and started firing at us. So we got the hell out of there quick."

John Ambrose, from Braintree, Essex, England, came on board the liner at Southampton with a British group called BUTNA: "Buddies of The Ninth Airforce."



The Canadian 9th Infantry Brigade landing at Juno Beach in Normandy June 6, 1944.

Libya, Chad sign friendship treaty

TRIPOLI, June 5: Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi and his Chadian counterpart Idriss Deby signed a "historic" friendship treaty after solving a bitter border dispute, the Libyan news agency Jana said today, reports AFP.

The two leaders also exchanged their countries highest decorations during the signing ceremony late Saturday which will lead to "economic and social cooperation between two fraternal peoples."

Jana added that Libya and Chad were "tied by blood, history and destiny."

The ceremony came after Libya agreed to apply the verdict of the International Court of Justice which awarded Chad the Aouzou Desert border strip running between the two countries.

Libya had occupied the mineral-rich strip since 1973 but handed it back to Chadian control on May 30.

Deby and a large Chadian delegation arrived in Tripoli Friday for a 8-hour visit and were due to leave this morning.

Gaddafi said the visit showed "support for Libya."

Libya has been under UN sanctions since April 1992 in connection with the bombing of the Pan-Am airliner over Lockerbie, Scotland, in December 1988.