

## Killing of Hindu leader triggers riots in Kashmir

JAMMU, June 7: Hindu nationalists attacked government buildings and set fire to a Muslim's house in a town in Jammu-Kashmir state on Tuesday after militants assassinated the second Hindu politician there in one week, reports AP.

Police have blamed both shootings on Muslim militants fighting for independence in Jammu-Kashmir, the only state in India with a Muslim majority, but no one has claimed responsibility.

Hours after the early-morning killing of Ruchir Kumar, a local right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party politician in Baderwah town, members of the party stoned and ransacked government buildings and set fire to at least one home owned by a Muslim.

Government officials imposed a curfew hours after Tuesday's assassination, but when the riots broke out they also deployed troops to help local police control the rioters.

No injuries were immediately reported in the street clashes. Ever since Muslim militants began fighting for independence in Jammu-Kashmir four years ago, most Muslims have remained in Kashmir Valley and most Hindus in Jammu, the state's winter capital. Baderwah is 80 kilometers (50 miles) northwest of Jammu.

One week ago, militants shot and killed Swami Raj Katal, a Bharatiya Janata Party member, as he returned home from work. On Tuesday, Kumar was shot as he left his home early in the morning.

## S African govt announces plans for amnesty

CAPE TOWN, June 7: President Nelson Mandela's new government announced plans Tuesday to grant amnesty for political crimes, but only with a full confession, reports AP.

The proposals would fulfill a campaign promise by Mandela to confront murder, torture, terrorist bombings and other crimes from the apartheid era in a bid for racial reconciliation.

Justice Minister Dullah Omar told reporters the purpose was to make a "clean break" with the past and create "a culture of human rights."

He refused to discuss specific cases but said the cut off date for political crimes eligible for amnesty would be Dec. 6, 1993.

That means the killers of top African National Congress and Communist Party leader

Chris Hani and American scholar Amy Biehl could be eligible, while white extremists accused of bombings that killed 21 people this year in a bid to derail April's all-race election, the nation's first, would be ineligible.

But Omar said Mandela, as president, retains the power to deal with individual cases as he sees fit. That would permit him to grant amnesty to the white extremists, as demanded by pro-apartheid whites negotiating with the government on creating a white-dominated territory.

Mandela's ANC won the April vote, making him the nation's first black president. He repeatedly has said an amnesty for political crimes would promote reconciliation in the racially divided country, but also had demanded full disclosure of such crimes.

# Israel threatens to close PLO offices in Jerusalem

JERUSALEM, June 7: Foreign Minister Shimon Peres warned today that the offices which operate as an effective PLO headquarters in Jerusalem will be closed if the Palestinians try to run autonomy from there, reports AFP.

"If the Palestinians manage autonomy from Orient House, we will shut it," Peres said. He went on the attack a day after he was forced to disclose a written pledge to PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat to maintain the status quo in the holy city.

Peres claimed today that the letter gave "no commitment" to keep Orient House or other institutions open.

However, the October 11 letter states "The Palestinian institutions of east Jerusalem are of great importance and will be preserved."

It also pledges "not to ham-

per their activity.... this important mission is to be encouraged."

Former Palestinian spokeswoman Hannan Ashrawi criticized the government saying

## Palestinian TV goes on air

JERICHO, West Bank, June 7: Palestinian TV went on the air for the first time on Monday, broadcasting a test card from a converted hotel in the self-rule enclave of Jericho, reports AFP.

The Palestinian Radio and Television Broadcasting Corporation's circular logo, bearing the letters PBC in English, followed by the name in Arabic and the Palestinian flag on the side, appeared on television screens in Jericho.

The test card was to be beamed for 24 hours, officials said. After the launch last

"Israeli officials persist in a policy of undermining Palestinian presence and rights in Jerusalem."

The government has previously stated that Palestinian

month of Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank town of Jericho and the Gaza Strip, the PLO began preparing to establish their own broadcasting centre.

Monday's transmission reached Jericho only, but the television is expected to be relayed to the rest of the West Bank and Gaza in time for the visit of PLO chief Yasser Arafat, expected later this month.

The test card was beamed from a hotel which has been turned into a press centre for Arafat's trip.

institutions which were in Jerusalem before the signing of the autonomy agreement last September can remain.

Orient House, the official headquarters of the Palestinian delegation to the Middle East peace talks, falls in that category.

Peres stressed that the new Palestinian self-rule authority would have to set up all its bodies in the autonomous areas of Jericho and the Gaza Strip.

"Jerusalem is the capital of Israel. It will not be cut in two. It will remain united under Israeli sovereignty."

"Jerusalem is politically closed but religiously open."

He has tried to play down the importance of the letter saying it had "been blown out of proportion." He previously denied its existence, as did Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

## Hezbollahmen rocket Israeli base in Lebanon

MARJAYOUN, Lebanon, June 7: Guerrillas fired Katyusha rockets into Israel's occupation zone in south Lebanon and attacked its militia allies with mortar bombs today, security sources said, reports Reuter.

They said at least 10 Katyushas slammed around the town of Marjayoun, where the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia keeps its headquarters. Guerrillas also lobbed mortar bombs at an SLA post just inside the zone's middle sector.

No casualties were reported in either attack.

Israeli and SLA artillery gunners retaliated by firing heavy shells onto guerrilla-held hills to the north.

The pro-Iranian Hezbollah said its fighters clashed with a joint Israeli and SLA patrol on the edge of the eastern sector of the strip.

## Lankan troops kill 40 Tigers

COLOMBO, June 7: Government troops killed about 40 Tamil guerrillas in two separate attacks in northern Sri Lanka, hours after a powerful rebel mine rocked a key naval base in the region, the military claimed today, reports AFP.

Troops Monday attacked dozens of Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) guerrillas at Madagal in the northern Jaffna peninsula "inflicting heavy casualties," a military spokesman said.

"Troops have killed about 20 to 30 Tigers ... more could have died," the spokesman said. No government soldiers were hurt.

Security forces then engaged a group of Tiger guerrillas in the Madagal area, killing another 10 militants, the spokesman said.

## Tidal waves death toll rises to 211 in Indonesia

JAKARTA, June 7: The death toll from tidal waves that engulfed the southern coast of East Java following an earthquake Friday rose to 211, it was announced today, reports AFP.

"Latest reports ... show there were 211 deaths with 19 people still unaccounted for," the East Java spokesman's office said by telephone.

Friday's pre-dawn earthquake, measuring 5.9 on the open-ended Richter scale, spawned waves of up to six metres (19.08 feet) that swept 500 metres inshore.

Relief and search efforts continued in Banyuwangi, the hardest hit district where most victims were found, the office said.

Aftershocks continued Tuesday, but were becoming weaker, the meteorological and geophysics office in Jakarta said.

## Off the Record

### Jackpot indeed!

BUENOS AIRES: An Argentine civil servant hit a 14 million dollars jackpot with a 3 dollars bet placed by his teenage son, reports Reuter.

Alberto Renan, 53, told reporters Monday that he had won a government-run Lotto game with six numbers picked by his 14-year-old son.

Renan, who said he had never played the Lotto before, added that he was quitting his dollar 400-a-month job at the Economy Ministry of the province of Buenos Aires.

A spokesman for the national lotteries, an casinos administration said that Renan's minimal bet had beaten elaborate "combined bets" worth up to 400,000 dollars.

## Model sues game show host for sexual harassment

LOS ANGELES: A former TV game show model is suing host Bob Barker, alleging he forced her to have sex while she worked on the show, reports AP.

Dian Parkinson's lawsuit, filed Monday in Superior Court, accuses the 70-year-old Barker of sexual harassment and seeks unspecified damages.

Barker had no immediate comment, but at a news conference on May 26, he denied he threatened to fire the former Playboy magazine model if she didn't have sex with him.

Barker, a widower since 1981, said that he was involved with Parkinson from 1989 to 1991 and that she had initiated the "little hanky-panky." He said he was going public because she had threatened to sue unless she got 8-million dollars.

In her lawsuit, she said Barker required her to have oral sex with him in his dressing room about twice a week for 3 1/2 years, first by using force and later by other means of coercion.

Parkinson also said she had intercourse with Barker six or eight times out of fear that she would be fired if she refused.

Parkinson, who worked for the show for 18 years, quit in 1993.

The producer of "The Price Is Right," Jonathan Goodson, has said Parkinson quit because of tension between herself and other models and because she was suffering from a bleeding ulcer.

Parkinson said that her ulcer was due in part to Barker's alleged sexual demands and that she has received 1,000 dollar a week to keep quiet. Goodson said the money actually was severance pay.

## Binge drinking epidemic

WASHINGTON: America's college campuses are inundated with an epidemic of binge drinking, fuelled in part by growing numbers of women just as eager as men to get drunk, a private commission said Tuesday, reports AP.

The panel urged colleges to stop accepting binge drinking as "a harmless rite of passage" and attack it as a problem causing most of the violent crime on campuses and many academic woes as well.

The problem is no longer restricted to Saturday nights, said the Reverend Edward A. Malloy, president of the University of Notre Dame and chairman of the Commission on Substance Abuse at Colleges and Universities.

Many students are "drinking every day or three or four times a week instead of just on the weekends," said Malloy.

He said the problem is acute in fraternities and sororities, where students down three times as much beer and booze as their peers.

The panel cited this "startling" statistic: the percentage of college women who drink to get drunk has more than tripled in the past 15 years, from 10 per cent to 35 per cent.

## Teen sex not as widespread as adults think

NEW YORK: American boys and girls are staying virgins longer than most adults think, according to a new report, says AP.

The Alan Guttmacher Institute said Monday that 62 per cent of adults assume the average teen has sex before turning 16. But 70 per cent of all boys and girls are still virgins when they reach 16, and 18 per cent abstain until at least their 20th birthday, the institute said.

Among girls who do have sex before age 15, 60 per cent said they were raped or coerced in some unspecified manner, the institute said, quoting a 1987 study.

Teen sex "is not as widespread, and does not begin as early, as most adults believe," the report said.

The institute, which studies reproductive issues and is affiliated with Planned Parenthood, based its report on research it primarily conducted in the 1990s and the research of others.

## Japan will support UNSC resolution against DPRK

TOKYO, JUNE 7: Japan will support a UN Security Council resolution against North Korea over its nuclear programme under a four-point policy decided at a ministerial meeting Monday, news reports said, says AFP.

Prime Minister Tsutomu Hata and two other key ministers agreed at an emergency meeting to take "maximum steps within constitutional limits" if the UN Security Council adopted a resolution against North Korea, Jiji Press and Kyodo News Service quoted official sources as saying.

Hata agreed with Foreign Minister Joji Kakizawa and Chief Cabinet Secretary Hiroshi Kumagai that Japan should first urge North Korea to fully cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in inspecting its

nuclear facilities.

The three agreed that Japan should study necessary measures if the UN Security Council adopted a resolution on economic sanctions against the Communist country.

They also agreed that Japan should strengthen diplomatic efforts, including approaches to China, for a peaceful solution to the North Korean nuclear issue, government sources were quoted as saying.

Meanwhile, Reuter adds, Kakizawa said Tuesday he may visit Beijing soon for talks with Chinese leaders over the crisis brought on by North Korea's refusal to allow full nuclear inspections.

"It is important to coordinate with China on this issue," Kakizawa told a news conference. "We must send a clear message to North Korea."

## Kuwait commutes death sentences of 10 Palestinians

KUWAIT CITY, June 7: A Kuwaiti Appeals Court on Monday commuted the death sentences of 10 Palestinians convicted of collaborating with the Iraqis during the 1990-1991 occupation, reports AFP.

Court sources said one of the 10, Imadeddin Adib, was to serve life in jail and the other nine had their sentences reduced to 10 years' imprisonment.

The Palestinians, all Jordanian passport holders, were sentenced to death in June 1993 for collaborating with the occupation forces and membership of the Palestine Liberation Front, a group based in Baghdad.

Several international Human Rights groups appealed against the sentence of Kuwait's State Security Court.

## BRIEFLY

### Quake kills 2 in Colombia:

Strong earthquake shock central and southwestern Colombia Monday, killing at least two people, injuring at least 30 others and leaving dozens more homeless, Reuter reports from Bogota.

The government's geological institute in Geolinas said the quake registered 6.0 on the Richter scale and was centred in the small town of Toribio in the southwestern province of Cauca, more than 125 miles (200 km) southwest of Bogota.

### Pakistan appoints 2 women judges:

For the first time in the history of Pakistan, two women judges, Ms Majida Rizvi and Ms Khalida Rashid, have been appointed judges of the Sindh and Peshawar High Courts respectively.

### 75 MIA rebels held in Algeria:

Algerian security forces said on Monday they had arrested 75 suspected members of an underground armed fundamentalist group, the Armed Islamic Movement (MIA). Reuter reports from Tunis.

The 75 men are suspected of having shot dead 27 members of the security forces in various attacks carried out since March 1993 in Algiers, the official Algerian news agency APS said. The agency was reporting an official security statement.

APS, monitored in Tunis, said some of those arrested had smuggled arms from abroad with the help of two unnamed foreign nationals.

### 3 hurt in Iranian market blast:

A bomb blast in a market in the southeastern Iranian town of Zahedan injured three people and shattered nearby windows on Monday Iran's official IRNA news agency said, Reuter reports from Nicosia.

TRNA said a relatively powerful sound bomb went off in the town's central market and local officials were investigating.

In March two bombs went off in Zahedan, near the Pakistani border, and an Iranian newspaper said they were set off by a Pakistan based Sunni Muslim militant group.

### Fire kills 5 in California:

Four young brothers and an uncle baby-sitting them were killed in a blaze that the boys may have started while playing with fire in a bedroom closet, AP reports from Oceanside, California.

Their father, Marine Lance Corporal Jesse Arriola, 23, had to be restrained by police when he and his wife, Angela, returned to the apartment complex from an early morning trip to Camp Pendleton on Monday.

The fire began shortly after 8 a.m. and investigators suspect the children started it, said fire spokesman Ted Wackerman.

Killed were Joshua, 4, Jesse, 3, Joseph, 2, Jeremiah, 6 months, and their uncle, Joseph Arriola, 21.

## Panama pardons Noriega's officials

PANAMA CITY, June 6: Panamanian President Guillermo Endara pardoned hundreds of former dictator Manuel Noriega's officials Monday, including the country's vice president-elect and a former president, reports AFP.

Endara won a 1989 presidential election in Panama, but was not able to take office until after Noriega was removed from power by a US invasion in December of that year.

Endara's pardon by decree means that vice president-elect Tomas Gabriel Altamirano will no longer face charges arising from the alleged persecution of Maylin Correa, a journalist who regularly attacked Noriega's government.

Altamirano Duque was managing editor of La Estrella de Panama and vice president of the Democratic Revolutionary Party.

# 'Sonia still an important player in Indian politics'

NEW DELHI, June 7: The Italian-born widow of former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi shuns politics and the media, but she is probably the country's most high profile woman today, reports IPS.

Indeed, every visiting head of state or foreign dignitary makes time to call on Sonia Gandhi at her well fortified home in Delhi.

The importance of being Sonia Gandhi was only reinforced when she was included in the official Indian delegation to facilitate the post apartheid government in South Africa.

Ostensibly, Sonia was in Pretoria in her capacity as chairperson of the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation (RGF) named after her husband, who was a staunch supporter of Nelson Mandela and his struggle against white minority rule.

Days earlier, newspapers carried a photo of Sonia with a group of dignitaries from around the world in Geneva to begin preparations for the 50th anniversary celebrations of the United Nations.

And, in keeping with her consistently high profile, she was feted a few months ago by Chinese Prime Minister Li Peng in Beijing, where she had gone as a guest of the Chinese people's Institute of Foreign Affairs.

Political analysts say these events are hardly surprising given the propensity of the Chinese and the fledgling South African government to recognise Sonia's growing stature in Indian politics and invest in potentially powerful ally.

For while she keeps her won counsel and ruling Con-

gress Party MPs guessing about her political intentions few doubt Sonia's ability to alter the course of Indian politics as custodian of the political legacy of the Nehru/Gandhi dynasty that ruled India for 40 years.

Still, close friends, mostly school and airline contemporaries of her husband, maintain that the 45-year-old attractive widow from Turin will continue to avoid politics (as she has the media) as it led to the killing of her husband in May 1991 and his mother, Indira Gandhi, in 1984.

Sonia's friends claim she has chosen reclusivity in an attempt to preserve her 24-year-old son, Rahul, and 23-year-old daughter, Priyanka, from India's vendetta-ridden politics.

Friends add that she divides her time between producing books on her husband and

helping the poor through the foundation.

But the 'Sonia factor' continues to surface in the country's politics and in the media.

It began immediately after Rajiv's death when loyalists appointed his widow party president and again when the newly elected Congress government allocated one billion rupees (US dollar 3.6 million) to her foundation.

Sonia politely declined to take up both offers, but she continues to command attention in influential political and public circles.

She meets ministers and MPs and holds durbars or private audiences with Congress workers. Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao, who was her husband's foreign minister, is a frequent visitor to her home, invariable before a Cabinet

reshuffle.

Congress Party MPs say Satish Sharma, her husband's closest and loyal family friend, was made Petroleum Minister after her husband in the last major Cabinet reshuffle, some two years ago.

Party insiders also say the foundation is the ideal engine for young Priyanka Gandhi's entry into politics. Recently graduated from a New Delhi college and presently teaching in a nursery, she reportedly harbours political ambitions, unlike her older brother.

The foundation's aim of uplifting the poor, promoting literacy and establishing a scientific think tank can easily be translated into political mileage for Priyanka, says observers.



A South Yemeni gunner prepares yesterday in Bir Nasser, about 15 kms north of the southern capital of Aden, shells for his 150mm battery during short break in fighting on the northern front line. Northern Yemeni troops have advanced on Aden in a snap offensive, killing four people and injuring 40 others.

## Malaysia signs deal with Russia to purchase Mig-29s

KUALA LUMPUR, June 7: Malaysia broke with its tradition of buying weapons only from the West, agreeing Tuesday to pay 600 million dollars to Russia for 20 MIG-29 jet fighters, reports AP.

Russian officials at the signing ceremony said it was their first major weapons sale in Southeast Asia in 30 years, and they hope for more.

Victor I. Samoilov, head of the State Corporation for Export and Import of Armaments and Military Equipment, told reporters that Malaysia would pay the entire 600 million dollars in cash.

Russia then will distribute funds to various companies involved which will offset some of the cost by buying 95 million dollars worth of palm oil and 55 million dollars worth of other goods from Malaysia over five years.

Samoilov said 16 single-seat and two twin fighters, known to Western air forces by the code name Fulcrum, would be supplied to Malaysia's air force for defence purposes.

Two other MIG-29s would be sent to the Technical Services Centre for training.

Each aircraft was worth about 20 million dollars, he said.

Russia does not make MIG-29 simulators, and Malaysia was reported to be obtaining one from the Canadian fighter-simulator software company CAE Electronics.

The package includes organising the TSC as a joint venture between the two countries for technical support for the MIG-29.

Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, who witnessed the signing, said the first aircraft would be delivered between next May and August.

Russian First Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Soskovets said in a speech: "Today's signing takes us to a new stage in our relationship.... There is great potential for cooperation in other areas also."

Other Russian officials said that since the failed Communist coup in Indonesia in 1965, Moscow had made no major military hardware sales in the region, but they were back again and hoped for increased sales in all fields.

Malaysia would be the only country in the region to fly the Russian planes. Its neighbours use mainly Western warplanes, most from the United States.

Kuala Lumpur coupled the announcement of the MIG-29

## Brazil buys missiles, launchers from Russia

BRASILIA, June 7: Brazil has bought ground-to-air missiles in its first arms purchase from Russia amid signs of increased military cooperation, an army spokesman said Monday, reports Reuter.

Russian and Brazilian army representatives signed a contract last week for the purchase of about 110 shoulder-held Igla missiles and launchers. The equipment is expected to be delivered by the end of 1994, the spokesman said.

"This is the first purchase of military equipment from Russia. It's the cheapest missile on the international market and its performance has already been proven," he said.

In another sign of cooperation between armed forces in Russia and Latin America's biggest country, Brazil and

purchase last year with a consolation prize for Washington: an order for eight F/A-18 fighters from McDonnell Douglas.

Anwar said training and other assistance in operating the MIGs would come from Russia with assistance from India, which has been flying the plane for many years.

Answering reporters' questions, Anwar aged that Pakistan might be anxious about Malaysia's military ties with India. He said Kuala Lumpur would explain to Pakistan that the deal would not harm relations between them.

The package signed Monday specified the transfer of technology from Russia over 10 years.

Russia agreed to establish military attaches in each other's capitals, the state news agency Agencia Brasil reported.

The accord was signed by Foreign Minister Celso Amorim and Vice Foreign Minister Gueorgui Mamedov in Belem, Brazil, Agencia Brasil said. They were attending the General Assembly of the Organisation of American states.

Mamedov said Russian relations with Latin America were in a new phase "without ideological content, based only on the principle of mutual advantage," the news agency reported.

The missile deal is part of a four-year 2 billion dollars trade accord signed last year. Brazil agreed to provide such products as coffee, sugar and soybeans in exchange for Russian goods, including arms



Sonia Gandhi