

Arafat will move to Jericho in 10 days

CAIRO, June 12: PLO leader Yasser Arafat will go to the Palestinian self-rule enclave of Jericho within the next 10 days now that international donors have released badly-needed funds, a PLO official



said today, reports Reuter.

"It is decided that chairman Arafat will move to Jericho within the next 10 days," Nabil Shaath, who holds the portfolio of international cooperation and planning in the new Palestinian authority, told reporters at Cairo airport.

Shaath, who arrived from

Paris where he took part in a meeting of international donors, said he would leave Cairo for the Gaza Strip on Tuesday to set up his new offices and residence.

There has been no official announcement for Arafat's departure from PLO's headquarters in Tunis but Arafat last week said he would go to Jericho only if international donors handed over money promised to help launch Palestinian self-rule.

The Palestinians won 42 million dollar in immediate aid from donors in Paris on Friday to pay their police force and start up self-government in Gaza and Jericho, with a pledge of more cash soon.

The World Bank said the Paris decision meant the new Palestinian national authority, which took over in May following Israel's withdrawal from Jericho and Gaza, was fully funded until the end of August.

PLO officials said Arafat had planned to go to Jericho earlier this month, but the trip was delayed because of lack of money.

BRIEFLY

Christopher to visit Israel: US Secretary of State Warren Christopher will visit Israel for two days from June 22 in a new bid to break the deadlock with Syria, the Jerusalem Post reported Sunday. AFP reports from Jerusalem.

However, a Foreign Ministry spokesman in Jerusalem said no date had been set for the trip.

The Post quoted an unnamed government official as confirming the dates but could not give details for the rest of Christopher's itinerary.

The secretary toured the region at the end of April and again in mid-May to try to narrow differences between Israel and Syria.

Mexican car bomb blast claims 2: A powerful car bomb exploded early Saturday outside a luxury hotel in this city in central Mexico, killing at least two people and injuring as many as five, authorities said. Reuter reports from Guadalajara.

Investigators were searching through the rubble for body parts after the bomb exploded in a car parked in a street next to the Camino Real hotel in the western part of the city.

Witnesses originally reported hearing two explosions but officials later said there was only one blast.

Hosokawa reelected JNP chief: Former Japanese Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa was elected again as the leader of the Japan New Party (JNP) at a convention here Saturday, politicians said. AFP reports from Tokyo.

JNP is one of the partners in the coalition cabinet of Prime Minister Tsutomu Hata.

Hosokawa resigned as prime minister in April after being grilled in parliament over a financial scandal.

Juvenile drug traffickers held: More than 100 children aged between seven and 15 have been arrested for drug trafficking in Hong Kong in the past 18 months. Xinhua learned yesterday from Hong Kong.

According to figures released to the Sunday Hong Kong Standard by the narcotics bureau, Hong Kong children have become a significant new tool in the dangerous world of drug trafficking.

Since January last year, 101 children, including 27 girls, have been arrested for drug trafficking, among which 70 per cent have been involved in trafficking heroin.

US actor Bill Marshall dies: American actor and producer G William (Bill) Marshall has died at the age of 71, according to an obituary run by the daily Le Figaro Saturday. AFP reports from Paris.

Marshall, who was married to actresses Michele Morgan, Micheline Presle, Ginger Rogers, and Corinne Aboynau, died Thursday.

Turkey closes border with Iraq to Kurds

SALAHUDDIN, Iraq, June 12: Turkey has started closing its border with Iraq to Turkish Kurds to prevent them from fleeing to Iraqi Kurdistan. UNHCR official said here Saturday.

People from Turkey have told us that the Turkish army has begun cordoning off the border region to stop a new exodus," Ayaman Ghrabieh, a Jordanian official of the High Commissioner of Refugees in Iraqi Kurdistan, told AFP.

Thousands of Turkish Kurds have fled fighting in southeast Turkey between government forces and the separatist Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) over the past months to settle in northern Iraq.

The UNHCR official did not confirm the report.

Turkish officials accused the PKK last month of masterminding the exodus of thousands of Kurdish civilians from Turkey to northern Iraq.

Govt forces recapture SPLA's HQ

KHARTOUM, June 12: Government forces recaptured Saturday the administrative capital of the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), military authorities said here, reports AFP.

The town of Kajo Kaji in the southern state of Eastern Equatoria was captured Saturday morning, the general command of the Sudanese armed forces said in a statement.

The town became the SPLA's administrative headquarters in 1992 after the fall of its one-time stronghold of Toreit, the statement said.

Kajo Kaji had been in the hands of the SPLA since 1989.

There was no immediate confirmation from rebel sources that the town had fallen.

International

DPRK ready to freeze N-plan in return for US recognition

LONDON, June 12: North Korean leader Kim Il-Sung has said he is prepared to freeze his country's nuclear programme in return for US diplomatic recognition and other concessions, a British news report said on Saturday.

The Independent said Kim laid out North Korea's terms, for settling the international row about its suspected nuclear weapons programme in a meeting last Thursday with a visiting US scholar, Selig Harrison.

The newspapers Beijing correspondent quoted Harrison as saying he had discussed the escalating dispute over nuclear inspection with North Korea's president for several hours at a residence outside Pyongyang.

Kim said North Korea would not build nuclear weapons if the United States granted his country's diplomatic recognition and lifted an economic embargo in place since the

newspaper said Harrison, an Asian affairs specialist, gave his account of the meeting in Beijing.

He described Kim as "forceful, sharp and alert" and said the North Korean leader did not seem intent on a nuclear confrontation, the report said.

Another report says: North Korea blamed the United States today for trying to

heighten the crisis over the inspection of Pyongyang's nuclear facilities with war talk.

The United States is now clamouring for a "military attack," and a "forestalling (pre-emptive) strike" upon the nuclear facilities of the DPRK, said today's Rodong Sinmun, organ of North Korea's ruling communists.

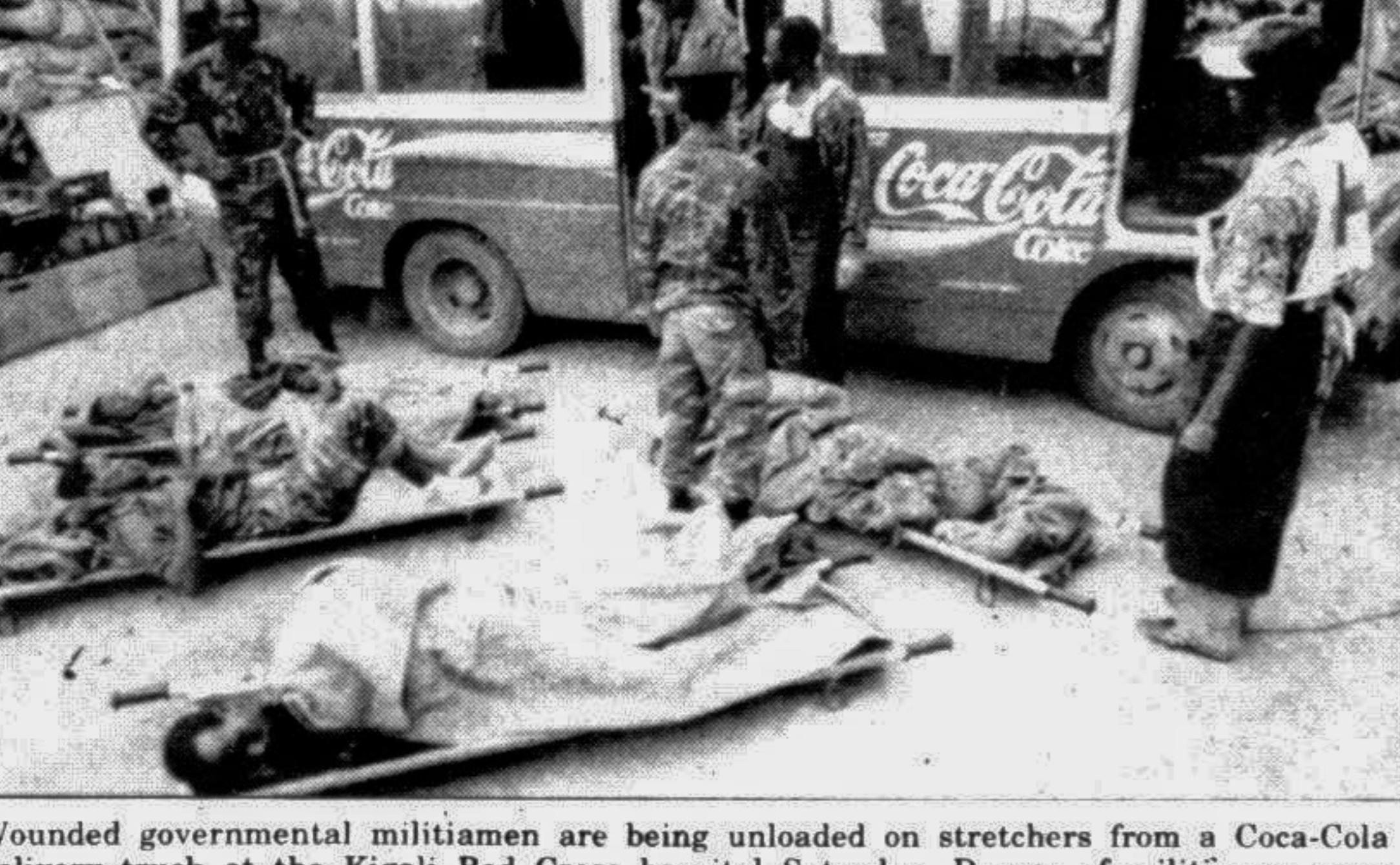
The anti-DPRK pressure campaign is being escalated by the United States and its followers ... in a bid to internationalise and politicise the nuclear issue of the DPRK", Rodong Sinmun said, according to a Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) dispatch monitored in Tokyo.

Rodong Sinmun said the North had done all it could to resolve the issue and would continue its "peaceful nuclear activities."

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), an arm of the United Nations, said it could not establish whether North Korea had diverted plutonium from a reactor for use in a secret nuclear weapons programme. The North denies such a programme.

The United States intends to seek UN sanctions in the coming weeks.

North Korea made new threats Saturday to retaliate for any punitive steps over its nuclear programme.



Wounded governmental militiamen are being unloaded on stretchers from a Coca-Cola delivery truck at the Kigali Red Cross hospital Saturday. Dozens of militiamen were killed or wounded by RPF rebel mortar attacks on Kamoni, between Gitarama and Kigali.

— AFP photo

OAU FMs condemn massacres in Rwanda

Fierce fighting in Kigali

KIGALI, June 12: Fierce fighting erupted early today in several parts of the Rwandan capital Kigali, a UN military spokesman said, reports AFP.

Rebels of the Tutsi-dominated Rwandan Patriotic Front pounded Nyamirambo in the southwest of the city, and the area held by the presidential guard in central Kigali, Major Jean-Guy Plante of the UN Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) said.

The RPF is present in many spots all round the city and is using its usual technique of harassing by bombing, surrounding and infiltrating, Plante said.

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Fighting was continuing at Gitarama, the strategic town 50 kilometres (30 miles) to the southwest of Kigali, where the mainly Hutu interim

Ministers, who began their final meeting at 1300 GMT, worked into the night to pass the resolutions dealing with a range of issues, from African conflicts in Rwanda, Liberia and Angola to members' dues.

The crisis in Rwanda has been a major issue during the week-long meeting of ministers laying the groundwork for the Tunis summit, which will bring together some 40 African leaders, including South African President Nelson Mandela.

Consultations with the warring sides in Rwanda have been held on the sidelines of the ministerial meeting.

OAU spokesman Ibrahim Dagash said the talks, which started Thursday, have produced "some progress."

Both Kigali and Andhra Pradesh have enacted laws recently to check the practice.

Usually families having devadasi tend to offer one of their girls for dedication for several reasons such as tradition, economic distress, the need of the family to redeem a pledge made to the gods.

But the dedication of the girl does not result in improving the economic lot of the family.

Both Kigali and Andhra Pradesh have enacted laws recently to check the practice.

Rocket attack on Kabul: 6 die

ISLAMABAD, June 12: At least six people were killed and 25 injured as the Afghan capital Kabul was attacked by rockets and mortar shells Saturday, Radio Kabul said, reports Xinhua.

The Fairview Sunset House, built by the British in the early part of the century as a retreat from the stifling summer heat of the Indian plains, is often the first stop for the victims of the "cats".

The elegant pinkish-orange building perched on a hillside with a stunning view of Srinagar's Dal lake and the snow-capped Himalayas is one of the most notorious of the so-called joint interrogation centres.

Troops have set up tents in the gardens of the heavily guarded prison known as "para two" to the local population. Windows have been blackened out of covered with gunny cloth.

They are gathered in one area and forced to file one-by-one in front of the masked informer, who peers out of the darkened windows of a military vehicle or through a slit in a sandbag bunker.

Suspects fingered by the informer are shoved to one side and carted off for interrogation while the others are allowed to return home once the net thrown around the neighbourhood has been removed.

An Indian paramilitary officer who requested anonymity said informers were needed to penetrate the shadowy world of the Kashmiri Muslim separatist gunmen whom the Indian authorities describe as "terrorists."

"We in the military are identified by our uniforms," he said. "But the terrorists do not have names nor faces, so we identify them with the help of locals."

The suspect's identity is established by very many people," the officer added. "And we cross-check to rule out any personal enmity or jealousy on

the part of the informer."

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It is in detention centers like Fairview, in a similarly incongruous settings, that some

The Indian government has

Off the Record

Sports day brings them together

LONDON: Britain's Prince Charles and his estranged wife Diana made a rare joint appearance on Saturday when they both attended the sports day at their sons' school, reports Reuter.



The couple, who formally separated 18 months ago, greeted each other with a peck on the cheek as they arrived for the annual event at the boarding school in Berkshire, west of London, where their sons William and Harry are both pupils.

Reporters later saw them leaving in separate cars.

The 45-year-old heir to the throne and his wife have seldom been seen in public together since their separation, but their occasional meetings have appeared amicable.

Both took part in this month's 50th anniversary commemorations of the D-Day landings in Nazi-occupied France, although on opposite sides of the English Channel.

Princess Diana, 32, accompanied her mother-in-law Queen Elizabeth in events on the British coast while her husband took part in ceremonies in France.

Lesbian couple sues magazine for exposing their affair

NEW YORK: Two lesbians are suing a magazine for 17 million dollars for publishing a photo they say revealed their relationship without permission, reports AP.

Valerie Merrivether and Rosetta Ford filed suit over a photograph in the June issue of Popular Photography showing them snuggling in a limousine in formal clothes en route to their wedding like "commitment ceremony."

The caption reads: "Lesbian couple: Light from the limo sunroof illuminates two women on the way to their commitment ceremony in a church in Greenwich Village."

Merrivether and Ford, both postal employees, said neither their families nor their co-workers had been aware of the relationship.

The photograph was shot by the limo driver, Kathy Shorr, in 1988.

Merrivether said she denied Shorr's request to allow the photo to be published, telling Shorr that she and Ford come from religious families who would be heartbroken about their relationship.

Catherine Flickinger, a lawyer for Popular Photography, said the magazine had not seen the lawsuit, and she had no comment.

Shorr, also named in the lawsuit, said, "I didn't do anything that was intended to hurt these women."

Phone sex line users blackmailed

PHILADELPHIA: An agency that collected bills for a telephone sex line extorted 2 million dollars from delinquent customers by threatening to tell their spouses or employers of the calls, prosecutors say, reports AP.

Bills collectors in some cases posed as law enforcement officers to coerce customers to pay an escalating series of inflated bills, authorities said in civil lawsuit filed Wednesday.

TMD Enterprises Inc. of Huntingdon Valley, also known as Standup Communications and Productions, and its owners, Barry Miller and Marc Teller, ran one of the country's largest wire and mail fraud schemes, Assistant US Attorney Catherine Votaw said.

Prosecutors estimate the company made at least 2 million dollars on the fraud since 1992.

Francis Recchutt, a lawyer representing Teller, Miller and their firm, said the lawsuit was the result of overzealous prosecutors trying to make a name for themselves.

"We've got law-abiding guys here. We're not talking about John Dillinger, we're not talking about Noriega. We're talking about guys who pay taxes," Recchutt said.

On Tuesday, US District Judge Clarence C. Newcomer froze the business' assets pending a June 17 hearing. Prosecutors are seeking to have the company reimburse the alleged victims around the country.

The company bought lists of unpaid credit card debts from the companies that provide "adult fantasy phone services" and used "abusive and unlawful practices" to pressure customers into paying, the lawsuit said.

KL defends purchase of Russian aircraft

KUALA LUMPUR, June 12: Malaysia today defended its purchase of 18 MIG fighters as an intelligent buy, dismissing claims that the deal was a "dumping of Russian arms", news reports here said, reports AFP.

"We made a thorough evaluation of the aircraft before finally deciding on the purchase," Defence Minister Najib Tun Razak was quoted saying by the New Sunday Times by Najib.

Razak political commentator Rustam Narzikulov said in Moscow's authoritative Sevoda newspaper Wednesday that the 550-million-dollar sale to Malaysia amounted to a dumping of Russian military technology on the world.

"What we will get will be new aircraft, and there is no question of dumping arms here to revive the so-called Russian defence industry," Najib said.