

Police storm 2 varsities in Seoul: 74 arrested

SEOUL, June 19: Police say they arrested 74 students in raids on college campuses Sunday in response to one of the most violent anti-government protests in recent years, reports AP.

The raids followed Prime Minister Lee Yung-dok's calls for stern punishment of those involved in a fierce campus battle that broke out Saturday and left about 200 police and students injured.

At dawn Sunday, about 1,600 police stormed Seoul's

Hanyang University and Hankyong University of Foreign Studies to arrest protest leaders.

The raids brought to 150 the total number of students arrested in the past two days for protests opposing government plans to open the domestic farm market to foreign products.

Police were posted across downtown Seoul. In bus terminals and train stations, officers were seen checking students for identification and searching their bags.

On Saturday, hundreds of militant students opposing foreign rice imports brandished metal pipes and threw fire bombs to repel riot police as they stormed Seoul's Hongik University. Police, volleys of tear gas, were trying to rescue 56 colleagues taken prisoner in an earlier fight with students.

Many of the protesters came to Seoul on a train they forcibly stopped when police tried to block their travel. Late Saturday night, about 1,000 police stormed two college campuses in Kwangju, 240 kilometers (150 miles) south of Seoul, confiscating steel pipes and fire bombs, news agency Yonhap reported.

Critics charge that Kim's government gave in to US pressure to open South Korea's rice and other agricultural markets in global trade negotiations last December.

Rice is a staple diet of Koreans.

Rwandan rebels reject French military intervention

KIGALI, June 19: Rwanda's rebels, rejecting French military intervention, said their forces could do the job of saving civilians from mass killings by conquering all corners of their nation by themselves.

"It is not for the French to intervene. It is for us to do ourselves," rebel Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) spokesman Major Wilson Rutayisire told Reuters on Saturday.

There is no country more unpopular with the rebels than France," a UN officer in the capital Kigali told Reuters. France has this week led international attempts to intervene and stop the killings that have claimed an estimated 500,000 lives.

France announced on Saturday it would send forces

to the Rwandan border ahead of an operation to halt massacres in the central African country.

A French government spokesman said the operation would only begin once approved by the United Nations. He did not specify which country the forces would go to but French media have spoken of Zaire or Uganda as possible

jump-off points. AFP reports from Kigali: Around 50 bodies were pulled out of the Sainte-Famille Church in Kigali, a refuge for hundreds of displaced Rwandans, UN sources said today, after another night of violent clashes between government and Tutsi rebel forces.

Most of the dead had been killed in rebel bombardments of the church overnight Friday, though other had died "after this attack, in unknown circumstances," Major Jean-Guy Plante of the UN Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) said as the bombardments continued.

UN sources earlier estimated at several dozen, the number of people killed in the bombardments of the church, where up to 1,500 civilians have been trapped for more than two months. The church was still under fire early today.

Prior to the bombardments the rebel Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) had launched a commando action to evacuate around 600 people. The raid came after some 60 youths were abducted and presumed killed by Hutu militia.

UNAMIR was attempting to persuade the warring factions to observe a truce for a few hours to allow the evacuation of civilian refugees from the church buildings.



A Tutsi boy hugs a baby refugee carried by a UN soldier from Ghana on Saturday in Kabonga, on the outskirts of Kigali, where the United Nations evacuated hundreds of refugees fleeing fighting in the Rwandan capital. — AFP photo

China to bar human rights lawyers

BEIJING, June 19: China plans to allow more foreign law firms to open offices, but will bar lawyers who specialize in human rights cases, an official report said Sunday, reports AP.

So-called 'human rights lawyers' or 'democracy lawyers,' who might jeopardize China's social stability and investment environment will be barred from coming in," Shen Bailu, a Justice Ministry official, told the Xinhua News Agency.

The number of foreign law offices will grow from the present 41 to about 100 by the end of 1995, Shen said. He also said the number of cities where foreign law firms can set up would be increased from the present five, Xinhua added.

Clinton asks Congress to pass anti-crime law

WASHINGTON, June 19: President Clinton Saturday warned that a "cancer of crime and violence" threatens the United States and called upon Congress to speed its consideration of anti-crime legislation, reports Reuter.

"Unless we do something about crime, we can't be really free in this country," said Clinton, who is spending the Father's Day weekend at Camp David with First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton and their daughter, Chelsea.

He said in his weekly radio address to the nation that unless the increasing rise in crime is stemmed "We can't exercise the opportunities that there are for us, and our children can't inherit the American dream."

Clinton hoped to generate support for a long-debated anti-crime package that would expand the use of the death penalty, ban the sale of certain assault rifles and increase the number of policemen on the streets by 100,000.

The Senate and House of Representatives each have passed differing versions of an anti-crime bill. Leaders are trying to hammer out a compromise version acceptable to both chambers before the July 4th congressional recess.

No issue poses the need to come together more to deal with the problems that we face than does the cancer of crime and violence that is eating away at the bonds that unite us as a people," Clinton said.

"Now it's time to pass the bill," he said, to stop talking, to stop posturing, and pass the bill. Clinton Friday visited the Robert Taylor Homes, a crime ridden public housing project in Chicago that has become a major focus of federal efforts.

"I went there because it's a good place to emphasize to all Americans that we have begun a nationwide effort to drive the guns, the gangs and the drugs from public housing and from all neighbourhoods where Americans feel terrorised," Clinton said.

I wanted to underscore how important it is to empower our people to take back their homes, their streets and their schools wherever they live," he said.

Govt slaps new restrictions on foreigners

US Senator calls for direct military invasion of Haiti

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti, June 19: Haiti's army-backed government slapped new restrictions on foreigners as a US Senator Saturday urged a military invasion of Haiti to restore democracy, reports Reuter.

Democratic Senator Bob Graham of Florida, shortly after arriving in Port-Au-Prince, issued a call for direct military intervention if exiled President Jean-Bertrand Aristide is not returned to power.

If the current regime will not give up power voluntarily and allow the democratically-elected president to return, the international community needs to liberate Haiti," said Graham, a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, during a visit to the capital outskirts with a population of around 180,000 people.

The new restrictions announced appeared aimed primarily at controlling the movements and freedom of foreign news media.

Interim President Emile Jonassaint, who was installed last month by army leaders signed a decree late Friday which bars Haitians and foreigners from going within two miles (3 km) of the country's border with the Dominican Republic or the Haitian coastline.

The new moves are the first concrete declarations made since Jonassaint's de facto government awarded itself special powers under a state of emergency announced last Sunday.

Under the decree, special permits will be required to take cameras or video cameras into these "strategic zones" and others established around telecommunication centres and electric generating plants. Foreigners violating the rules will be immediately deported.

Another report adds: The United States and Britain agreed to arrangements Saturday under which the Turks and Caicos Islands will be used to process requests for

political asylum from Haitian boat people, said a British Embassy spokesman.

President Clinton's envoy for Haiti, William Gray, signed a memorandum of understanding with representatives from Britain as well as the British-occupied Caribbean islands in the Turks and Caicos capital of Grand Turk.

The embassy spokesman said the processing centre, which will be based on land, is expected to be operating by mid-July.

The Turks and Caicos are a group of 30 small islands near the southeast end of the Bahamas.

Friday, six Haitian boat people were granted refugee status after being interviewed as part of a new US immigration procedure aboard a navy ship off Jamaica.

They were the 35 Haitians picked up at sea earlier this past week and taken to the 1,000-bed US naval hospital ship.

Ramos apologizes to Danielle Mitterrand

MANILA, June 19: President Fidel Ramos has apologized to the wife of French President Francois Mitterrand for banning her from a controversial conference on East Timor in the Philippines last month, reports AFP.

In a letter to Danielle Mitterrand, copies of which were released today, Ramos — who is to visit France in September — said "my government sincerely regrets that your person has been so affected by this situation."

"Yet I am grateful that your response has been very correct," he said, referring to her decision to cancel her attendance at the Manila meeting, centered on Indonesian military abuses in the former Portuguese colony.

Ramos, under pressure from Indonesia over the conference, barred foreign delegates from entering the country.

Ramos explained in the letter that his decision to bar foreign delegates to the week-long conference was mandated by a "higher responsibility to preserve and protect the highest interest of our nation."

Off the Record

Brown rice — all it takes to keep one healthy?

KAGOSHIMA, Japan: Two men set out for San Francisco Sunday in a nine-meter (30-foot) yacht, intending to prove that rations of only brown rice are enough to sustain them for the two-month Pacific crossing, reports AP.

Japanese photo studio owner Yoichi Kuwazuru, 47, and Yang Sung-gi, 30, his South Korean brother-in-law from Pusan, carried 20 kilograms (44 pounds) of brown rice, Kuwazuru's wife, Yoshie, said.

The only other food on the yacht was 600 grams (21 ounces) of salt and sesame, and one kilogram (2.2 pounds) of pickled plums, she added.

Mrs. Kuwazuru said her husband, a yachtsman for more than 12 years, long has dreamed of sailing across the Pacific, and also wants to prove his contention that unpolished rice contains all the nutrients needed to keep humans healthy.

The two set sail from Kagoshima on Japan's southernmost island of Kyushu, 985 kilometers (616 miles) southwest of Tokyo.

Safe method to freeze human eggs

SYDNEY: Australian scientists claimed a world first yesterday in developing a reliable and safe method of freezing human eggs before fertilisation, reports AFP.

Doctors had already removed and frozen eggs from four patients at the Royal Women's Hospital in Melbourne, all of whom were soon to lose the ability to produce normal eggs.

Biochemist Debra Gook said her breakthrough could allow women to delay fertilisation and pregnancy years beyond the normal age limits for conception.

The patients undergo a similar procedure as in vitro fertilisation (IVF) with hormone stimulation and egg recovery," she said. "But we can then stop the process and freeze the eggs."

Women cancer patients, whose eggs might be damaged by radiation treatment, could store their own eggs and later have them fertilised and implanted in procedures already developed for IVF, known as test-tube fertilisation.

Tajik govt, opposition firm to resolve conflict

TEHRAN, June 19: Tajik government and opposition representatives, meeting Saturday in Iran, opened a new round of UN-sponsored talks aimed at securing a ceasefire in Tajikistan, reports AFP.

UN Special Envoy Ramiro Pritz-Ballon urged the Russian-backed government and guerrillas of the democratic and Islamic opposition to "show flexibility," and called for a ceasefire "as a precondition to any settlement."

The parties are hoping to reach a political settlement by the end of the third round of talks which will be held in Islamabad, Pakistan, by the end of July, he added.

But they faced "very difficult negotiations because of serious differences," according to Pritz-Ballon, whom UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali named as special envoy to Tajikistan.

Representatives from both sides said here they were determined to resolve the conflict.

A first round held in Moscow in April set up an agenda for talks and a joint commission on the refugee problem.

"No lasting solution will be possible without tackling the problem of refugees first," Pritz-Ballon said.

Many of the refugees — whose number is estimated at 200,000 by the pro-communist government and more than 700,000 by the opposition — fled across the border to Afghanistan from where the guerrillas mount their attacks.

Some of them have joined the rebels in their fight to topple the government.

Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati, who also attended the session, said his country was "fully committed" to help resolve the crisis in Tajikistan, but called for an "immediate ceasefire," first.

He urged both sides in the conflict to show "political courage and tolerance" in a bid to reach a negotiated settlement.

The minister stressed Iran's neutral stand in the conflict, saying the Islamic Republic "does not seek to export its revolution through force."

Iran "will not hesitate" to send peacekeeping troops to Tajikistan if asked by the United Nations, he said.

BRIEFLY

France, Kuwait start jt war games: Kuwaiti and French air forces started on Saturday their joint military exercises named "Desert Mirage," the second of its kind since the Gulf War in 1991. Xinhua reports from Kuwait City.

French warplanes "Mirage-2000," which arrived here Friday, joined the two-day war games. It is the first game to be launched from the Ahmad Al-Jaber Air Base after its rebuilding following the Iraqi invasion.

UVF rebels kill 6 in N Ireland: Armed men opened fire in a packed village pub in Northern Ireland late Saturday, killing six people and wounding several more, the Royal Ulster Constabulary said. AFP reports from Belfast.

The attack on the bar at Loughin Island, County Down, in the east of the province, was claimed by the banned loyalist Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) in a telephone call to the media.

Ex-AP newsman Quevedo dies: Alberto Quevedo, who supervised the Latin American service of the Associated Press for seven years, has died. He was 74, AP reports from New York.

Quevedo died Thursday in Miami. He began his AP career in Buenos Aires in 1938 and transferred to the AP's New York headquarters in 1957. In 1975 he became Latin American editor, responsible for the news cooperative's Spanish-language service. In 1982 he was named correspondent at the United Nations for the Latin American service. Quevedo moved to Miami after he retired in 1987. He is survived by his wife, Luisa, and three daughters.

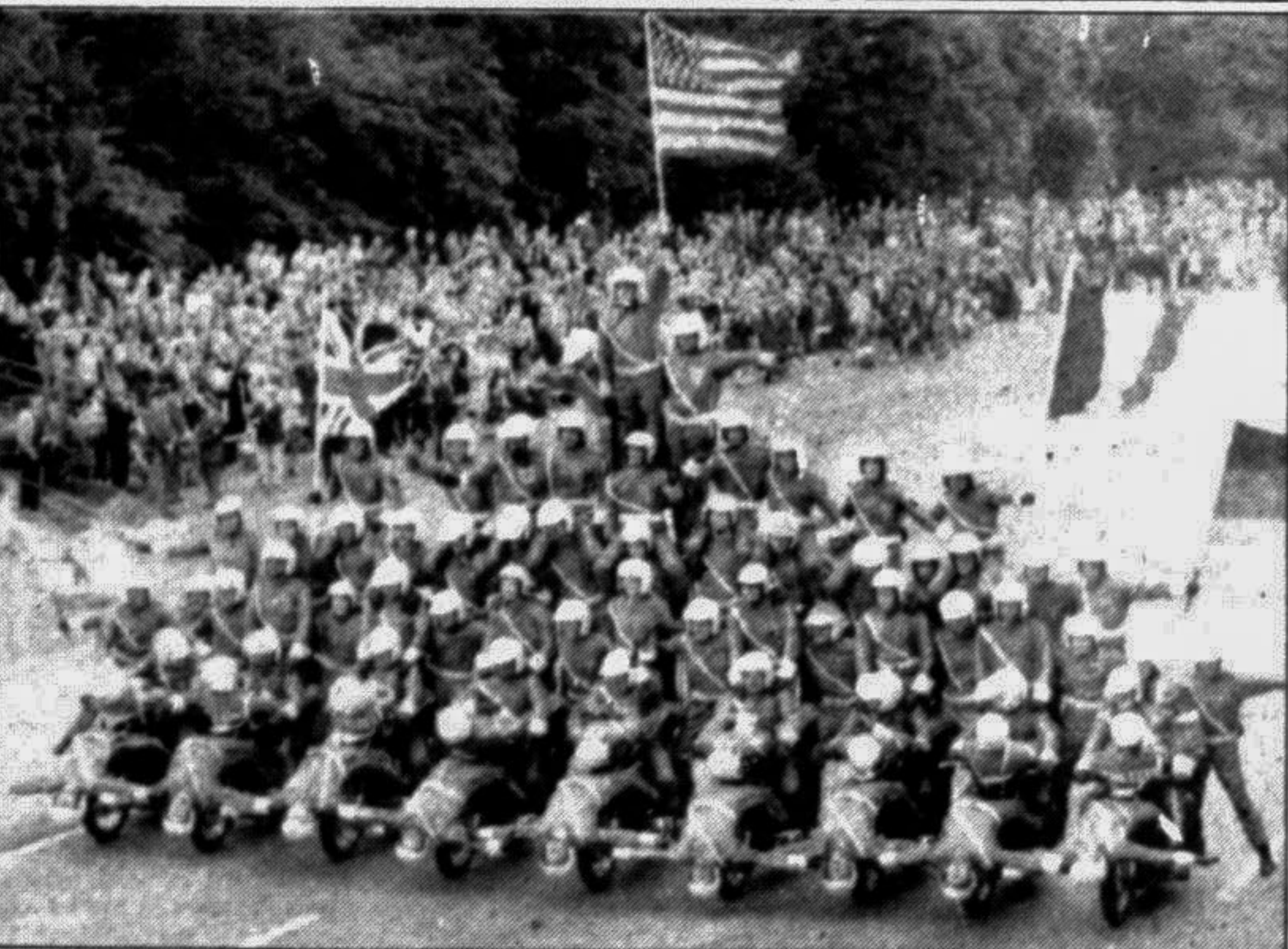
Two LTTE men shot dead: Troops opened fire and killed at least two suspected Tamil guerrillas who had infiltrated a key military facility located on an island in Sri Lanka's embattled north, defence officials said yesterday. AFP reports from Colombo.

Soldiers gunned down the two men believed to be from the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) at Kays Island late Saturday, a defence spokesman said.

The LTTE earlier this month infiltrated the adjoining island of Karainagar where the main northern naval base is located and exploded mines, killing five sailors and wounding several more.

12 killed in Pak bus mishap: At least 12 people were killed and six injured when a mini-bus plunged into a dry river bed after colliding with a truck, hospital sources said yesterday. AFP reports from Multan, Pakistan.

The vehicle was on its way from this central Pakistan city to the nearby town of Muzaffargarh when the accident took place overnight. Police said the bus skidded off a 40-foot (1.3 metre) high bridge over the Chenab river while overtaking a truck which had blocked traffic after developing a mechanical problem. Four people including the bus driver died instantly, while eight others died later in a Multan hospital, the sources said.



Berlin city police officers roll along a street here formed as a mobile pyramid on Saturday. 75 policemen gathered together to make a new record for the Guinness Book of Records. — AFP photo

Serbs, Muslims trade artillery fire along frontlines

SARAJEVO, June 19: Fierce fighting has erupted along frontlines in Bosnia as conflicting signals emerged from the warring parties of the likely fate of a peace plan being prepared by the major powers, reports Reuter.

A United Nations spokesman told reporters in Sarajevo on Saturday that Bosnian Serb and mostly Muslim Bosnian army forces exchanged mortar and artillery fire along a wide front near the northern towns of Gradacac, Ribnica and Doboj. UN spokesman Major Dacre Holloway confirmed reports of a "high level of military activity" in the heavily contested northern battlezone around Brocko, adding later news of numerous detonations in the

area. A UN official said there had also been fierce combat around Serb-held Mount Ozren. South of Doboj, a Bosnian Serb army source told Reuters Muslim forces had made some gains in attacks on strategic hilltops with both sides suffering heavy casualties.

The Mount Ozren region is a mountainous finger of territory stretching south from Serb heartlands and surrounded on three sides by Bosnian government controlled area.

The fighting seriously violated an eight-day-old temporary ceasefire that had brought relative calm to much of Bosnia. The truce was intended to

prepare both sides to end the 26-month war in Bosnia by accepting a long-term peace plan currently in the last stages of preparation by international mediators.

Another report from Zagreb adds: Croatian President Franjo Tudjman Saturday said the proposed carve-up of Bosnia was "the only reasonable proposal" after 90 minutes of talks here with US envoy to the former Yugoslavia, Charles Redman.

Tudjman said that the proposal for the ethnic division of Bosnia put forward by the four-power international contact group mediating the Bosnian conflict was the only possible solution.

20 teams to monitor anti-corruption efforts in China

BEIJING, June 19: China is to dispatch 20 teams nationwide to monitor anti-corruption efforts, reports said today, acknowledging that a 10-month campaign had failed to significantly improve the "grim" situation, says AFP.

Secretary of the Central Commission for Disciplinary Inspection Wei Jian Xing said the campaign launched last August had achieved some results but added that progress was uneven and that successes had not been consolidated, the Economic Daily reported.

"Deep-rooted problems affecting the anti-corruption struggle still await resolution, the situation facing the anti-corruption struggle is still fairly grim," said Wei, announcing the intensification of the drive in the second half of this year.

The teams are to be dispatched in late June and early July to inspect anti-corruption work carried out by 24 ministries of the central government and by authorities in 24 provinces.

Taiwan's ruling party wins local polls

TAIPEI, June 19: Taiwan's ruling Nationalist Party has won local elections in the island's two largest cities by a landslide, but opposition candidates made some gains, election officials said on Sunday, reports Reuter.

The Nationalists won 665 of 901 community chief posts at stake in Taipei and Kaohsiung in Saturday's polls, the officials said. They won 730 posts in the last elections in 1990.

The main opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) which wants Taiwan to abandon its official goal of eventual renunciation with China, more than doubled its number of seats to 27 from 11.

12 killed in Mexican plane crash in US

CHANTILLY, Va, June 19: A plane apparently owned by the government of Mexico crashed while approaching Dulles International Airport in a heavy fog Saturday, killing all 12 people aboard, US officials said, reports AP.

Carl Vogt, chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board, said the Lear jet had missed one approach to the airport and was attempting a second when it went down in a heavily wooded area on Dulles property.

"There's no one alive," Vogt said at an early afternoon news briefing at the airport. "The bodies are being taken out of the wreckage at this time."

US authorities could not provide the identities of the victims, although Vogt did say they had Spanish surnames.

Mike Zurik, a spokesman for the Federal Aviation Administration, had said earlier that "we have confirmed

12 people dead, eight adults, four children."

Zurik said the plane was registered in Mexico. The passengers may have been headed to Washington for a first round World Cup match between Norway and Mexico, scheduled for Sunday at Robert F. Kennedy Stadium.

Police and rescue workers with dogs combed the wreckage area, about four miles (6.4 kilometers) south of the airport's main terminal. Bulldozers had to be brought in to clear a path for rescue teams.

NTSE officials said there was no sign of fire at the time of the crash.

Dulles Airport is located 26 miles (42 kilometers) west of Washington.

Vogt said that NTSB investigators were at the scene and would probably remain there for at least three days.

Israeli planes blast Hezbollah bases

NABATIYEH, Lebanon, June 19: Israeli warplanes blasted bases of Iranian-backed Shiite Muslim guerrillas in the hills of south Lebanon Sunday, police said, reports AP.

They said two fighter-bombers fired six rockets on the bluffs surrounding the village of Mitta, situated in a stronghold of fundamentalists of Hezbollah, or party of God.

There was no immediate word on casualties from the raid at 11:20 am, the fourth since June 2 when Israel mounted its most lethal air assault in east Lebanon in a year.

Up to 50 Hezbollah recruits were killed and 200 wounded in that attack, which targeted a Hezbollah training base at Ein Kawkab east of the ancient town of Baalbek.

In all, Israel has launched 20 air strikes against Lebanon-based guerrillas this year, leaving more than 59 people dead and 210 wounded, by police count.

Tension has been running high in south Lebanon, the only active Arab-Israeli war front, since the June 2 air raid for which Hezbollah has vowed to take "merciless revenge."

The United States, fearing that a major blowup could undermine its Middle East peace efforts, urged all parties involved to exercise restraint.

Hezbollah has vowed to wreck the Arab-Israeli peace talks. The group has long been spearheading a guerrilla war to dislodge Israel from a border enclave it occupies in south Lebanon.