

### Legislators okay Chris Patten's reforms for HK

HONG KONG, June 30: The last and most complex part of Governor Chris Patten's democratic reforms for Hong Kong were adopted today by the Legislative Council by a 32-24 vote, reports AP.

The vote — after 15 hours of debate — climaxed a 20 months effort by the British administration to beef up Hong Kong's political institutions ahead of the colony's July 1997 handback to China.

Meanwhile, China said Thursday it will dismantle Hong Kong's political system after the territory's Legislative Council approved Governor Chris Patten's controversial democratic reforms.

In a brief statement, the Xinhua news agency, China's

### UK-China accord on military bases in HK

HONG KONG, June 30: Britain and China reached an agreement Thursday on the future of British military bases to be vacated in 1997 when China regains sovereignty over the British colony, reports AP.

Officials of the Joint Liaison Group, which is overseeing Hong Kong's transfer to China, did not immediately disclose details of the agreement on the 39 military sites.

British negotiator Hugh Davies told reporters there also had been agreements on other issues, although he declined to elaborate.

de facto embassy in Hong Kong, said that a new political structure will be established to replace the existing system, when the territory reverts to Chinese rule July 1, 1997.

In a separate article, the semi-official Hong Kong branch of China news service said that the British colony's three tiers of governing councils would be "short lived," adding that "the councils must be reorganised after July 1, 1997."

The three tiers are the district boards, two urban councils and Legislative Council.

The Chinese responses came after the Legislative Council voted 32-24 to adopt Patten's electoral reform proposals early Thursday. The reforms put Sino-British relations on the skids when they were first proposed in October 1992.

"It is definite that China and Britain can no longer cooperate in the political area because the British side has damaged the foundation for cooperation," since Patten's electoral reform bill was passed early Thursday, China news service said in a commentary.

"However, the Chinese side has clearly reiterated that it will cooperate in social and economic areas in Hong Kong beside the political issue, said the commentary.

"But these will mainly depend on the British side's sincerity and action," Patten said on the approval of his reform package.

# Jewish extremists vow to disrupt Arafat's Gaza trip

JERUSALEM, June 30, Right wing protesters began arriving in Jerusalem on Thursday, vowing to keep Yasser Arafat away. Outraged opposition leaders, citing biblical precedent, warned that the PLO chief's weekend visit would lead to Israel's destruction, reports AP.

Settler leaders offered 100,000 shekels (dlsr 33,000) for Arafat's capture. Israeli intelligence officials reportedly were concerned that Jewish extremists might try to assassinate him.

In "Operation Burning Desert," billed as the largest in the annals of Israel, 8,000 police were being deployed throughout the country to thwart right-wing riots. Half the force was to be stationed

in Jerusalem, the expected focus of the anti Arafat protests.

Several rabbis issued religious rulings including one urging troops called up for Arafat duty not to show up for work on Saturday. It is the Jewish Sabbath, a day of rest when activities such as work and travel are forbidden.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation leader was to be

given a three day visit on Friday in the Gaza Strip and perhaps briefly visit the West Bank town of Jericho. Right-wing leaders insisted that Arafat planned a secret stopover in Jerusalem, a claim denied by the government and PLO officials.

Opposition leaders hoping to mobilize hundreds of thousands of protesters on Thursday issued doomsday warnings. Former Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, whose government ordered the killing of Arafat's senior aide Khalil al-Wazir in 1988, likened the PLO chief's arrival to the Roman conquest of Jerusalem in 70 AD when the Jewish Temple was destroyed.

"The coming of Arafat to the Land of Israel symbolizes the start of the destruction of the state of Israel and its being turned into a Palestinian state," said Shamir, his voice breaking with emotion.

"We mustn't allow Arafat to get foot in the Land of Israel. He shall not pass," he added.

For Israel's right wing, which has been unable to draw large numbers of people to anti-autonomy demonstrations, the Arafat visit will be an important test of strength.

Many Israelis, even those who support the self-rule agreement for Gaza and Jericho, still find it difficult to believe that Arafat is a man of peace and not a terrorist bent on destroying the Jewish state.



Palestinian prisoners are greeted by friends and relatives as they are released at the Nahal Oz crossing to the self-ruled Gaza Strip Wednesday, two days before the expected arrival of PLO leader Yasser Arafat in Gaza. — AFP photo

## Off the Record



The Princess of Wales arrives Wednesday at the Serpentine Gallery in London's Hyde Park. She was attending a gala dinner in aid of the renovation appeal. — AFP photo

### I tried, I failed, so butt out: Charles

LONDON: Prince Charles has tried to be a good husband, it didn't work, so butt out, reports AP.

"Just look at the level of intrusion, persistent, endless carping, pontificating, criticising, examining, inventing," the prince exclaimed in a television documentary broadcast Wednesday.

While complaining about press intrusion in private matters, Charles did suggest that he had an affair after his marriage broke down.

Asked specifically whether his relationship with Camilla Parker Bowles wrecked his marriage, Charles didn't flatly deny that they might be more than friends.

"All I can say is that, I mean, there is no truth in so much of this speculation and Parker Bowles is a great friend of mine and I have a large number of friends," he said.

A divorce from Princess Diana, he said, "is very much in the future."

"At the moment it's not a consideration in my mind. And anyway it's something that I think is very personal and private between my wife and myself and that's how it'll remain," he said.

### Alcohol acts as an aphrodisiac in women

LONDON: Scientists explained on Thursday what male seducers have long known but never quite understood, reports Reuter.

Alcohol, they reported in scholarly study, can act as an aphrodisiac in women because it stimulates the production of sex hormones.

Booze has long been known to depress sexual arousal in men, so scientists have often wondered how alcohol gained its reputation as an efficient aid to seduction of women.

Finnish and Japanese doctors said in a letter to the science journal Nature that they had found alcohol causes women to produce more testosterone — the "male" sex hormone that women produce in smaller amounts.

Testosterone has been linked to sexual arousal in women in some studies.

The effect was only noticeable in women who were ovulating, and thus at a fertile stage in their cycle, and in those taking birth control pills, which affect hormonal balance.

Alcohol did not affect the testosterone levels in the men tested.

### Infertile women may give birth to babies

MELBOURNE: Two single Australian women made infertile by cancer treatment may soon give birth to babies through a new method of *in vitro* fertilisation — but by law they will have to get married first.

"I think it's unbelievable, it's quite ridiculous," Dr Debra Gook, a biochemist at the Royal Women's Hospital in Melbourne who developed the new and controversial method, told Reuters on Wednesday.

Gook said the two unidentified women, who she understood did not have boy-friends, were among four women undergoing chemotherapy and radiotherapy who wanted to become pregnant when their treatment ended.

She said healthy embryos from the two single women had been frozen and would be allowed to thaw for fertilisation after the pair recovered from their treatment. The pair would then be implanted with three-day-old embryos for natural development.

Gook said three normal babies had been born from frozen eggs in the 1980 — two in south Australia and one in Germany — but animal studies carried out at the same time suggested the technique could produce abnormal children.

## Mediators to present peace map to Bosnian factions

SARAJEVO, June 30: International mediators planned to present a proposed peace map to Bosnian warring factions as fighting raged between Serbs and Muslim-led forces who showed few signs they were ready to lay down their guns, reports Reuter.

United Nations officials vowed to rescue an unravelling ceasefire in Bosnia while the mediators pressed for approval of the map, seen as the last hope for halting the war.

The ceasefire is under great threat... but the ceasefire is not dead," Yasushi Akashi, the special UN envoy in the former Yugoslavia, told reporters after meeting NATO ambassadors in Brussels.

Akashi said that the UN Security Council would be asked soon, possibly today, to decide what steps to take amid a fresh upsurge in fighting.

Fighting between the mostly Muslim-Bosnian army and Serb troops raged in north-central Bosnia around a supply route in the Mount Ozren area, where attacking Muslim forces have gained ground recently, UN military officials said on Wednesday.

Akashi told Belgian officials

earlier that Western and Russian diplomats had agreed on a map to propose to the warring sides in Bosnia, a Belgian Foreign Ministry spokesman said on Wednesday.

A five-nation "contact group" from Russia, Britain, Germany, France and the United States drew up the map that would give the Serbs 49 per cent of Bosnia, and the Muslim-Croat federation the rest.

The spokesman said foreign ministers from the five countries would meet on July 5 at an as yet unspecified location to ratify the proposed map.

Diplomats said the plan will go for final endorsement at the G-7 summit in Naples next week before being presented to the warring parties with a take-it-or-leave-it ultimatum.

A French Foreign Ministry spokesman told reporters the major powers had decided to offer incentives to the warring parties if they agreed and sanctions if they did not. But he offered no details.

Despite growing pressure from the international community to agree on a peace settlement, neither side has given any indication it will accept

the proposed map.

Bosnian-Serbs who have seized 70 per cent of the country, say the map requires them to hand over too much land and Muslim and Croat allies say it gives them too little.

Akashi and UN military commanders met NATO officials to discuss how the United Nations and the alliance would implement a peace deal and how to react if the deal was rejected.

Relations between Akashi and NATO have sometimes been strained because of his refusal on several occasions to back NATO air strikes despite calls for support from UN troops and Serb violations of weapons and troop exclusion zones.

Some of the main contributors to UN peacekeeping forces mostly NATO members, have said they may withdraw their troops if the peace deal is rejected.

NATO sources said Akashi told the ambassadors that, if the peace efforts fail, one option short of total withdrawal of UN peacekeepers could involve a new mandate for a smaller force.

## Arafat postpones Cairo tour

CAIRO, June 30: PLO leader Yasser Arafat has postponed a visit to Egypt due to take place today, a senior Egyptian official said, reports Reuter.

"We were told he is not coming today, but we are on standby," presidential spokesman Mohammed Abdou Moneim told Reuters "there is no problem... his plans are always changing."

Arafat had been due to meet Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in the Mediterranean city of Alexandria today and go on to make a historic visit to Gaza on Friday.

Abdul Moneim did not say whether the delay would affect Arafat's planned trip to Gaza eight weeks after the PLO leader and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin signed a self-rule agreement setting up Palestinian self-rule in Gaza and Jericho.

## ROK welcomes election of Murayama

SEOUL, June 30: South Korea today welcomed the election of Tomiichi Murayama as Japan's new prime minister, hoping for a further improvement in relations between the two countries, reports Reuter.

"We welcome that Japan has gained early political stability by electing Murayama as Japan's 81st prime minister," the South Korean Foreign Ministry said in a brief statement.

A spokesman for President Kim Young-Sam said Kim sent a congratulatory message to Murayama, saying "I am convinced the existing friendship and cooperation between our two countries will be cemented further."

## Israel launches air raid on Hezbollah bases

SIDON, Lebanon, June 30: Israel today launched an air raid on Iranian-backed Hezbollah guerrilla bases in south Lebanon, security services said, reports AP.

The raid targeted the Iqlim al-Tuffah hills, a Hezbollah stronghold, they said, adding they did not know if there casualties.

One hour earlier guerrillas fired Katyusha rockets at Israeli positions in their self-declared security zone

## BRIEFLY

### Oxford to honour Mandela:

Oxford University is to award Nelson Mandela, South Africa's first black president, its highest honour in acknowledgement of his long struggle for democracy and equality in his country, Xinhua reports from London.

It will present him with a degree of doctor of Civil Law by diploma, the university said on Wednesday.

President Mandela is expected to accept the honour when he visits Britain next month to celebrate South Africa's rejoining the Commonwealth from June 1.

### LTTE gunmen kill airman:

Separatist guerrillas ambushed a routine air force foot patrol in northeastern Sri Lanka and killed one airman to avenge the loss of two of their own fighters, the military said yesterday, AFP reports from Colombo.

Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) gunmen shot at the airman at Panmedavachachya Wednesday as they patrolled a main highway in the region, a military spokesman said.

The understaffed Sri Lanka army is forced to depend on the air force and sometimes even the navy for ground patrol duties. The spokesman said security personnel retaliated, killing at least two of the attackers involved in the ambush.

### Quakes rock Tibet, Qinghai:

Two major earthquakes measuring 6.3 and five on the open-ended Richter scale rocked Tibet and the neighbouring Chinese province of Qinghai this morning, a State Bureau of Seismology spokesman said, AFP reports from Beijing.

The epicentre of both earthquakes was located on the Tibet Qinghai border, some 400 kilometres northeast of the capital Lhasa, the spokesman said.

The remote, mountainous region affected by the tremors was almost completely uninhabited, the spokesman said, adding that there had been no reports of any casualties or damage.

### 5 tons of drugs seized in Iran:

Iranian security forces have captured more than five tons of various drugs in the northeastern provinces during the past three months. The official news agency Irna reported on Wednesday, Xinhua reports from Tehran.

Commander of the Provincial Security Forces Mohammad Hashem Gorooi was quoted as saying that his forces have arrested some 1,872 drug dealers in this connection.

The seized drugs included 4,800 kilograms of opium, 150 kilograms of heroin and 56 kilograms of Hashish, Gorooi said, adding that some 59 grenades and 151 pieces of firearms were also seized from the drug traffickers during the period.

### Chinese language encyclopedia:

A US publisher announced plans for a 22-volume Chinese language encyclopedia to be produced in collaboration with the Beijing government, AFP reports from Chicago.

World Book International said Wednesday that the encyclopedia, based on a translation of its World Book, will present a fair view of Chinese history.

"We've always been objective," said company president John Frere. "We've gone through this with Arabian countries, and it's been successful."



Father chimpanzee Yak (R) looks on as mother Chim holds their first as yet unnamed baby at the Bangkok Zoo Wednesday. The baby, born a month earlier, is attracting large crowds to the zoo. — AFP photo

### Liberian rebels abduct 6 UN observers

UNITED NATIONS, June 30: Six UN observers in Liberia have been taken hostage by a rebel faction that is demanding food in exchange for their release, UN officials said, reports AP.

"We are urgently seeking their release," UN spokesman Fred Eckhard said Wednesday.

The six were taken captive Tuesday in Tubmanburg, in western Liberia, by the United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia.

The military observers include a Jordanian captain, a Egyptian colonel, an Uruguayan commander and a foreign national whose grade was not known.

## Cambodian leaders force MPs to sign bill outlawing Khmers

PHNOM PENH, June 30: Cambodian leaders are forcing members of Parliament to sign a bill outlawing the Khmer Rouge guerrilla group, a Cabinet minister says, reports AP.

Finance Minister Sam Rainsy said Wednesday night that this prompted two members of his party, FUNCINPEC, to resign! Pok Marina as undersecretary of state for foreign affairs and Luu Lay Sreng as a member of the party's steering committee.

Neither could be reached for comment but a second party member confirmed the resignations.

"Many MPs are required to sign this draft," Sam Rainsy said. "I think this is opposite to democratic practice."

Those who oppose the law

openly, publicly, will have problems with the authorities, so who dares?" he added.

The government of Co-Premiers Prince Norodom Ranariddh, of FUNCINPEC, and Hun Sen, of the Cambodian People's Party, was elected in a UN-organized poll in May 1993.

It has been struggling to find ways to end the war with the Khmer Rouge, which has been fighting since its brutal 1975-78 reign was overthrown.

Peace talks over the past year all have failed, leading the administration to propose outlawing the Khmer Rouge.

Sam Rainsy and others opposing the bill say it will end hopes for peace and lead to

government repression of people branded as Khmer Rouge supporters.

Sam Rainsy said all 51 People's Party members of Parliament had signed a petition supporting the draft law.

People's Party member Khieu Kanharith, a senior Information Ministry official, said his party was traditionally anti-Khmer Rouge and so eagerly signed the bill: "You don't need to be forced to."

The pressure was more subtle in FUNCINPEC, Sam Rainsy indicated.

The first who has signed is the first prime minister, who has shown an example," Sam Rainsy said, referring to Ranariddh.

demanding anonymity said. "The party would certainly like to make an appeal" for signatures but added: "I don't think you are going to be forced to sign."

Government spokesman Veng Sereyvudh of FUNCINPEC said: "The government has decided to come up with this law and I support it because it's the government's policy."

The bill states that the Khmer Rouge has failed to uphold a 1991 peace accord by boycotting the election, continued to commit genocidal acts and violated the provisions of the constitution that say Cambodia is indivisible.

It says all members of the group shall be considered as

offenders of the constitution and offenders of the laws of the kingdom of Cambodia and shall be arrested by the competent authorities and sent to the court for sentencing. Prison terms would range from 10 years to life.

The bill provides for a two-month amnesty to allow Khmer Rouge members to defect to the government side.

They should arrested the king first," Sam Rainsy said.

He said King Norodom Sihanouk could be considered a Khmer Rouge supporter because he opposes outlawing the group. Sihanouk wants a peaceful end to the fighting.

The US and Australian based Campaign to Oppose the Return of the Khmer Rouge held a news conference

### India's Janata Dal splits

NEW DELHI, June 30: India's largest centrist party has formally split, with a breakaway group of 14 MPs electing socialist and trade unionist George Fernandes as its leader, a spokesman said Wednesday, reports AP.

The 14 Janata Dal (People's Party) MPs, constituting a third of the opposition party's strength in parliament, met here late Tuesday to announce they will not attempt any reconciliation with the leadership.

"We gave the other side time for a patch-up. We couldn't have waited endlessly," said Nitish Kumar, a dissident MP. He said the new group would also be known as the Janata Dal.

### Thursday to push for outlawing the Khmer Rouge

"The government is so weak. Why does the government allow the Khmer Rouge to talk so many times? said member Dr Haing S Ngor, star of 'The Killing Fields,' a film about the Khmer Rouge atrocities of the 1970s.

Another member, Boua Chanthou, said the Khmer Rouge is earning dlsr 20 million a month selling timber and gems to Thai companies.

It's time for us... to stop them from earning any more money to buy ammunition to kill," Boua said.

Outlawing the group would allow the government to seize the assets of the Khmer Rouge in countries like Thailand.