

## US ultimatum to Haitian generals

WASHINGTON, July 7: Haiti's ruling generals must step down within six months or face possible US military intervention, a senior US official said Wednesday as the number of Haitian refugees picked up at sea grew to 14,000, reports AFP.

The State Department said meanwhile that approximately 2,900 Haitians in 46 boats were picked up Tuesday by US coast guard ships off Haiti, bringing the total to 14,000 since the United States began screening for political refugees June 15.

We don't expect the military regime to be there six months from now. We believe that the dictatorship will step down, will leave, William Gray, President Bill Clinton's special assistant for Haiti told ABC television.

If they don't then there are options that are open. The president has made it very clear that the military option is just one of those options.

Asked if he was saying that the military government must be out of Haiti within six months Gray said, that's exactly the message, and it is my belief that is going to happen.

State Department spokeswoman Christine Shelley said details were still being worked out on a new policy announced Tuesday to send political refugees from Haiti to other countries in the region, denying them asylum in the United States.

"We're trying to be sure we have a way of identifying those in need of protection. Shelly said, adding that discussions were being held with the UN High Commissioner of Refugees on how to handle the boat people.

The Panamanian government has agreed to accept up to 10,000 Haitians but has come under harsh criticism in that country. Other refugee centres are expected to be established in Dominica and Antigua, according to US officials.

## Nigeria's political crisis deepens

LAGOS, July 7: Nigeria's political crisis deepened after the military government charged opposition leader Moshood Abiola with treason and powerful oil unions vowed to hold more strikes in pursuit of democracy, reports Reuter.

Abiola the tycoon businessman widely believed to have won last year's annulled presidential election, was arraigned on Wednesday before a court in the inland capital Abuja.

The 57-year-old philanthropist, backed by an alliance of pro-democracy groups, politicians and retired generals, proclaimed himself president last month in defiance of Nigeria's military rulers.

Abiola who faces life imprisonment if convicted of treason, pleaded not guilty. He also complained to the judge of

maltreatment.

The judge fixed July 14 for a ruling on his lawyers' request for bail. The authorities have not revealed where he is being detained.

Abiola's arrest on June 23 heightened tensions in Africa's most populous nation. The junior oil workers' union Nupeng began a strike on Monday to press for his release and in-statement as president.

The strike has disrupted domestic fuel supplies creating long queues of vehicles at filling stations which are likely to lengthen as more fuel stations run dry.

Nupeng's General Secretary Frank Kokori was arrested on Wednesday. The union said it has called an emergency meeting of its leadership to finalise the next line of action.

## Amnesty period increased from 2 to 6 months

## Cambodia outlaws Khmer Rouge

PHNOM PENH, July 7: Parliament voted unanimously Thursday to outlaw the Khmer Rouge, and the premier said the measure would weaken the guerrilla group that has been fighting successive governments for 15 years, reports AP.

Parliament also increased the amnesty period for members of the Khmer Rouge to surrender without punishment from two to six months and added a provision allowing King Norodom Sihanouk to pardon members of the guerrilla group.

"It is time to give up," Prince Norodom Ranariddh, the first premier, said to the Khmer Rouge after the vote.

He said Cambodia would immediately ask countries like Thailand, which allows the Khmer Rouge to pass through its territory, to arrest members of the group and return them to Cambodia.

The government also would ask other countries to seize assets of the Khmer Rouge, believed sizable considering the

group's estimated 20 million dollars a month in illegal border trade with Thai businesses.

The guerrilla group has been fighting from the jungles since its brutal 1975-78 regime — under which hundreds of thousands of Cambodians were killed — was overthrown. The Khmer Rouge controls about 10 per cent of Cambodia with about 9,000 men.

Ranariddh's administration, elected in the May 1993 UN organised poll, has been hampered since taking office by its war with the Khmer Rouge.

Adding to its problems, infighting was exposed in a coup attempt that was suppressed Sunday without bloodshed.

Three alleged architects of the plot to take over the government have been arrested and the fourth, Ranariddh's half-brother, Prince Norodom Chakrapong, has been expelled to Malaysia. The other three include Sin Sen, a deputy in the Interior Ministry; Teas Chhoy, a police chief; and Sin Song, a politician who lost his

job after leading a failed secessionist movement.

On Thursday, the Royal Palace released a letter King Norodom Sihanouk had written to Chakrapong, his son, expressing gratitude to the prince and thanking Ranariddh for letting him leave Cambodia safely.

But Sihanouk who is undergoing chemotherapy in Beijing, said he had no power to intervene in judgment on Chakrapong because he does not know what really happened.

Interior Minister You Hockry said Gen. Chhay San Yun, a deputy in the Defense Ministry, had fled to Vietnam, and two members of the Interior Ministry are missing.

"Some generals have fled to Vietnam," he said, declining to be more specific. "We will ask Vietnam to give them back. We will arrest them."

The administration has received information that nine of

the 14 Thais in custody are members of a sharpshooting death squad, he said. He declined to reveal the source of that information.

But Ranariddh said that before fleeing to Vietnam, Chhay San Yun of the Defense Ministry had told the government that the nine were specialists in explosives, weapons and radio communications.

You Hockry said the investigation into the insurrection was continuing but added, "Generally, the situation is in hand."

The unanimous passage of the controversial Khmer Rouge law averted a second fracture in the administration. It came only after Parliament voted to amend the draft law to include some amnesty provisions and guards against abuse.

Finance Minister Sam Rainsy had led opposition to the draft law, saying it would allow the government to arrest its opponents by accusing them of being Khmer Rouge.



PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat shakes hands with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin as UNESCO General Director Federico Mayor (C) looks on after both received the Felix Houphouet-Boigny United Nations award for peace on July 6.

## ROK Defence Minister seeks apology

SEOUL, July 7: South Korea's defence minister apologized Thursday for saying Seoul's suburbs could serve as 'barricades' to shield the capital in the event of a North Korean attack, reports AP.

The minister Rhee Byung-tae, has been criticized harshly for the comment, made Tuesday during a parliamentary hearing. The main opposition party is demanding his resignation, and residents of several 'satellite cities' to the north of Seoul launched an angry protest.

In his parliamentary testimony, Rhee was explaining the South's strategy for defending Seoul, less than an hour's drive from the North Korean border.

"Using new cities as barricades in times of emergency is part of planning for new cities," he said.

On Thursday, he told reporters his remarks were misconstrued.

## Senior British official to visit China next week

BEIJING, July 7: In another sign of reconciliation over Hong Kong, China said Thursday that a senior British official would arrive in Beijing next week for talks, reports AP.

Alastair Goodlad, Britain's Minister for Hong Kong Affairs, will be the highest-ranking British foreign affairs official to visit China in a year marked by fierce disputes over Hong Kong's political future.

Confirmation of Goodlad's visit supported evidence that London and Beijing have shelved their argument over electoral reforms in Hong Kong and are focusing instead on the colony's transition from British to Chinese rule in 1997.

At a weekly briefing for reporters, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Shen Guofang said Goodlad would arrive next Thursday to discuss Anglo-Chinese relations with Chinese Foreign Ministry officials.

He said Goodlad also would visit Shanghai, the port on China's east coast that hopes to challenge Hong Kong's role as Asia's financial and shipping hub.

He did not give a specific timetable for Goodlad's visit, the first of its kind since British Foreign Minister Douglas Hurd visited in July 1993.

## Off the Record

### Preacher on trial for additional wives

SINGAPORE: One of the 10 wives of a self-styled Islamic preacher on trial for having six wives too many was rushed from his Singapore courtroom trial in labour pains, the Straits Times reported on Wednesday, says Reuter.

The heavily-veiled Noor Afizah Baba, 25, eighth wife of self-proclaimed preacher Abu Talib Harun, was taken to hospital in Malaysia's southern city of Johor Baru on Tuesday, the paper said.

She later gave birth to a baby boy, a hospital source said. Abu Talib, 34, the father of 17 previous children all below the age of five, is being tried in an Islamic court on charges of violating Islamic law by having more than four wives at a time.

About Talib says the Shi'ite school of Islam allows him the additional six wives.

If convicted, he could be jailed or fined or both, lawyers said.

### Wrong choice of target

TOKYO: In a country where women often fall victim to groping hands on overcrowded rush-hour trains, 19-year-old Naomi Furukawa was the wrong choice of target, reports AP.

When Miss Furukawa felt a hand up her skirt, she identified herself as a police officer, ignored the man's repeated pleas for forgiveness, took him off the Tokyo-area commuter train and arrested him, police official Kaichi Sato said Thursday.

The man was charged with indecent assault after the incident Wednesday evening, he added.

Also in Tokyo, police are looking for the man or men who have forcibly stolen the panties from 13 women walking in Tokyo in the last four months.

A person convicted of indecent assault can face up to seven years in prison in Japan, but most cases of groping on trains are never reported.

### Benign breast growths not benign

BOSTON: Some benign breast growths that are common in young women appear to double the risk of breast cancer later in life, according to a study released Thursday, reports AP.

Another report published Thursday found that having a child temporarily increases the risk of breast cancer, but lowers it later in life.

Dr. William Dupont and others from Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn., found that women with growths called fibroadenomas face about double the usual risk of breast cancer. Fibroadenomas are typically diagnosed when women are in their 20s. Many experts have believed they are unrelated to later development of cancer.

The Vanderbilt study found the increased risk was highest in women whose close relatives had been diagnosed with breast cancer. It was also more elevated in those who had a particular variety of growths called complex fibroadenomas.

"Since fibroadenomas are commonly diagnosed before the age of 30, these lesions provide a means of identifying young women who have an increased risk of breast cancer decades before the onset of invasive disease," the researchers wrote.

They suggested that women with both complex fibroadenomas and a family history of breast cancer should begin having regular mammograms at age 35 or 40.

## Clinton pays respect to dead of WW II

WARSAW, July 7: On a solemn morning of remembrance, President Clinton is honouring fallen soldiers of World War II and Hitler's victims, while trying to calm anxieties that Russia might again seek to dominate Poland, reports AP.

The president was paying his respects Thursday at Poland's Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and visiting the Warsaw Ghetto Memorial to the Jewish Community that

made a Nazi unsuccessful stand against last terror 50 years ago.

Addressing Poland's historic need for security, Clinton pointed to Russia's entry in the NATO Partnership for Peace, saying "we are in better shape now than we were a few months ago."

Russia has pledged to respect the borders of its neighbours. Moreover, Clinton said, Russia's economy is on the rise.

"In an uncertain world," Clinton said Wednesday, "I think we are doing about as well as we can in moving things in the right direction" to keep reform and democracy alive.

President Lech Walesa, the visionary unionist who led Poland out of Moscow's military and economic grip, said his country's security cannot depend on "paper guarantees."

Speaking openly about Poland's security problems, Walesa said, "My apprehensions amount to 40 per cent and my hopes amount to the other 60. If the United States continues to extend its assurances of stability and security in this region of the world, the proportions will change."

Clinton was addressing Poland's security and economic concerns Thursday in a speech to the Polish Parliament.

Before the end of World War II, virtually all of Poland was leveled by German bombs.

### Govt to renew BBC's royal charter

LONDON, July 7: The British government announced Wednesday it plans to renew the BBC's royal charter when it expires in 1996, allaying fears over the future of the corporation's public broadcasting mandate, reports AP.

But Heritage Secretary Peter Brooke, presenting a broadcasting white paper including the proposed 10-year renewal of the charter, said the corporation should aim to develop its commercial interests.

The move came despite pressure from some Conservative MPs who want partial or total privatisation of the BBC but was expected after the BBC introduced reforms a year ago to restructure and control costs.

## BRIEFLY

**Columbia lifts off today:** The weather was the sole concern for Friday's planned launch of space shuttle Columbia, AP reports from Cape Canaveral.

Columbia is due to lift off on the laboratory research mission at 12:43 pm (1643 GMT). The shuttle will carry seven astronauts and thousands of aquatic animals, including fish, newts, toad eggs and baby sea urchins.

Shuttle weather officer Ed Priselac said rain and thunderstorms were likely early Friday afternoon. He put the odds of a Friday launch at 60 per cent.

**One killed in Mexican clash:** Rival Indian groups clashed in a gun battle Wednesday that left one man dead and at least three others seriously wounded in a dispute that began with hostage taking, AP reports from Mexico.

The 20-minute shooting exchange underscored the simmering tensions of an unresolved guerrilla uprising that led to 10 days of fighting between Indian guerrillas and the army in early January. But no rebels were reported involved in the latest violence.

Protestant Indians who were expelled from San Juan Chamula, a town 30 miles (50 kms) north of San Cristobal de las Casas, took Mayor Domingo Lopez Ruiz hostage Tuesday and brought him to a government Indian affairs office in this city.

**'Deng in good health':** Chinese senior leader Deng Xiaoping is now in Beijing and is in good health, one of his daughters said Thursday, AP reports from Beijing.

Deng Nan, speaking to reporters at a conference on the environment in Beijing where she is a delegate, did not give any other details.

There are regular rumours that the 89-year-old Deng is ailing or dead, and with equal regularity China or his children report that he is well.

**Gen Wimol slates ex-US envoy:** Thailand's army chief called former US ambassador Morton Abramowitz a 'devil' and an 'enemy of the Thai people' for contending Thailand is still helping Cambodia's Khmer Rouge guerrillas, AFP reports from Bangkok.

Abramowitz is "not an ambassador but a devil," General Wimol Wongwanich told reporters Wednesday evening.

### Mandela tries to end war in Angola

PRETORIA, July 7: President Nelson Mandela launched his first foreign peacemaking effort Thursday, hosting Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos and two other African leaders in talks on ending Angola's 19-year civil war, reports AP.

Mandela also plans to meet soon with Angolan rebel leader Jonas Savimbi in hope of setting up face-to-face talks between Savimbi and dos Santos.

And advance team from Savimbi's National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) rebels would visit South Africa next week to set up the Mandela Savimbi meeting, a spokesman for Mandela said Thursday.

Savimbi, who reportedly refuses to leave Angola for security reasons, has accepted Mandela's offer for a meeting in South Africa. In principle, according to the Portuguese news agency LUSA, giving unidentified sources, it said the date still must be decided.

## Concern over growing harassment of journalists in India

NEW DELHI, July 7: The public beating of two reporters by police under the command of India's "supercop" has sparked concern over the growing harassment of journalists in the world's largest democracy, reports AP.

Human rights groups, the media, lawyers, and political parties have taken up the cudgel on behalf of the battered pair to focus attention on what many of them describe as "systematic suppression" of the press by the state.

The Indian government is bracing itself for protests since the June 30 thrashing of the newspaper reporters by men serving under Punjab Police Chief K P S Gill, and has offered to launch an investigation into the incident.

Rahul Banerjee and Abhijit Das, sports reporters for The Statesman, were beaten after a press conference called by Gill at a luxury hotel here to discuss his appointment as chief of India's field Hockey Federation.

They were punched, kicked and dragged away at gunpoint

to a police station for asking questions which allegedly embarrassed Gill, who earned the nickname "supercop" for crushing Sikh militancy in Punjab.

Police chiefs from India's 25 states opened a meeting here Wednesday and the assault by Gill's men and relations with the press were set to be one of the top items on the agenda. Home Ministry sources said.

"We will try to see where the malaise lies and how to mend fences with the media," said a minister who requested anonymity.

About 100 journalists held a protest march to parliament here Wednesday chanting 'stop bashing reporters' and carrying signs proclaiming 'journalists are not terrorists'.

Gill has claimed the beating occurred after he has left the press conference and accused the media of "blowing it out of all proportion."

The government's offer to investigate the incident had been dismissed.

The dismissed seems to be to obfuscate the issue," said C R Irani, chief editor of The Statesman.

Others have said the beating should be seen in the perspective of growing state intolerance of the media.

"It is high time we take action to stop the hectoring of the state," said a spokesman for the Delhi Journalists' Association, who has long complained that many Indian publications bear official harassment without a murmur.

Most of India's 28,400 listed publications are heavily dependent on state advertising.

The autonomous Press Council of India said it had received 216 reports from journalists in 1993-94 complaining of assaults, detentions, arrests or other forms of harassment.

The council probed only 40 such complaints in 1979 when it was set up, said its Deputy Secretary Vibha Bhargava.

Complaints reached an all time high in 1992-93, when 233 reports of harassment by the authorities reached the

28-member Council, headed by a retired Supreme Court judge.

"The situation is terrible in the east," another Council official said, in several eastern and northeastern states journalists have died or vanished in mysterious circumstances over the past few years.

"The Council advises the government to observe caution, circumspection and restraint while taking action against writings amounting to fair criticism in newspapers," the panel said in its 14th annual report published last year.

The Indian Federation of Working Journalists decided Tuesday to independently investigate reports of 'suppression and harassment' of journalists by militants and the authorities.

Federation president, Vikram Rao, said the union would send teams to the troubled state of Kashmir and northeast India to investigate complaints and also probe allegations that a section of the press was fuelling militant campaigns.



Journalists chant slogans before a police barricade on Thursday in New Delhi to protest the public beating of two reporters by police officers.

### SA sells arms to Oman

JOHANNESBURG, July 7: South Africa is selling long-range artillery guns worth 120 million dollars to Oman in the first public arms sale since a UN weapons embargo was lifted. South African arms maker Denel Ltd said on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

A statement said the deal included ammunition, spares and logistical support for the 155 mm G-6 self-propelled artillery guns but did not say how many of the weapons were involved.

The G-6 based on the G-5 that was developed with the help of Canadian scientist Gerald Bull is widely regarded as one of the best of its kind in the world. South Africa sold an unknown number of G-5s to Iraq in the 1980s.

The deal is the first major transaction between South Africa and a foreign country since the lifting of the arms embargo against South Africa, said the statement.

The UN embargo was lifted following historic all-race elections at the end of April.