

## BRIEFLY

## ASEAN condemns Khmer Rouge:

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on Saturday condemned their former ally, the Khmer Rouge guerrillas, for upsetting the peace ASEAN had patiently nurtured in war-torn Cambodia, AFP says from Bangkok.

ASEAN foreign ministers, putting the finishing touches on a communiqué to cap their annual two-day meeting, expressed support for the elected government of Cambodia and concern about instability in that country.

They denounced a recent abortive coup d'état in Phnom Penh as well as a Khmer Rouge decision to set up a provisional government in guerrilla-held territory in northern Cambodia, in the vicinity of Preah Vihear.

## Rocket attacks kill 3 in Kabul:

Three people were killed and two were wounded when opponents of President Burhanuddin Rabbani launched fresh rocket attacks on the Afghan capital Kabul, official Kabul Radio said on Friday, Reuter reports from Islamabad.

It blamed forces controlled by Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and northern warlord General Abdul Rashid Bostum, who seek to topple Rabbani.

Some houses were also damaged by rockets on Thursday night and Friday, said the broadcast, monitored in Islamabad.

## 4 boys die in Punjab blast:

Four children were killed in the Indian state of Punjab when a bomb they recovered from a canal exploded while they were playing with it, the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported on Friday, AFP says from New Delhi.

The bomb went off when the boys struck it against a tree on Thursday in Doraha town in the industrial district of Ludhiana, the news agency said. Four other children were injured.

Police said the bomb was among 50 reportedly imported from Iraq as scrap. Detectives who combed the area found four bombs buried near a paramilitary camp and recovered the rest from the canal.

## Asia-Pacific meet in Dec:

Military leaders from Asia-Pacific countries will meet in Tokyo in early December to discuss regional security, a newspaper reported yesterday, AFP says from Tokyo.

The meeting will be the first of its kind in the Asia-Pacific region, the Sankei Shinbun said.

Representatives from the United States, Russia, China, South Korea, Australia, Japan and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member countries will discuss their defence policies and exchange opinions at the meeting the newspaper said.



Ashaari Muhammad, leader of Malaysia's controversial Al Arqam movement, performs prayers on Saturday in a hotel in northern Thailand's Chiangmai. The Islamic leader who has been in self-imposed exile for seven years has called for an independent national referendum to test his popularity against that of Premier Mahathir Mohamad. — AFP photo

## Interpol-Mexico chief held:

Two senior police officers, including the head of Interpol-Mexico, were arrested in their offices, the federal attorney general's office said, AP reports from Mexico City.

Friday's two paragraph announcement called the arrests "a disciplinary measure of administrative character" because the officers had ignored instructions from superiors. There was no further explanation.

It was unclear if Federal Police Cmdr. Emnilio Islas Rangel, director of Interpol-Mexico, and Cmdr. Juan Jose Valedelamar Escalona would face charges.

## Budapest's Matthias church bombed:

An explosion destroyed the back entrance of the landmark Matthias Church early Saturday and shattered stained-glass windows in the main sanctuary, AP reports from Budapest, Hungary.

The neo-Gothic church, which dates to 1247, was the site of coronation ceremonies for Hungary's monarchs over the centuries.

## Floods leave 7 dead on Thai border:

Seven people were confirmed dead and almost 30 missing in floods that have inundated the Thai-Myanmar border region in Mae Sot, Thai officials said yesterday, Reuter reports from Mae Sot, Thailand.

Thai and Myanmar authorities were continuing searches for more victims and trying to reach isolated communities still cut off by water up to four metres (13 feet) deep in some places.

## Prison riot in Sweden

STOCKHOLM, July 23: A decision to place three inmates in solitary confinement set off a 12-hour prison riot by inmates who set fire to several buildings in southwestern Sweden before giving up Saturday morning, reports AP.

No injuries were reported, according to officials, who said a "show of force" and mediation efforts by several inmates helped restore order.

The uprising at Tidaholm Prison, about 320 kilometres (200 miles) southwest of Stockholm, began at evening lock-up time Friday when prisoners refused to return to their cells to protest the decision.

## Japan to help ROK, US resolve North Korean nuclear issue

SEOUL, July 23: Japanese Prime Minister Tomichi Murayama reaffirmed on Saturday that his government would closely cooperate with South Korea and the United States to resolve the North Korean nuclear issue, reports AP.

Murayama, who took office last month, sought to ally unease in South Korea over his Socialist Party's traditionally strong ties with the Communist North.

He also took steps, although mainly symbolic, to try to soothe the lingering bitterness associated with the Japanese colonial period in Korea.

Through close cooperation

## Gunmen spray bullets on Shi'ite Muslims

## 6 killed, 28 hurt in Karachi

KARACHI, July 23: At least six people, including a seven-year-old child, were killed and 28 injured here today when unidentified gunmen sprayed bullets and lobbed an explosive on a bus, police said, reports AFP.

The victims were all Shi'ite Muslims who were targeted shortly after leaving an early morning prayer gathering at the city's central district, a police official said.

He said a preliminary investigation showed that the gunmen, apparently waiting in ambush, opened fire on the vehicle and when it stopped they hurled an explosive device, possibly a hand grenade, at the vehicle.

The driver was missing and was believed to have driven the bus away after the attack, the official said.

Hospital sources said all the dead and several of the injured bore shrapnel and bullet wounds.

AP adds: "It was a nightmare," said Ahmed. "I saw three motorcycles pull up beside us. They started shooting. I heard an explosion. Everyone was screaming."

In an attempt to flee from the gunmen, the bus driver sped through the streets of Karachi, said Ahmed. He said the terrifying ride ended at a Shi'ite-run hospital in central Karachi.

"He saved so many lives because he just stepped on the gas and kept driving," said Ahmed.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the

shooting, but witnesses blamed militant Sunni Muslims. Most of Pakistan's 120 million people are Sunni Muslims.

Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has accused her political opponents of inciting sectarian violence in an attempt to destabilise her government.

Her conservative opposition has denied the charge.

Hasan Tarabi, a spokesman for the militant Shi'ite group, the Movement for the

Enforcement of Shi'ite Law, vowed to avenge the killings.

"We will not sit quietly and let this happen," Tarabi said in a prepared statement.

He said Benazir's government was helpless to stop the killings.

"Scores of Shias have been massacred in the country. They government has failed to protect us," he said. "We have to do something to protect ourselves."

Police feared Saturday's attack in the southern port city of Karachi was in retaliation for the Lahore killings.

Police and paramilitary troops were deployed outside the hospital where the passengers had been taken and around the mosque in the northern suburb of Karachi.

Residents of the area have refused to talk to police because they fear retaliation, said Alim Jafri, a police spokesman.



Mourners gather around the bodies of victims killed in an attack on a bus in Karachi yesterday. — AFP photo

## Malaysia plans to deport 20 aliens

KUALA LUMPUR, July 23: A group of at least 20 illegal immigrants, most of them from China, doused themselves with kerosene on Friday and threatened to set themselves on fire over Malaysia's attempts to deport them, police said, reports Reuter.

Police were negotiating with the group, who have been sitting in a police bus on a football field near the international airport for several hours, police and witnesses said.

Two officials from the Chinese Embassy have joined the negotiations, a police spokesman at Kuala Lumpur's International Airport said.

## Akihito to visit France, Spain

TOKYO, July 23: Japan's Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko will go on a 13-day tour of France and Spain during October, business Daily Nihon Keizai Shinbun reported today, says Reuter.

It said they will stay overnight in Frankfurt on October 2 prior to start of the visit, before going to Paris for an official reception with President Francois Mitterand.

## Missing Yemeni, Omani envoys found safe

ALGIERS, July 23: The Ambassadors of Yemen and Oman in Algeria, who went missing week ago, have been found "safe and well," Algerian security officials announced late Friday, reports AFP.

Their Moroccan driver and a Yemeni guest of theirs were also reported safe.

The report came three days after Algeria's outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) condemned the "kidnappings" and blamed the incident on the government.

"The FIS Parliamentary delegation condemns the kidnapping of the two ambassadors and holds the totalitarian establishment entirely responsible for the decadent situation in Algeria's and for all kinds of violations of human rights in the country, a FIS statement said.

Omani ambassador Hissal Al-Siyabi and his Yemeni counterpart, Qacem Askar Jebrane went missing on July 15.

## 12000 Muslims flee homes to escape Bodo violence

NANAS TIGER RESERVE, India, July 23: More than 12,000 Muslim settlers have taken refuge around a tiger reserve in India's remote northeast to escape ethnic violence by the majority Bodo tribes people, reports AP.

Muslim elders accused the Bodos of trying to "cleanse" their villages of Muslims after years of migration from Bangladesh, pitting the Muslim settlers against native Bodos for land and jobs.

"The Bodos may be attacking villages where Muslims are in majority so that the villages turn into tribal majority again," said Khondakar Shamsul Alam, a 72-year-old leader of the village of Barpara.

The Bodos, most of whom are animists who believe in witchcraft, want to preserve their ancient culture and heritage which they say is threatened by the Muslim immigration.

The current spate of attacks on Muslim settlers started on Wednesday after a Bodo woman was killed, apparently by a

Muslim settler. Bodos raided Muslim settlements, killing 11 Muslim settlers, by official count. Witnesses put the death toll at 25.

The state government deployed 2,000 paramilitary troops in the area.

## Sanjay thanks fans

NEW DELHI, July 23: Film star Sanjay Dutt has thanked his numerous fans for their love and prayers, and expressed the confidence that he would soon come out of prison winner, reports PTI.

"I want to thank you all for your love and prayers. I know with your love and prayers and with God on my side, I will come out soon and come out as a winner," Dutt stated in a letter written in Thane prison and released here by his secretary.

Dutt is currently under judicial remand in Thane jail as an accused in the Bombay bomb blast case. He was arrested by Bombay police last year was accused in the serial bombings case and was subsequently released on interim bail.

By Saturday, 12,000 refugees were registered in 10 relief camps near this public park and tiger reserve on the Bhutan border, about 140 kilometers (87 miles) north of Gauhati, capital of Assam state.

"My two brothers were killed and there is no trace of my mother. I am helpless," said Rup Bano, a 36-year-old Muslim, clutching her 18-month-old son.

Some of the refugees piled baggage onto bullock-drawn carts, but others fled with nothing.

Wednesday's riot was the fourth deadly clash in nine months between Bodos and the Muslims. In the worst incident last October, at least 40 Muslim settlers were killed.

The Bodos also are fighting the Indian government to demand and autonomous Bodo region. At least 1,000 people have been killed in the last six years of insurrection.



Iranian supporters of Maryam Rajavi for president of Iran shout as they demonstrate on Friday during a rally at Lafayette Park across the street from the White House in Washington. Hundreds attended the march and rally for democracy in Iran that was sponsored in part by the National Council of Resistance in Iran. — AFP photo

## Myanmar refugees fear going home

BANGKOK, July 23: Thousands of Myanmar refugees who fled to Thailand after a Myanmar army raid on their settlement remain camped out without shelter on Thai soil, too afraid to return, a relief official said today.

About 6,000 refugees from Myanmar Mon ethnic minority fled to Thailand following a surprise raid on their camp just inside Myanmar on Thursday.

Myanmar troops had with-

drawn from the area but the refugees, most of them women and children, were refusing to go back, said Nai Shwe Thein, deputy chairman of the Mon relief committee.

"They are afraid to go back because the Myanmar soldiers can come back at any time. They want to stay in safety on the Thai side," Shwe Thein told Reuters in a telephone interview from the western Thai border province of Kanchanaburi.

The refugees had sufficient supplies of rice but were without shelter and being drenched by monsoon showers, he said.

Myanmar troops and Mon guerillas clashed briefly on Thursday but there were no reports of death or injuries, he said.

About 50 male refugees were seized and taken away by the Myanmar troops, he said.

The raid on Halockhanti refugee camp came as a senior Myanmar junta official was in Bangkok telling Thai leaders that the regime had accepted an invitation to start dialogue with the United Nations following grave concerns over its human rights record.

Myanmar Foreign Minister Ohn Gyaaw, in Bangkok to attend a two-day association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) meeting told his Thai hosts on Thursday that the junta had authorised him to engage in dialogue on various issues with the United Nations.

There are about 70,000 refugees from Myanmar in camps on the Thai side of the border.

## Off the Record

## A tricky one for the jury

TAMPA: A woman who paid a hitman 1,500 dollars to shoot her abusive husband was acting responsibly, three mental health experts testified in a Florida murder trial, reports AP.

Mary Stiles contends that years of abuse from the circus performer, known as Lobster Boy because of his clawlike hands, left her no choice but to have him killed.

The experts testified Friday after Judge William Fuente reversed himself and decided to let a jury decide whether her battered spouse defence has merits.

Mary Stiles, 56, admits arranging for a teenage neighbour to shoot Grady Stiles, 55, as he sat in their trailer in November 1992. She claims she feared for her life and had no other choice.

"She had a reasonable perception that her life was in danger and was in a kill-or-be-killed situation," said psychiatrist Arturo Gonzalez.

The experts chronicled how the alcoholic beat her with his pincer-like hands for years, and even sexually abused her with a crude blackjack weapon.

The said she awoke two nights before the slaying with her stump-legged husband at a top her, holding a knife to her throat and threatening to kill her.

## 150 yrs of all-male policy ends

CHARLESTON, South Carolina: A military academy was ordered Friday to admit the first woman into its cadet ranks, ending more than 150 years of an all-male policy, reports AP.

Judge Weston Houck's decision would admit Shannon Faulkner, 19, to the Citadel in Charleston, South Carolina, where women have previously only been allowed to attend classes as visiting students.

Faulkner had filed a sex discrimination suit against the Citadel, which had accepted her application mistaking her for a male student and then rejected her when discovering the error.

The Citadel had threatened to make Faulkner follow all the academy codes strictly — including shaving her head — if forced to admit her.

The judge ordered Faulkner's immediate admittance to be followed up by plans for accommodating more women to be completed by 1995.

## 23m yrs old rhino skeletons found

GANNAT, France: Well preserved rhino skeletons at least 23 million years old have been found at a prehistoric archaeological site in central France, the director of the dig said Friday, reports AP.

Francois Esculles said the three skeletons found in the past few days were of a male, a female who apparently died as she was giving birth and one as yet unidentified. They together with the remains of crocodiles and fossilised birds, were found at a depth of 12 metres (40 feet).

Another rhino skeleton was uncovered last year a few hundred metres (feet) from the most recent finds which are on mount Libre, two kilometres (1.2 miles) from Gannat in the department of Allier.

"Last year's rhinoceros died of dehydration in a swamp at the edge of a large tropical lake which at the time covered the area between Clermont Ferrand and Moulins where temperatures were around the same as they currently are in the Sudan," said Esculles.

The three individuals found this year were found on a layer of clay and appear to have got stuck following a storm.

The morphology of these rhinos is close to that of today's Hippopotami which only appeared on earth seven or eight million years ago, Esculles said.

## Sudan declares ceasefire

KHARTOUM, July 23: The Sudanese government declared a unilateral ceasefire starting Saturday in its 11-year war with southern rebels, reports AP.

A government statement said the action was in response to an appeal from President Daniel arap Moi of Kenya, where peace talks have been taking place between Sudanese officials and the two rival rebel factions of the Sudan People's Liberation Army.

"All Sudanese armed forces are herewith ordered to observe a cease-fire in all the operation zones in southern Sudan, save in the case of self-defence," the statement said.

Japanese officials say an announcement expected within the next month on measures to make amends for the wartime sex slavery will not include compensation for the women themselves.

Earlier Saturday, about 500 activists held a peaceful protest a few blocks away from the Japanese Embassy in Seoul to demand that Japan compensate war victims in South Korea.

Kim said it was time for the two countries to move ahead.

The Japanese leader's Seoul visit is his second trip abroad as prime minister.