

BRIEFLY

Chinese dissident jailed: Chinese authorities in Anhui Province have sentenced democracy and worker activist Zhang Lin to three years of "re-education through labour," his wife said yesterday. Reuter reports from Beijing.

Ji Xiao said by telephone she took their three month old daughter, whom her husband had never seen, to visit Zhang on Sunday before he was to be taken to the coal mine where he will serve his sentence.

4 shot dead at Detroit club: An early-morning shooting at an after-hours club on Sunday left four men dead and two injured, police said. Police responding to a 4:30 am call found the six men shot in a northeast side home, where the club was located, said Officer Dale Seaton, AP reports from Detroit.

The home was used for "after-hours activities," he said. No further information was immediately available on the shooting. Police were investigating.

ROK writer charged: The best selling South Korean writer on Monday was charged with violating a security law by writing a controversial novel allegedly siding with Communist North Korea. AFP reports from Seoul.

Cho Chong-Rae, 51, has been accused of eulogizing a pro-North Korean leftist movement before and during the 1950-53 Korean War in his novel "Taebaek mountains," police said.

Remains of Japanese soldiers: The remains of 10 Japanese soldiers taken prisoner in World War II were repatriated on Sunday after a ceremony at their war cemetery in the Buryat republic in Siberia, the Itar-Tass news agency reported. AFP says from Moscow.

Government officials in Ulan Ude, the capital of the small Russian republic south of Lake Baikal, and a Japanese Health Ministry delegation laid wreaths on the tombs of the soldiers.

4 Nigerians to die in Sudan: A Sudanese court sentenced to death four Nigerian drug traffickers convicted of trying to smuggle cocaine and heroin into Saudi Arabia disguised as Muslim pilgrims, judicial officials said on Sunday. AFP reports from Khartoum.

They were arrested in May in Khartoum on their way to Saudi Arabia after swallowing a total of four kilograms of the drugs.

Another Bombay bldg collapses: At least five people were killed and six injured when a five-storey building collapsed near Bombay's central business district, yesterday, the third fatal collapse within a week, Reuter reports from Bombay.

Most of those trapped beneath the debris of the building in congested Zaveri Bazaar area were construction workers, a fire brigade official said.

US soldier airlifted to FRG: An American soldier was airlifted to Germany after breaking his hand while preparing for joint US-Russian military exercises in the Ural Mountains, officials said Monday. AP reports from Moscow.

Also Monday, an Army spokesman announced that US Defence Secretary William Perry had cancelled his trip to Russia this week because of the worsening situation in the Caribbean.

ROK FM leaves for US: South Korea's foreign minister left for Washington on Monday for talks with US officials on coordinating policy on North Korea's nuclear programme. AP reports from Seoul.

The United States is set to hold technical meetings with North Korea this weekend to work out terms for freezing the communist country's suspected nuclear weapons programme in exchange for economic aid and steps toward full diplomatic recognition.

Clash claims 8 in Chechnya: Clashes between government and opposition forces in Chechnya killed eight people on Sunday, as the Moscow-backed main opposition group intensified efforts to oust the government, police said. AFP reports from Grozny, Russia.

The fighting took place at Argun, 15 kilometres (nine miles) south of the Chechen capital Grozny. Forces led by faction leader Ruslan Labazanov were hit by a grenade attack launched by government troops.

24 crew feared dead in Cape Town: Radio messages from a stricken iron ore carrier that sank over the weekend indicated the 24 crew members went down with the ship, a rescue official said Monday. AP reports from Cape Town.

"It doesn't look as if they made it to the life boats," said Capt. Bill Dierker, head of South Africa's Maritime Search and Rescue Operations.

Poet Wright dies in UK: The lyrical, satirical and narrative poet David Wright, who said total deafness since childhood meant he perceived the world like an eccentrically-sited camera, has died at age 74. AP reports from London.

The South African born poet died of cancer on August 28 at Waldon, 40 miles south of London, his family reported. Wright was prolific. In addition to poetry, produced guides to Portugal, an autobiography, anthologies of verse, book reviews, a biography of his fellow South African and poet Roy Campbell and modern English translations of Beowulf and the Canterbury Tales.

Israeli killed in Gaza: Arab gunmen in a moving car shot and killed one Israeli soldier and wounded two others in the Palestinian self-rule enclave of the Gaza Strip on Sunday, the Israeli army said. Reuter reports from Jerusalem.

"An Israeli soldier was killed and two other soldiers were wounded moderately as a result of terrorist gunfire at them Sunday evening in the Gaza Strip," an army spokeswoman said.

2 Filipinos abducted: Two local businessmen have been abducted by unidentified armed men in the southern Philippines following the release of seven South Koreans held by Muslim guerrillas, police said yesterday. AFP reports from Cotabato.

Ethnic Chinese retailer Jorge Lim was abducted by four gunmen who barged into his home in General Santos City late Sunday, while six to Escudero was snatched from his hardware store in Mang town earlier Sunday, police said.

US singer Lance dies: Rhythm and Blues singer Major Lance, who had a big hit in 1964 with his song "Um, um, um," has died at the age of 55, family members were quoted on Sunday as saying. Reuter reports from Atlanta.

He died in his sleep on Saturday and the cause of death was hard disease, they said. Lance, who won a Grammy Award in 1963 for the song "Hey Little Girl," also produced a number of other hits including "Monkey Time."

Delhi lobbies for boycott of confce

OIC meet in Islamabad tomorrow

ISLAMABAD, Sept 5: Islamic countries are set to meet here Wednesday to develop a common front on key issues facing the international community, including Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kashmir, Afghanistan and the Middle East, a foreign office spokesman said.

The three-day extraordinary conference of foreign ministers of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) is to be inaugurated by Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto.

"Our objective as a host country is to have action-oriented decisions on all the four burning issues," the spokesman told AFP.

The issues require some political direction from the OIC foreign ministers which enables us to take certain stands at the upcoming United Nations General Assembly, he said.

Senior officials are to meet here Tuesday to prepare the agenda of the main conference. Some 20 ministers, among them 14 foreign ministers, have already confirmed their participation, despite India's lobbying for a boycott, he said, adding that the response was "better" than the previous emergency meeting of Islamic foreign ministers in Turkey last year.

At least 45 members of the 51-nation OIC have decided to send their representatives to the session, convened at "short notice," he said. Bosnian Prime Minister Haris Siladzic would lead his country's delegation to the conference, he said.

Concerning Afghanistan, where ex-Mujahideen factions have been fighting since the fall of the communist regime in April 1992, he said there was no decision about Afghan-

istan's representation because the country's factions have not agreed on a foreign minister.

He said India sent out its envoys to a large number of Islamic countries, urging them not to attend the Islamabad conference.

"Pakistan is very happy that a vast majority of our friends and brothers have refused to heed to the Indian pressure," he said.

The last conference met at Karachi in April 1993, when the Islamabad peace accord on Afghanistan, which ended last June, was still in place. This week's conference will aim to promote a reconciliation among the warring factions through consultations and a call for a cessation of hostilities, he said.

On Bosnia, the conference will take a decision on recommendations of an OIC con-

tact group which met recently in Geneva. It called for confirmation of territorial integrity of Bosnia-Herzegovina, protection of safe areas, lifting of an arms embargo and the monitoring of weapons supplies to the Bosnian Serbs, he said.

Observers said among the four key issues of the Islamic world, Kashmir is considered a significant item on the agenda from a Pakistani point of view.

"We are looking to OIC support for an end of repression in Kashmir, where a half million Indian army is currently engaged," he said.

As for the Middle East, the conference is likely to support continuing moves toward peace, he said. The OIC countries believe that UN resolutions on Jerusalem and the territories occupied by Israel should be fully implemented, he said.

Junta to meet Suu Kyi by year end

TOKYO, Sept 5: Myanmar's ruling junta will open talks with opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi by the end of the year, a Myanmar intelligence official said in reports published here today, says AFP.

The comments by Kyaw Win, deputy director of the Myanmar Defence Ministry's Intelligence Bureau, to Japanese reporters on Saturday in Yangon were the first official confirmation that the ruling State Law and Order Registration Council (SLORC) plans to sit down with Suu Kyi, the Daily Yomiuri and Mainichi Daily News said.

The Nobel laureate is in her sixth year under house arrest in Yangon, the dailies said.

SLORC chairman Than Shwe or his deputy will meet Suu Kyi when the chairman has time, Kyaw Win was reported as saying.

According to Kyaw Win, Suu Kyi indicated she wished to meet the junta leaders during a conversation at her house in early August with a Myanmar priest who has lived in Britain for more than 30 years, the newspapers said.

Kyaw Win said Suu Kyi told the priest that she had no words of hate for military junta.

US, Cuba continue talks to break deadlock

NEW YORK, Sept 5: Cuban and US negotiators are trying again Monday to break a deadlock in talks on halting the flow of Cuban refugees, reports AP.

The talks, entering their fourth successive day, were to resume at 1 pm (1700 GMT) Monday at the Cuban Mission to the United Nations.

"There are substantial gaps between us and I would caution against any premature speculation that an agreement is going to be reached," David Johnson, a spokesman for the US delegation, said after Sunday's three-hour session at the US mission.

Former Cambodian minister escapes house arrest

PHNOM PENH, Sept 5: Former Interior Minister Sin Song, an alleged ringleader of Cambodia's recent failed coup attempt, has escaped house arrest from inside the country's heavily guarded Defence Ministry, Co-minister of Interior Sar Kheng said today, reports AFP.

"It is true that General Sin Song escaped on Saturday at 3 am from the Ministry of Defence building," Sar Kheng told AFP.

Sar Kheng said he did not know how Sin Song was able to escape from the Defence Ministry but added that an investigation was underway.

However, a senior police officer, who asked not to be identified, said three high-ranking military colonels who were guarding Sin Song had also disappeared.



Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto arrives at Cairo Airport on Sunday. Benazir is the only female head of an Islamic country to attend the ICPD Conference on Monday. Benazir refused to change her programme despite threats from religious groups at home.

— AFP photo

Lanka may free Tamil detenus

COLOMBO, Sept 5: The government was considering releasing Tamil detainees and restoring electricity to Sri Lanka's embattled north as another gesture of goodwill to end ethnic bloodletting, defence officials said today, reports AFP.

Junior Defence Minister Anuruddha Ratwatte called for a report on providing electricity to the northern Jaffna peninsula, which is dominated by the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the sources said.

Reporters who accompanied Ratwatte during his visit to front-line troops in the island's east Sunday said the minister called for foreign aid to rebuild the areas devastated by the Tamil guerilla war.

"Please help us to get the

message across. We need foreign help to rebuild these areas and develop the infrastructure. We can't do it alone," a correspondent quoted the minister as saying.

The minority Tamil community is concentrated in the northern Jaffna peninsula. Tiger cut off power to the region by sabotaging electricity pylons shortly after the latest round of fighting broke out in June 1990.

The new government of Prime Minister Chandrika Kumaratunga has also called for a list of rebel suspects in government custody to reciprocate the LTTE's release over the weekend of 10 policemen held by the rebels for four years.

Ratwatte told reporters in the island's northern Palay

military base Saturday that the government's peace moves gained momentum with the release of the police hostages and expected peace talks "within months, if not weeks."

The LTTE move followed the Colombo government's partial lifting of an economic embargo on Jaffna last week in keeping with a "hand of friendship" to the guerillas to negotiate a settlement of the long conflict.

Tigers are leading a protracted campaign to establish an independent Tamil homeland called Eelam by carving out a third of the country. Some 30,000 people have died since the separatist campaign was launched in 1972.

All political and military efforts to end the fighting have failed.

2 more killed in Afghan fighting

ISLAMABAD, Sept 5: Two people were killed and 23 wounded in overnight rocket attacks on Kabul, held by forces of Afghan President, Burhanuddin Rabbani, government-controlled Kabul Radio said on Sunday, reports Reuter.

The radio, monitored in Islamabad, said forces loyal to Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and his ally, northern warlord General Abdul Rashid Dostum, had fired 65 rockets into Kabul.

Both sides said they had inflicted heavy losses in men fighting near the town of Pul-i-Alam in Logar province, about 60 km (37 miles) south of Kabul.

Kabul radio said an attack by opposition militias had been repulsed and three tanks destroyed. It said on Saturday that 40 attackers had been killed and many wounded.

3 largest power plants collapse Two-thirds of Pakistan plunged into darkness

KARACHI, Sept 5: Pakistan's three largest power plants broke down Sunday night plunging two-thirds of the country into darkness, reports AP.

Power was restored to most parts of the country after three hours, although officials say they are still not sure what caused the blackout.

Some parts of Karachi, Pakistan's largest city of 9 million, were still without power Monday and there was no indication of when it might be restored, said Sammi Ahmed, of the Karachi Electric Company.

He said the country's three largest power generation plants developed technical problems simultaneously, unusual even in Pakistan where power outages are an almost daily occurrence.

Experts complain that Pakistan's power supply system — a combination of hydro-

electric, thermal and nuclear — is inadequate and poorly maintained.

Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto is negotiating with a private consortium for the construction of a mega-power project, but so far no final agreement has been reached.

In the meantime Pakistan's industrialists are getting fed up. "Last night's was a major breakdown, but these power outages have been going on for months," said Habib Charania, of the Karachi chamber of Commerce and Industries.

"Our industries are losing billions of rupees (dollars)," Pakistan's perennial power supply problems have been aggravated by unusually heavy monsoon rains that have downed hundreds of miles of above ground power lines, particularly in the country's largest cities of Karachi and Lahore, explained Ahmed.

Al Arqam chief's wife, spokesman arrested

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 5: The head of a banned Islamic sect has been joined by his wife and an aide in indefinite detention under a law that strips them of their right to trial, police said Monday, reports AP.

Khadji Aam and Asaari's spokesman Said Sulaiman were detained under the Internal Security Act, which also was used against Asaari when he was deported from Thailand on Friday, said Shamsuri Arshad, the police deputy inspector general.

The government moved against Asaari after banning last month his Al Arqam group, a religious-business movement that was born in Malaysia in 1968 and grew into a widespread organisation covering Southeast Asia and some other Muslim countries.

Al Arqam is accused of being a national threat because it

allegedly deviated from mainstream Islam in its philosophy and was spreading disunity among the predominantly Muslim Malay population of Malaysia.

There have been few public protests against the crackdown from among the 100,000 followers that Asaari, 53, claims to have. The only objection has come from opposition leaders and human rights activists protesting against use of Internal Security Act.

Asaari lived in self-imposed exile along with his family and aides in Thailand since 1988, supervising his religious order and a \$18-million business empire of textiles, food, restaurants, audio cassettes and taxi services.

His wife, their 6-month-old daughter Ummu Mubarak and spokesman Said were taken into custody after they also were deported by Thailand on Saturday.

Off the Record

Plan to take revenge backfires

MANILA: A man angered by his noisy neighbours tried to hurl a grenade at them but it exploded as he struggled with his wife, police said Monday. The man was killed and six others, including the wife, were injured, reports AP.

Eddie Fajardo, 23, died instantly in the blast Sunday night at his home in suburban Malabon, police investigator Renato Concepcion said.

Police said Fajardo, who wanted to go to sleep early, got into a heated argument with his neighbours, who were having a drinking party.

He then grabbed the grenade, but his wife, Annaliza, tried to stop him as he was about to throw it. The grenade exploded as they grappled witnesses said.

Key to diplomatic success

TOKYO: Japan's 70-year-old Prime Minister has found the key to diplomatic success when travelling abroad — take your daughter, your doctor, your own bottled water, and avoid local vegetables as much as possible, reports Reuter.

These are the ingredients for health, according to reports of officials who oversaw Prime Minister Tomichi Murayama's visit, last week to southeast Asian nations.

They said the prime minister sailed through the arduous trip of four nations in eight days without the slightest sign of any health problem.

This wasn't the case on Murayama's first overseas trip in July to the economic summit in Naples. He collapsed with a stomach ailment during the summit, his first appearance on the international stage.

Strangest reaction!

QUEESVILLE, Ontario: A woman whose parachute malfunctioned plunged almost 10,000 feet (3,000 meters) into a marsh. After she landed on her back, she got up and apologised to her skydiving instructor, reports AP.

"It's the strangest reaction I've ever seen," said Kevin Killing, an instructor at the Newmarket Skydiving School.

Sharon McClelland, 26, of Newmarket was making her second parachute jump — her first free fall — when her chute only partially opened Saturday.

"She failed to follow proper procedure and open her backup chute," said Frank Watts, owner of the parachuting school.

The partially opened parachute slowed McClelland's descent and ultimately saved her life.

"If I really knew what was happening, I don't think I would have made it," she said.



Miss Patinya Thongsri, 19, receives a kiss from an attendant after winning the Miss Thailand 1994 contest on Sunday. Thongsri will represent Thailand in Miss World contest.

— AFP photo

An-Nahar reappears

JERUSALEM, Sept 5: The east Jerusalem newspaper An-Nahar re-appeared today with an oath of support for the Palestinian cause more than a month after the Palestinian authority closed it down for pro-Jordanian sentiments, reports AFP.

"An-Nahar is back after 36 days in a new format," the daily said in an editorial. "We are a Palestinian newspaper down to the bone and Arab to the marrow."

"Our people are in a new period of building an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as capital under the leadership of the PLO."

Thousands of lazy cows clog traffic in Delhi roads

NEW DELHI, Sept 5: Thousands of lazy cows have invaded the roads of the Indian capital, clogging traffic and causing accidents, but no one seems to know just what to do with them, reports AFP.

The sleepy-eyed animals, revered by Hindus, are all over, occupying major traffic intersections and busy streets, forcing exasperated motorists to slow down and zig-zag around them.

Traffic screeches to a halt when the cows suddenly get up to change lanes or make themselves more comfortable, frequently resulting in collisions.

The cows have even held up

motorcycles, causing security scares and problems for New Delhi's already harried traffic police.

"We want this menace to go," said Qamar Ahmed, a deputy commissioner of police heading the traffic section. "But what are we to do? The cows are squatting everywhere."

"It is a traffic hazard," he added. "It impedes the flow of traffic and leads to accidents."

While the Indian capital's road system is open to a variety of transport, with horse carts still a popular mode of transport in some districts and camels and elephants seen playing the routes occasionally, there has been nothing like

the present bovine invasion.

A police officer was killed here last month when his motorcycle collided with a stray pig that darted across the road and the wayward cattle have been involved in dozens of accidents, although none has proved fatal.

"The other day I saw a motorcyclist fall after hitting a cow," said Delhi resident Nargis Alam. "Luckily, he suffered only bruises and managed to drive on. Everyone cannot be lucky."

Traffic police chief Ahmed agrees, "most people (who meet with accidents) simply get up, dust their clothes and go away. There is hardly any

thing else to do."

"I have ordered my men to shoo away the cows wherever they see them," Ahmed added. "But there is a limit to this."

Traffic police are pressing the New Delhi administration, controlled by the Hindu-revivalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, or Indian People's Party), to drive away the constantly dozing cows.

The BJP government, one of whose first decisions was to ban the slaughter of cows in the capital, says it is on the job, but the cow population on the roads shows no signs of declining.

Delhi's Rural Development Minister Sahib Singh Verma

estimates there are at least 10,000 stray cattle on the roads of New Delhi, their owners seemingly unconcerned.

The city authorities say they heeded up some 14,500 cattle from the city roads last year and earned more than 82,000 dollars in fines from their owners. This year, about 5,000 cattle have been rounded up.

But the police refuse to join the campaign.

"Yes, it is our duty to ensure smooth traffic, but we cannot be catching cows," said Ahmed. "Anyway, we don't have the manpower and resources for such a job. If we take away the cows, who will feed them?"

US holds talks with DPRK today

SEOUL, Sept 5: The United States will begin three days of talks with North Korea this week on the return of the remains of American soldiers killed in the Korean War. South Korean officials said a Monday, reports AP.

The talks, scheduled to open on Tuesday at the border village of Panmunjom, will focus on the return of what the North says are the remains of 14 US soldiers killed in the Korean War, said the officials at the Unification Board.

US officials, observing the US Labour Day holiday on Monday, were not immediately available to confirm the scheduled talks.