Off the Record

Clinton to visit Haiti on Mar 31: President Bill Clinton will visit Haiti on March 31, when United Nations peacekeepers take over from a United Statesled multinational force, the White House announced on Wednesday. Reuter reports from Washington.

Spokesman Mike McCurry said Clinton will attend a ceremony marking the hand over and meet with US military personnel who helped restore President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to power. Clinton will also meet with Aristide, McCurry told a news briefing.

Imam shot dead in Egypt: Gunmen thought to be Muslim militants shot dead the imam (preacher) of a mosque in southern Egypt on Wednesday, apparently because of a dispute over control of the mosque. security sources said. Reuter reports from Assiut.

The imam. 43-year-old Ahmed Mustafa Abder Rahman. was gunned down as he came out of his mosque at about noon. they added.

Mass grave found in Vietnam: The remains of 48 North Vietnamese soldiers killed during the 1968 Tet offensive have been found in a mass grave where they were buried by US and South Vietnamese troops, officials said on Thursday, AP reports from Hanoi.

The 48 were killed on March 4, 1968, while attacking a southern military post at Eaktua, about 20 kilometres (12 miles) southeast of the Dac Lac provincial capital of Buon Ma Thuot, said Phung Nien Son. Son is director of the province's Department of Labour. War Invalids and Social Welfare.

Guatemalan team head to UN: Guatemalan government and army negotiators will meet with United Nations mediators as part of the ongoing efforts to end the nation's 34-year civil war. AP reports from Guatemala

The joint government-army delegation will give their opinion on a draft UN proposal to sign a final peace accord by July 31, said chief negotiator Hector Rosada.

Meningitis kills 500 in Niger: A meningitis epidemic in Niger has killed nearly 500 people since December, the Health Ministry said on Wednesday. more than doubling an estimate released a week ago, AFP reports from Nieamey.

Around 5.000 cases of the disease have been recorded in the impoverished West African country, it said. A ministry toll released on February 28 placed the number of dead at 233 out of 2,000 known cases of the disease.

Armenian minister sacked: Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan on Wednesday dismissed his minister in charge of energy issues - an American citizen - Itar-Tass news agency reported. Reuter says from Moscow.

Ter-Petrosyan issued a decree relieving Steve Tashjian of his duties, saying he had been transferred to another job.

Reuters-NBC sign deal: Reuters has reached a global agreement to provide news and financial data that NBC can use in its programming worldwide, the companies announced on Wednesday. Terms of the pact weren't disclosed. AP reports from New York.

Under the 10-year agreement, NBC will be able to use information from Reuters around the world on all of its existing and future programme services.

5 chopped to death in Trinidad: A 20-year-old mother and her four children were chopped to death in Trinidad as the family slept, police said on Tuesday, Reuter reports from Port of Spain.

Police Superintendent Regionld Taylor said detectives were searching for the woman's lover for questioning and police suspected the murders occurred after an argument over the woman's fidelity.

Measles claims 21 in Vietnam: measles outbreak along Vietnam's border with China has killed 21 people, including a dozen children, a news report said on Thursday. AP says from Hanoi.

The deaths in late February and early March occurred in two districts in northern Ha Giang province, 185 kilometres (115 miles) north of Hanoi, the trade union newspaper Lao Dong (labour) reported.

HR monitor áppeals aid for Rwanda: The chief UN human rights monitor on Wednesday appealed for argent contributions to help rebuild Rwanda's devastated court and prison system. AP reports from United Nations.

Rwanda's judicial system was left in ruins after a campaign of ething slaughter by soldiers and allied militiamen of the Hutti government last year left some 500,000 people dead most of them members of the minority Tutsi ethnic group.

DPRK, Japan to continue talks: Officials from Japan and North Korea informally agreed in Singapore in mid-February to continue working-level talks aimed at resuming normalisation negotiations, it was re-

ported on Thursday. AFP says from Tokyo.

An unidentified senior Japanese foreign ministry official met in Singapore an aide to Kim Yong Sun, Secretary of the Workers Party of Korea. Kyodo News Agency said, citing a source close to the proceedings. Informal meetings had been held before in Geneva and Beijing.

Mexicans stage pro-abortion rally: Pro-choice demonstrators smashed windows and spray painted the headquarters of an anti-abortion group on Wednesday to commemorate International Women's Day. AP reports from Mexico city.

Shouting "we are not incubators!" some 40 women attacked the offices of Pro-vide, a Mexico City organization opposing birth control and abortion.

Ireland to amend abortion law: The Dail (Irish parliament) on late Wednesday voted by 18 votes in favour of controversial plans to amend the country's

law banning abortion, AFP reports from Dublin. The bill which will make information about foreign abortion facilities more freely available in the Irish Republic secured crucial second stage approval by 85 votes to 67.

NASA in search of launch system: NASA selected four companies on Wednesday to enter a competition to develop the first new American launch system

in three decades. AP reports from Washington.

Three California aerospace firms will enter into negotiations for the X-33 programme, which seeks to create a new generation of reusable rockets. They are Lockheed, McDonnell Douglas and Rockwell International Corporation. NASA expects to spend 24 million dollars in 15 months of the concept phase.

## CIA report published in the NY Times

## Most of 'ethnic cleansing' in Bosnia carried out by Serbs

NEW YORK. Mar 9: The CIA has concluded that 90 per cent of the acts of "ethnic cleansing" in Bosnia were carried out by Serbs and that leading Serbian politicians played a role in the crimes, The New York Times reported on Thursday, says AP.

A CIA report, based on aerial photography and technical analysis, also concludes that while Serbs were not the only group to commit war crimes, they were the group involved in a systematic attempt to eliminate all traces of other ethnic groups from their territory, the Times said.

CIA spokesman David Christian told The Associated Press on Wednesday night that the agency had no comment on the report.

The Times said the report

was completed this year and considered so sensitive it was classified at what one official called "an obscene level."

The contents were made available to the Times by one American official in Europe and two more in this country. "Ethnic cleansing" have be-

come keywords of the war in former Yugoslavia and refer to the practice of creating ethnically homogenous areas through murder, terror and expulsions to consolidate con-

International estimates put the number of refugees, made homeless by fighting and "ethnic cleansing," at over 2 million throughout former Yugoslavia, including 1 million in Bosnia-Herzegovina alone.

The fighting began after Serbs in Bosnia rebelled

against the republic's secession from Serb-dominated Yu-

The report might be highly classified because it comes at a time when the United States and its European allies have embraced Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic as a potential peacemaker.

The Clinton Administration may fear that if the report becomes widely circulated, it could cause Milosevic to stop cooperating.

.Sources close to the agency told the Times the report had been submitted to senior Pentagon officials, and officials at the State Department and the National Security Council.

The report said there was no conclusive evidence of direct involvement by Serbian leaders in ethnic cleansing.

but "the systematic nature of the Serbian actions strongly suggests that Pale and perhaps Belgrade exercised a carefully veiled role in the purposeful destruction and dispersal of non-Serb populations." Belgrade is the capital of neighbouring Serbia, while Pale is the Bosnian Serb headquarters.

The ethnic cleansing of the Muslims and Croats cited in the report took place throughout the area now controlled by the Serbs, which amounts to 70 per cent of Bosnia.

The report said Muslims and Croats also committed atrocities, some of them of great ferocity. But it concludes that these actions "lack the intensity, sustained orchestra-Bosnian Serbs did."

## Heavy fighting around Kabul, 500 hurt or killed

KABUL. Mar 9: Presidential troops and a rival Islamic group pounded each other on Wednesday, the third day of major government offensive that reportedly has killed or wounded at least 500 people. reports AP.

President Burhanuddin Rabbani's troops launched a major assault on Monday against Hezb-e-Wahadat soldiers in an attempt to drive them from their stronghold in the south of Kabul.

Hezb-e-Wahadat, a mostly Shi'ite Muslim group that opposes Rabbani, has provided stiff resistance. At one point on Wednesday Hezb-e-Wahadat soldiers fired twenty rounds a minute into the centre of Kabul.

An accurate casualty figure is impossible to get because most people bury their dead immediately in line with strict Muslim tradition.

Voting under way

in Orissa

was under way today in the

eastern Indian state of Orissa

in the latest in a series of

provincial elections consid-

ered tests for Prime Minister

P V Narasimha Rao, officials

am (0130 GMT) across half of

the coastal state to elect 76

lawmakers to the 147-seat

Orissa legislature the Press

are eligible to vote and 753

candidates are in the fray.

More than seven million peo-

ple had voted in the first phase

of polling on Tuesday to elect

India electing new govern-

ments in February and March.

The outcome of four of the

elections are considered polit-

Orissa is one of six states in

Some 11.7 million voters

Trust of India reported.

the other 71 legislators.

ically important.

The polling began at 7.00

said, reports AFP.

NEW DELHI, Mar 9: Voting

Witnesses said one rocket landed outside a hospital operated by the International Committee for the Red Cross, injuring at least 19 people, most of them arriving to visit patients in the hospital.

It appeared the rocket was fired by government troops, said witnesses.

As the rockets rained down on the beleaguered city, a father holding his young son arrived at the Red Cross-run hospital in Karte Se wailing: "Someone must be able to stop

To a nearby reporter he said "tell the world." His son later died.

Workers at the Karte Se Hospital have been trapped inside the hospital since Monday and so far the Red Cross said it has been unable to relieve the

"Unfortunately there have been some civilian casualties.

but there have been civilian casualties on this side of Kabul as well," said Abdullah, presidential spokesman, who uses only one name.

"The difference is that the civilians are not our targets ... We have concentrated our firepower on the front line," he said.

Hezb-e-Wahadat is the last remaining opposition group still within the city limits. However, there are other factions in the multi-sided war just outside the capital, including the Taliban student militia, considered the second most powerful force after the president's army.

According to Abdullah the Taliban have promised not to attack Kabul.

But Mullah Borjan, a Taliban spokesman told The Associated Press in an interview outside Kabul that all promises are off.

## US threatens Pakistan to include in terrorist list

WASHINGTON, Mar 9: The US has told Pakistan that if there is evidence any time of Pakistani support for terrorism in Kashmir, it could be promptly included in the list of state sponsors of terrorism. reports PTI.

A State Department spokeswoman Christine Shelly at press briefing here yesterday said "we have had, of course, serious concerns about reports of Pakistani support for Kashmiri militants who may have committed acts of terrorism.

We have made clear to the government of Pakistan that if justified by the facts, any country could be named a sponsor of terrorism under US law at this time."

However, the spokeswoman said I would like to be very

clear in making a distinction between 'an act' of terrorism which occurs on the territory of a country and the issue related to putting countries on the terrorism list, which has to do with state sponsorship of terrorism. These are certainly distinct activities.

Asked why Pakistan is not put on the list of state sponsors of terrorism despite its known as support for terrorists in India. Shelly said "the list of state sponsors of terrorism is one which is under

"In last January's report, Secretary of State Christopher concluded that available evidence did not warrant a finding that Pakistan had 'repeatedly' provided support for acts of international terrorism", she added.

## Five more shot dead in Karachi

KARACHI, Mar 9: Five more people have been shot to death in the strife-torn Pakistani city of Karachi, just a day after the murder of two US diplomats in a city-centre ambush, police and press reports said today, reports AFP.

Three people died when central Nazimabad district.

The dead men included criminal and terrorist acts.

Reports said gunmen in a hicle in a narrow lane and was unclear.

## Egypt refuses to budge from tough stance over NPT

CAIRO, Mar 9: Egypt refused to budge from its tough stance over the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty on Wednesday as US Secretary of State Warren Christopher resumed Middle East diplomacy amid a series of daunting obstacles, reports Reuter.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Moussa insisted after talks with Christopher that Cairo could not commit itself to backing an indefinite extension of the treaty, as Washington wants, as long as Israel has not signed it.

there was still much to play for before the treaty comes up for review next month at a New York conference.

\* Christopher, starting a fivecountry Middle East tour, said meanwhile that he had set to work on another thorny issue facing him by lobbying members of the US Congress to reverse their cuts in promised debt, relief for Jordan.

## Brunei backs UNSC seat

TOKYO. Mar 9: Brunei's Foreign Minister Prince Mohammed Bolkiah said on Wednesday his country would back Japan's bid for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council, a Japanese Foreign Ministry official said today, reports AFP.

san al Bolkiah, told his Japanese counterpart, Yohei Kono, that he supported a permanent seat for Japan in as part of a reform of the world body, the Foreign Ministry official said. It was the first time Brunei

publicly announced support for Japan's quest to permanently join the Security Council, the official said. The foreign minister of

Brunei is scheduled to return home today.

## tion and scale of what the

unidentified gunmen sprayed a car with bullets in the city's

Mulla Rehmat, who is reported by newspaper to have been wanted by police for a series of

car intercepted Rehmat's vepumped bullets into it, killing him and a colleague instantly. Another occupant of the car died later of his wounds. Police said the motive for the attack

But both he and US officials played down their differences over the treaty and hinted

# Japan's bid for

Prince Bolkiah, younger

brother of Brunet's Sultan Has-

### Ahmed Abdou Zahid El Kacimi (L) and Ali Saleh Abdou El Kadi, both Yemeni, ride their camels across the Arab world, going through Rabat on Wednesday, where they were greeted by Moroccan Minister of Youth and Sports Ahmed Meziane. According to the Moroccan press agency MAP, the two adventurers wish to "reinforce Arab solidarity. — AFP/UNB photo

Napoleon's hair on auction LONDON: A lock of Napoleon Bonaparte's hair will be auctioned on March 16 alongwith books and manuscripts, London Auction House Philipps said on Wednesday, reports

Reuter. The lock of hair, mounted in a case, was cut during Napoleon's imprisonment on St Helena island and given to a British marine by Napoleon's surgeon. Napoleon died in exile

on the island in 1821. The hair, sold together with other items belonging to British Major Robert Pearson boys, is expected to fetch up to

1.500 pounds (2.440 dollars). The auction will also include a lock of the Duke of Wellington's hair, expected to fetch upto 200 pounds (325

The Duke won the battle of Waterloo in 1815, defeating Napoleon's French army.

Killer whale too a very caring mom

VANCOUVER. British Columbia: School children and other aquarium visitors choked back tears as a newborn killer whale struggled briefly for life before dying while its mother nudged it around a pool. reports AP.

"She was trying hard to get the baby to the surface, but there was never a time when the baby looked vigorous." David Huff. veterinarian at the Vancouver Aquarium, said Wednesday.

Huff said the baby orca likely survived for only a few minutes. He described the mother, Bjossa, as a "very caring

"There were a lot of red eyes," said John Nightingale, the aquarium's executive director. The calf's body was left temporarily with its mother so she

could mourn. "Bjossa's first calf died in 1989 at three weeks of age. Her second, in 1991, survived for three months.

"We've been waiting for 17 months," aquarium gift shop worker Birgit Eckert said of Bjossa's pregnancy as she dried her eyes. You get a personal attachment."

## Brazilian dock workers vote against N-shipment

RIO DE JANEIRO. Mar 9: The National Federation of Dock Workers voted Wednesday in Brasilia, the nation's capital, to boycott a British freighter carrying nuclear waste navigating near the Brazilian coast, reports AP. The Pacific Pintail left

France on February 23 on a secret route to Japan with 14 tons of highly radioactive residue of reprocessed nuclear Dock workers leader Jader de Queiroz justified the boycott

potentially more deadly than Chernobyl," site of the world's worst nuclear accident in April 1986 in Ukraine. A Brazilian air force plane located the ship Wednesday 500 kilometres (320 miles)

because this ship is

eastern capital Recife. out of territorial waters. The Greenpeace ship "Solo" has been tracking the the

from the coast of the north-

and took the credit that the ship skirted the Caribbean. Greenpeace issued a statement Wednesday con-

British freighter for 14 days

firming it had alerted the Brazilian government that if the Pacific Pintail follows its current route, it would pass only 175 kilometres (110 miles) from the island Abrolhos, an ecological park. Greenpeace also confirmed

that the Brazilian government had expressed dismay to the embassies of Japan and France, expressing concern over the ship's route.

The Brazilian government issued a statement on February 24 banning the shipment from passing through its 320kilometres (200 mile) zone.

The freighter is carrying a 28 cylinders made of glass mixed with highly radioactive waste processed out of spent nuclear fuel from Japanese

112-ton steel cask containing

### 'Jordan Valley must remain under Israeli control

JORDAN VALLEY. West Bank, Mar 9: The Jordan Valley must remain under Israeli control even after a permanent settlement with the Palestinians, an Israeli Cabinet minister said on Wednesday, reports AP.

Control of the 250,000-acre valley, a strip of fertile land snaking through about 100 kilometres (60 miles) of desert along the West Bank-Jordan border, is seen by many Israelis as a key to repelling any Arab attack from the east.

### Body's metabolism compensates for eating less, burning fewer calories BOSTON, Mar 9: Confirming metabolism has a "set point" what frustrated dieters have

long feared, researchers at Rockefeller University have discovered that the body's metabolism compensates for eating less by burning fewer calories, reports Reuter.

The finding, published in today's New England journal of Medicine, explains why most people find it so difficult to lose weight and keep the weight off unless they permanently increase their level of

It also confirms earlier research into the long-standing theory that the body's

that fine-tunes the way the body burns calories. The researchers found that

when a person's weight drops by 10 per cent, the body's metabolic rate falls 15 per cent to compensate, thereby burning fewer calories.

Conversely when most people go on an eating binge and their weight increases by 10 per cent, the body com pensates by ratcheting up the amount of energy burned by 16

The process seems identical in both obese people and people of average weight.

planation for the fact that obese people tend to regain lost weight unless they increase their physical activity on a permanent basis," said Dr Rudolph Leibel, leader of the team. "It clearly shows that decreasing food intake or increasing energy output for a short period is not going to control weight.

These findings offer an ex

General Owezarek Krzysztof (C), the leader of Poland's six-man North Korean armistice-

monitoring contingent, steps off the train from Pyongyang on Thursday in Beijing, after the

Polish team was forcibly expelled by the North Korean government. The Poles had been

stationed in the northern side of Panmunjon truce village under the Korean armistice, an

arrangement dating back to the end of the Korean War in 1953.

"Good nutrition and increased physical activity over the long term -are necessary to lose weight and keep it off." Leibel said.

On average, about 60 per cent of the calories a person

the body while resting. An other 10 per cent used up digesting food and the remaining 30 per cent are burned through physical activity. The findings showing that

consumes are used to maintain

- AFP/UNB photo

little difference was seen between obese and non-obese patients "provide additional evidence that obesity is a biological disorder, which must be considered in an overall approach to weight control," the researcher said. Losing weight and keeping

it off for a long period of time may not be enough to reset the body's set point at a higher rate, burning more calories, the researchers suggested. "A reduced level of energy

expenditure has been reported to persist in subjects who have maintained a reduced body weight for periods ranging from six months to more than four years." they said.

In an editorial in the New England Journal, Dr William Bennett of Cambridge hospital in Cambridge, Massachusetts, said the typical 155-pound man gains about 22 pounds over a 20-year period simply by retaining the amount of energy in one carrot stick per

The extra weight of middle age, he said, probably comes from people becoming less physically active as they get

The fact that the typical American is more likely to be fat than in years past "may be more easily explained by the availability of gasoline than by the availability of fast food," Bennett wrote.

Although the popular belief that obesity is caused by overeating persists. Bennett said a 'theory of gluttony' does not stand up to the evidence available.

### Mexicans march for president's resignation MEXICO CITY. Mar 9 : Tens

of thousands of protesters marched on Mexico's capital on Wednesday to demand the resignation of President Ernesto Zedillo and show their support for Zapatista Rebel Leader Subcommander Marcos, reports Reuter.

Leftist demonstrators from 10 states converged on Mexico City's Colonial Central Square to chaunt, clap and stamp their feet in praise of Marcos and his rebel Zapatista Na tional Liberation Army in the southernstate of Chiapas.