# BREFLY

Nobel laureate Fowler dies: william Fowler who shared the 1983 Nobel Prize in physics for research on the creation of chemical elements inside stars. died on Tuesday. He was 83, AP reports from Pasadena. California

Fowler died of kidney failure at Huntington Memorial Hospital, said Jay Aller, a spokesman for the California institute of Technology, where Fowler was a professor emeritus of physics. Fowler shared the 1983 Nobel Prize with Subramanyan Chandrasekhar for theories explaining the chemical and physical process between stars and the universe.

7 buried alive in Ghana: Seven Ghanaian men were killed when a tunnel they dug in search of gold caved in and buried them alive, the Ghana news agency reported on Tuesday. Reuter says from Accra.

"I was holding a torch while the others were digging when all of a sudden, the tunnel caved in and buried them," said Nsoh Adongo, the only survivor of last Sunday's accident in the village of Tongo in Ghana's northern upper east region.

33 beheaded in S Arabia this yr: Three people were beheaded in Jeddah on Tuesday for murder and the use of alcohol and drugs, raising the number of executions in the Saudi Kingdom to 33 so far this year. AFP reports from Jeddah.

The Interior Ministry said a Saudi and an Afghan were executed for nurdering two Yemenis in the Red Sea City of Jeddah. And a third person, whose nationality was not given. was beheaded after being found guilty on alcohol and drugs charges. Alcohol is strictly forbidden in Saudi Arabia, under Muslim law

15 die in Ethiopian train mishap: At least 15 people were killed and 90 injured when a train derailed east of the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa as it crossed a bridge damaged by heavy rains, the ENA news agency reported on Tuesday. AFP says from Addis Ababa

Rescue workers were still searching for survivors from the accident, which occurred late Monday near the town of Arba, 270 kms from Addis Ababa, a spokesman for the Ethio Djibouti Railway Co told ENA.

French minister in Bosnia: French Defence Minister Francois Leotard flew into the Bosnian capital on Tuesday, where nine French peacekeepers died in a road accident. AFP reports from Sarajevo.

Leotard made no statement on arrival but went directly to see the corpses, laid out at the airport. The men died when their truck plunged down a ravine while travelling on nearby Mt Igman. Four others who were injured were to be flown home for treatment.

Strike paralyses Swaziland: Throngs of people and vehicles jammed city streets on Tuesday in the second day of a strike described as the most disruptive in years. AP reports from Mdabane, Swaziland.

The Cabinet held an emergency meeting to discuss what action to take, but no decision had been reached by Tuesday night. Members of the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions vowed to continue the strike unless their demands for workers rights were met. The protests follow demonstrations by pro-democracy advocates.

N Korean held in Nepal: Nephitese authorities are questioning a staffer of the North Korean embassy for allegedly trying to smuggle out foreign currency. an official said Tuesday. AP reports from Kathmandu.

Customs officers at Katmandu's airport stopped Li Song-Ho as he was about to board a Bangkok-bound Thai Airways jetliner on Friday along with Ambassador Rim Hoe-Song and his wife, the official said on condition of anonymity.

Ahmad Khomeini's health unchanged: A doctor treating Ahmad Khomeni, the son of Iran's late leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, said the cleric's health has been deteriorating since late on Tuesday, the Iran News Agency IRNA said yesterday.

Khomeini's "health condition.... has been deteriorating since late Tuesday night," it quoted Dr Hassan Arefi as saying. He told the agency that medication had failed to improve a sudden drop in blood pressure and he had irregular heartbeat.

Pak troops leave for Haiti: An initial batch of 180 Pakistani soldiers left for Haiti-on Wednesday to take part in the United Nations peace keeping efforts in the

troubled island state, officials said, AFP reports from Karachi. The UN had asked Pakistan to contribute an infantry battalion of 850 men of all ranks and four staff officers for the UN Mission in Haiti (UNMIH) which began after the military regime fell from power there last year.

Bomb attack on Turkish mosque: Assailants threw firebombs at a Turkish mosque in Hamburg and at Turkish offices in three other German cities in the second straight night of such attacks, police said Wednesday,

AP reports from Berlin. Previous outbreaks of anti-Turkish violence have been blamed on Kurds protesting Turkish military actions against Kurds in southeastern Turkey, but there was no immediate proof of responsibility for the latest attacks. Minor damage was reported from firebombings late Tuesday and early Wednesday in Hamburg, Frankfurt, Cologne and Ludwigshafen. There were no injuries.

Dini to call confidence vote: Italy's Prime Minister Lamberto Dini has decided to call a confidence vote in parliament in an effort to push through his controversial emergency budget. Italian radio said on Wednesday. Reuter reports from Rome.

The decision was announced to reporters by Finance Minister Augusto Fantozzi after an emergency cabinet meeting Dini called to discuss how to overcome obstacles to passage of the 20 trillion lire (12 billion dollars) package, which he billed as vital to restoring financial market confidence in Italy.

Floods claim 2 in S Russia: Two people have died in flooding in the coastal areas along the

Caspian Sea in southern Russia, the Interfax news agency said Wednesday. Hundreds of houses have been destroyed and more than 2,000 people were forced to leave their homes. AP reports from Moscow.

Strong winds pushed water from the Caspian Sea into the low-lying regions of Kalmykia and Dagestan on the sea's northwestern coast, flooding thousands of square kilometres of land, the Russian Ministry for Emergencies told Interfax.



Academy Awards nominees for best actors John Travolta (L) for "Pulp Fiction" and Tom Hanks (R) for Forrest Gump stand with each others wives Rita Wilson (2nd L) and Kelley Preston (2nd R) gather at the Academy Awards Luncheon on Tuesday at the Beverly Hills Hilton. The 67th Academy Awards will be held on March 27. -AFP/UNB photo

# ECO summit for political solution to Kashmir crisis

ISLAMABAD, Mar 15: Central Asian leaders attending the 10-nation Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO) summit here on Tuesday called for a political settlement to the dispute over Kashmir, reports

Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto said India was responsible for "draconian" measures against the "struggle for freedom in Kashmir, in which more than 10,000 people have died in the past five

Benazir, describing the Kashmiri militant movement as an uprising for the basic and universal right of self determination," called for a UNsponsored plebiscite in the northern Indian state to enable its people to choose between union with India or Pakistan. draman President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and Afghan President Burhamuddin Rab-

bani also voiced support at the

ECO summer for a political set

KABUL, Mar 15: Govern

ment troops extensively looted

civilian homes during their re-

cent conquest of southwest

Kabul, residents said, reports

extended family of 20 were

forced to leave their home in

the Karte Se district and the

government soldiers who

moved in cleaned the place

very intense in our area. I

moved my family to a safer

place. Now I cannot return to

my home," Ashim said Monday.

Ashim's house claimed it was

empty when they arrived and

said they had only taken it over

temporarily. They said that

when the lighting calmed

down, they would return the

said government troops had

ransacked her house as well

But a woman from Karte Se

"They took everything.

Several other residents

Mohammed Khanouni, the

head of a government security

commission that's to oversee

the newly captured area, said

the looting was carried out by

armed bandits who entered

southwest Kabul during the

chaos surrounding the fighting.

They took my bicycle. They

even took my tea pot and

cups," said the woman, who

requested anonymity.

gave similar accounts.

property.

Government soldiers in

When the battle became

Haju Ashim said he and his

tlement in Kashmir. Iran has closely followed the grave situation in Kashmir and is deeply concerned over

people. Rafsanjani said.

Demanding an end to the violence, he called for the res olution of the problem in consonance with the aspirations and will of the oppressed Kashmiri people.

the plight" of the Kashmiri

persuaded to end its "repression" in Kashmir and that UN resolutions calling for a plebiscite in the territory should be respected.

Rabbani said India must be

The two-day ECO confer ence - aimed at promoting economic cooperation in the region - is, being attended by Afghanistan, Azerbaijan. Turkey, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan,

Meanwhile: Iran on Tuesday called for a comprehensive political settlement in Afghanis tun and the setting up of a

Troops loval President

Burhanuddin Rabbani were not

involved. Khanouni said Tues-

day, adding that 31 people had

been arrested in southwest

scored important advances in

southern Kabul over the past

week, driving back two opposi-

tion groups, Hezb-e-Wahadat, a

Shute Muslim movement, and

the Taliban, a militia made up

ted as Rabbant's men moved

into the areas, where most of

the civilians are Hazaras, a mi

nority group made up mostly of

Shiite Muslims Most Afghans

Somali warlords

meet Mar 20

malia's two most powerful war-

tords - Mohamed Farah

Aideed and arch rival Ali

Mahdi Mohamed - will meet

next week for the first time in

a year, a Somali official said on

spokesman for a joint negotiat-

ing committee appointed by

the leaders, said the two men

would meet at the divided

The feud between the two

men led to a clan-based civil

war that killed 30,000 people

and 10 times that number in a

Abdul Cadir Mashaleyste.

Tuesday, reports Reuter.

city's port on March 20.

famine that followed

MOGADISHU, Mar 15: So

are Sunni Muslims.

The abuses were commit-

of Islamic theology students.

Rabbani's troops have

Kabul in recent days.

Afghan troops loot

civilian homes

stable government acceptable to all segments of society.

Speaking at the ECO summit, iranian President Rafsanjani termed "as unfortunate" the Aighan factions' failure to sink their differences and set up "a stable and independent government.

tran has supported the people of Afghanistan by hosting à million refugees, he said. Prime Minister Benazir said

the "continuing fratricide is an ongoing cause of concern to all of us. She said Pakistan would continue to work with the United Nations and the 51-nation Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) to achieve a peaceful reconciliation in Alghanistan.

President Suleyman Demirel of Turkey voiced concern over the situation in Afghanistan appealed to all parties to refrain from use of force" and to solve their differences through negotiations.

### Singapore to hang Filipino maid tomorrow

SINGAPORE, Mar 15: Sin-President Fidel Ramos there is no basis for a stay of execution murder, the government said AFP. today. reports Reuter.

Flor Contemplacion, 42. was sentenced to death in January 1993 for strangling maid's employers on May 4, 1991. Contemplacion is scheduled to hang on Friday.

Her lawyers and family in the Philippines argued that new evidence showed she was innocent, and Ramos had appealed for clemency.

#### Most Australians disfavour Queen

CANBERRA, Mar 15: Most Australians favour an Australian head of state rather than Britain's Queen Elizabeth, an opinion poll published today showed, reports Reuter.

The poll published in the Australian newspaper found 57 per cent favoured an Australian head of state, while 34 per cent preferred that the Queen remain head of state.

The most recent comparable opinion poll found 52 per cent support for a change to a republic and 38 per cent backing for the status quo.

Prime Minister Paul Keating has campaigned since 1993 for a change to a republic by 2001 the 100th auniversary of Australia's federation.

#### Syria-Israel direct talks in few days

DAMASCUS, Mar 15: US Secretary of State Warren Christopher left here early today after announcing that Israel and Syria would resume direct peace talks at ambassador level in the next few days, reports AFP.

Christopher headed back to Washington at the end of his first Middle East swing of 1995, after staying an extra night in the Syrian capital.

He announced the breakthrough late Tuesday in Damascus after talks with Syrian and Israeli leaders aimed at ending the stalemate in the peace process.

The United States is also to take a greater role in the process to try to kick-start negotiations at a higher level.

## China rules out plan for referendum on Tibet

BEIJING, Mar 15: The Chinese government denounced today the Dalai Lama's plans gapore President Ong Teng for a referendum among Ti-Cheong has told Philippines betans on the future course for their campaign for independence as a "mean trick" for a Filipino maid convicted of aimed splitting China, reports

"The Tibet is an autonomous region under the sovereignty of China, so the question of holding a referenanother maid and drowning dum here simply does not the three-year-old son of that arise." Tibet People's Congress Standing Committee chairman Raidi told journal-

Tibet is an inalienable part of China. The proposed referendum is only a mean trick by the Dalai clique and some anti-China Western forces to split China. This is entirely out of the question," he said. The Tibetan spiritual

leader, who has been in exile in India since fleeing his Himalayan homeland with many followers after a falled anti Chinese revolt on March 10, 1959, called last week for Tibetans to prepare for a referendum. in a statement released to mark the 36th anniversary of

the uprising he also warned that Beijing's refusal to negotiate with him could lead to violence in Tibet.

whether Beijing, whose troops seized Tibet in 1951, would consider marking the 30th anniversary in September of the autonomous region's establishment by launching talks with Dalai Lama.

"Once the Dalai Lama renounces his position of Tibetan independence and entirely stops all his activities aimed at splitting China, the central government will be happy to see him putting an end to his self-exile at an early date," he

#### Rebel Kazakh Mps found alternative parliament

ALMA-ATA, Mar 15: Rebel deputies opposing President Nursultan Nazarbayev's dissolution of Kazakhstan's legislature today founded an alternative "people's parliament." reports Reuter.

A meeting of about 100 deputies of the 177-member parliament pledged to try to register the body as an official organisation. "We will act without violating the law," deputy Viktor Rogalov said.

The number attending the rebels' meeting was down from 130 deputies who issued a Raidi offered little hope of a statement on Tuesday dechange in policy when asked nouncing Nazarbayev's action.

# Off the Record

### 'Lion King' hits all-time sales record

LOS ANGELES: Disney's hit video "Lion King" hit an alltime sales record with 26 million copies sold in the two weeks since it was released, reports AFP. The sales have totalled 450 million dollars since the video

came out on February 28. Walt Disney Co said on Monday. The previous record had been held by "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," which sold more than 24 million copies. Before the video went on sale, the "Lion King" made 312 million dollars at the movie theatres.

#### Self-insemination risks AIDS

CHICAGO: Women who practise self-insemination with sperm that hasn't been properly screened for HIV run the risk of contracting the AIDS virus, a US researcher cautioned, reports AP.

Another researcher said there have been no reported cases of HIV infection through artificial insemination since 1986, and the chances of a woman contracting the virus if they go through a doctor or clinic is "probably remote."

While all of the sperm banks questioned in a 1987 survey reported they screened donors for the AIDS virus fewer than half the doctors practising artificial insemination said they did. Dr Mary E Guinan reported in Wednesday's edition of The Journal of the American Medical Association.

A year later the federal Centres for Disease Control and Prevention recommended that semen donors be screened for the AIDS virus, but it is unknown how many actually are.

And with an unknown number of women using such devices as turkey basters to inseminate themselves with sperm from donors who were improperly screened, the door is left open for HIV infection, Guinan said.

"Artificial insemination is safe but not completely so." wrote Guinan of the CDC's HIV-AIDS office.

Dr Maria Rosarion G Araneta, lead researcher of a separate article in the same Journal edition, said chances of a woman being infected were probably remote.

Araneta's study found that seven of 199 women artificially inseminated with semen from HIV-infected donors between 1983 and 1985 later tested positive for the virus. Thirty-one others known to have received infected semen refused testing or could not be located.

Each year, about 75,000 American women are artificially inseminated with sperm from anonymous donors. Araneta

### Aging panda sick

BEIJING: An aging panda who has had frequent nosebleeds has been examined by CAT scan, the first such examination of a panda in China, an official newspaper said Wednesday, reports AP.

The history-making panda is Yangyang, a 24-year-old male at the Hangzhou zoo, in coastal Zhejiang province. In the wild, pandas usually do not live more than 20 years, and captive pandas usually live to be about 25. Yangyang had his first nosebleed in late 1992. Last year,

the frequency and severity of the nosebleeds increased, and recently Yangyang has had monthly attacks, the Guangming Daily said. Also, his eyesight has been failing.

A special medical team was set up to examine and treat Yangyang. The CAT scan and an examination of the nasal cavity showed that Yangyang is suffering from cataracts and has a

tumor in his nose, the report said. It said the hospital was helping to treat the panda, but did

not give details.

### Woman marries woman

PHNOM PENH: Two Cambodian women, one dressed as a man, married legally in a ceremony attended by hundreds of well-wishers and friends, the Cambodia daily newspaper said vesterday, reports Reuter. Two women, Khav Sokha and Pum Eth, were married in

Kro Bao Ach Kok village, Kandal province on March 12." the newspaper said. "Both women love each other very much" it said, describ-

ing the event as a "strange story."

There is no word for homosexuality in the Khmer lan-

# Ship with French New Bombay boss prefers dictatorship to democracy! for Cape Horn

TOKYO. Mar 15: A cargo ship carrying reprocessed nuclear waste from France to Japan appeared to be heading for Cape Horn despite protests from Brazil. Argentina and Chile, the environmental group Greenpeace said today, reports

AFP. It looks like it is going in the direction of Cape Horn." a spokeswoman said, adding that the group will issue another report shortly if the move

could be confirmed. The Greenpeace boat Solo. which has been following the nuclear waste-carrying Pacific Pintail since it left the French port of Cherbourg on February boss of Bombay is a rabblerousing Hindu chauvinist who prefers dictatorship to democracy and is blamed for inflaming anti-Muslim riots, reports

Bal Thackeray is the chief of Shiv Sena, the party that led a Hindu nationalist coalition to victory in the legislative election for Maharashtra, a western state governed by the Congress Party the last 44

Maharashtra was one of two key industrial states where Hindu nationalists took power on Tuesday, signalling trouble for Prime Minister PV Narasimha's government in national elections next year.

part of the victorious coalition in Maharashtra, formed government on its own after ousting a Congress government.

Thackeray, 71, has no position in the new government of Maharashtra, whose capital is Bombay. But he handpicked the chief minister. Manohar Joshi, who was sworn in at the public park where Thackeray launched his party in June 1966.

Shiv Sena began as a movement to safeguard the local Marathi culture and language against south Indians migrating to Bombay, which was

then becoming India's comadopted a distinctly anti-Muslim tone. "Muslims must prove their

credibility." Thackeray said in an interview published last month. Partition of this country linto India and Pakistan in 1947) was done on communal itnes Muslims asked for their own nation. Then leave us alone. Shiv Sena, which means

"Army of Shivaji." is named after a 17th century warrior who defended western India against the Muslims who founded the Muhgal Emptre The Hindu extremists

benefited from a split in the

Muslim vote. Muslims control

te, the Bharatiya Janata Party. mercual capital. Later it in Maharastra. But even before Sena threats. the election, many people said Shiv Sena controlled the state through a combination of public service and strong-arm tac-

Tuesday.

Subtle threats of violence meant that any strike called by Shiv Sena was closely followed. In 1991, at a time of heightened political tension between India and Pakistan, Shiv Sena protesters trashed a cricket field to force the cancellation of a match between

Pakistan closed its consulate in Bombay in March 1994 after hotels refused to give space for Pakistan Day

teams from the two countries.

about 10 per cent of the vote celebrations because of Shiv Thackeray came to interna

- AFP/UNB photo

After the recent defeat of Shute Hezb-i-Wahdat faction in

southwest Kabul various jails were discovered by troops

loyal to Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani, where

dead prisoners such as this man in leg-irons were found on

tional attention in early 1993 when his editorials in his daily newspaper. Saamna, were blamed for inciting anti-Muslim riots in which 800 people were killed.

Although the courts absolved him, two retired judges of the Bombay High Court said followers of Shiv Sena were heavily involved.

Thackeray admits that he would prefer a dictatorship to democracy, and has not shied from comparisons with Adolph

Hitler. When told by a Time Magazine interviewer after the 1993 riots that Muslims in

Bombay felt like the Jews of Nazi Germany, he replied: "Have they behaved like the Jews in Nazi Germany? If so. there is nothing wrong if they are treated as Jews were in Germany."

Despite Thackeray's record Muslim reaction to the outcome was muted.

"Whichever party comes to power will learn to be responsible. They are not animals. They are human beings," said Maulana Kudus Kashmiri, head of the Ullema Council, a body of Muslim priests.

This is like a bachelor who is carefree before marriage. But after marrying, he learns to be resnonsible

#### Carlos Salinas surfaces in NY NEW YORK, Mar 15: Form-

er Mexican President Carlos Salinas De Gortari has surfaced in Manhattan and broken his silence. Denying he has been forced out of his country, the New York Times reported in its · Wednesday editions, says Reuter. Following news reports that

Salinas had left Mexico in a form of exile after openly clashing with President Ernesto Zedillo, his handpicked successor, the New York Times reported that the former Mexican leader had surfaced in New York, claiming he could return to Mexico whenever he syanied