

BRIEFLY

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 murdering 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: Thousands 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 Mbabane, 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: Nepalese 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 Kathmandu'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 Khomeini, 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 (UNMITH) which began after the military regime fell from power there last year.

Bomb attack on Turkish mosque: Assaults 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.

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 AFP.

Afghan troops loot civilian homes

KABUL, Mar 15: Government troops extensively looted civilian homes during their recent conquest of southwest Kabul residents said, reports AP.

Somali warlords meet Mar 20

MOGADISHU, Mar 15: Somalia's two most powerful warlords - 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 Tuesday, reports Reuter.

Ship with French N-waste heading for Cape Horn

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New Bombay boss prefers dictatorship to democracy!

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China rules out plan for referendum on Tibet

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Syria-Israel direct talks in few days

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Off the Record

'Lion King' hits all-time sales record

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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.

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 yesterday, reports Reuter.

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