# BRIFFIY

#### Sirima Bandaranaike turns 79 : Sri Lanka's matriach Prime Minister Sirima Bandaranaike marks her 70th birthday Monday with two political world records in hand, despite never having made it to the elusive

presidency. AFP reports from Colombo. After a painful 17 years in the opposition, she rallied her faction-ridden party into a dramatic comeback in March

Hashish seized in Pakistan: The anti-narcotics task force and frontier corps of Pakistan seized a record 40 tons of hashish, destined for Europe and America, in the coastal area of Baluchistan province late Saturday night, officials said on Monday. Xinhua reports from Islamabad.

It was the second largest haul in the history of the province after the one in which 3.000 kilograms of heroin was seized in the same area.

Filipino Foreign Secy quits: Philippine President Fidel Ramos said on Monday he had accepted the resignation of Foreign Secretary Roberto Romulo, Reuter reports from Manila.

Romulo has been under intense pressure to resign since the execution of Filipino maid Flor Contemplacion in Singapore last month.

UP election violence claims 2: Two persons were killed as an estimated 60 per cent of the 2.5 crore eligible votes cast their franchise during the third phase of the three tier Panchayat elections in Uttar Pradesh vesterday in 203 development blocks. PTI reports from

One person was killed in cross-firing between two rival groups in Wazirpur in Bulandshar district. In another incident a police constable was killed and several others injured when an election duty truck overturned in Deoria district yesterday, official reports said.

Flash flood kills 13 in Indonesia : A flash flood killed 13 youths near a popular waterfall on the Clapus river near Bogor, west Java on the weekend, a report in The Republika Daily said on Monday. AFP reports from Jakarta.

The flood, caused by sudden heavy rain, occurred on Sunday afternoon at the Curug Nangka Nature Park, where a number of teenagers were walking by and swimming in the river, it said.

20 hurt in Bosnian rocket attack: Twenty civilians were wounded on Sunday in a rocket attack on the centre of Teocak a small town in northeast Bosnia.

Sarajevo radio reported. AFP reports from Sarajevo. The UN Protection Force was unable to confirm the attack on Sunday evening. The radio said three rockets were fired at the Teocak area near the confrontation lines some 40 kilometers (25 miles) northwest of Tuzla, with one falling on the

Chinese Speaker in Seoul: Chinese parliamentary speaker Qiao Shi arrived for a six-day visit at the invitation of his South Korean counterpart, Hwang Nakju. AP reports from Seoul.

Giao will meet with President Kim Young-sam and other senior South Korean officials to discuss ways of promoting political exchanges between the two countries. Seoul officials said

14 die in Lankan bus plunge : Fourteen Buddhist pilgrims died when their bus plunged off a cliff in Sri Lanka's central hills district, police said yesterday, Reuter reports from Colombo.

They said 36 others were being treated in hospital after the accident on Sunday evening in the Nuwara Eliya district. about 100 km (60 miles) east of Colombo.

Vietnamese leader in Tokyo: Viet namese leader Do Muoi arrived in Tokyo on a five day visit for talks with Japanese government and business leaders. AFP reports from Tokyo.

It is the first visit in Tokyo by Do Muoi, who is also the general secretary of the Vietnamese Communist Party. He was accompanied by Fereign Minister Nguyen Mahn Cam was scheduled to hold talks with Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama on Tuesday and will meet Emperor Akihito on

11 die in Taiwan nightclub fire: A fire swept through a karaoke nightclub before dawn Monday, killing 11 people and injuring 13 others, police said, AP reports from Taipei.

One man was burned to death at the door of an elevator and ten others died in the hospital of smoke inhalation after escaping through a stairway, police said. Three of the injured were listed in critical condition, they said.

Freighter catches fire in HK: A freighter carrying fireworks collided with a Chinese vessel in Hong Kong waters touching off a fire aboard the cargo ship, a government information service official said on Monday. AFP reports from Hong Kong.

Firefighters were working to put out the blaze on the 41.000 tonne Panamanian registered freighter California Luna, which had been carrying 52,000 kilograms (114,400 pounds) of fireworks.

Yemeni to die for murder: A court in Aden has sentenced man to death for murdering a Yemeni journalist Awater Saleh Ahmed, the official Saba news agency said on Sunday AFP reports from Aden.

A police report said Mohammad Taher Othamn shot dead Awater a journalist for the Saba agency in Aden and a divorcee and mother of two, on December 9 because she refused to marry him.

7 die in Thai grenade attack: Ale ast seven people were killed and 27 others injured when a hand grenade was thrown into a restaurant in Hua Hin, a tourist city in central Thailand, late Saturday night, Xinhua reports from Bangkok.

Local newspaper Bangkok Post on Monday quoted police as saying that most of those killed or wounded were clients of the Pakluav Restaurant and had been attending a birthday party there.

Japanese architect honoured: Japanese architect Tadao Ando, whose unconventional structures withstood the earthquake that toppled much of Kobe, won Sunday the prestigious Pritzker Architecture Prize. AFP reports from Los Angeles.

The 53-year-old self taught architect from Osaka said he was "bewildered" after he was selected by the international panel of judges for his buildings, marked by functional yet aesthetically appealing designs.

PHNOM PENH, Apr 17:

today, reports Reuter. around 8 pm about 20 Khmer Rouge wearing government army and civilian clothes entered Wat Bay Domram in Banan district and opened fire. killing three policemen and four villagers," Brigadier-General Por Vannak told Reuters.

# Russia will ignore parts of CFE treaty, warns Grachev protests from Russia's western

MOSCOW, Apr. 17: Russia has warned it will ignore parts of a key treaty, limiting its deployment of non nuclear arms, until the Chechen conflict is over, a move likely to plunge worsening relations with the west to a new low. reports Reuter.

Defence Minister Pavel Grachev said Moscow could not stick to all the terms of the cornerstone 1990 Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) treaty because the agreement limited the number of troops Russia could station in its volatile southern regions. Only when conditions are

conditions in the CFE treaty. he told interfax news agency. The amount of arms and military equipment which the treaty allows Russia to have in this region is insufficient. Grachev's comments will

undoubtedly set off fresh

stable can Russia fulfil all the

cludes 30 nations and covers an area from the Atlantic to the Urals. provides for the biggest cuts of conventional weapons in arms control history and stipulates the distribution of troops and armour.

partners who have watched

Moscow's actions in Chechnya

happy about Grachev's expla-

nation that Moscow would try

to persuade them that the

leaders of the former Soviet

Union made a mistake when

they agreed to sign this doc-

The CFE treaty, which in-

They are also unlikely to be

with growing alarm.

But Moscow wants to move extra troops and tanks to Chechnya because more than four months after it set cut to crush the region's independence bid. Kremlin forces have still not eliminated all rebel resistance.

Russian forces maintained heavy shelling of the Chechen town of Bamut for most of Sunday but did not attempt to storm the last rebel bastion in the region's lowlands. Inter-Tax news agency said.

Moscow's forces temporarily suspended their operations late in the day to prevent further losses but planned to liberate the area in the near future. Itar-Tass news agency

Russian troops tried to seize Bamut on Friday but rebels hidden among the nuclear proof bunks at the base beat off the attack. Tass said around 10 Russians had been killed.

If Bamut is captured, the rebels will be reduced to fighting a guerilla war from the mountains of southern Chechnya where they have already set up bases.

General Anatoly Kulikov, until last week the commander of operations in Chechnya. told independent NTV television the Chechens could not

mount a proper partisan war. "They have no social or economic base just 500 to 800 people who have nothing to lose. There will not be national partisan war but partisan

But rebel Chechen leader Dzhokhar Dudayev, who has been in hiding since Russian troops captured the regional capital Grozny in early February, vowed the Chechens would never given in.

methods will be used, he said.

Chechens are genetically incapable of reconciling themselves to slavery. You can kill him hang him but nature itself will not allow a Chechen to come to terms with slavery. he fold Ukrainian journalists in an interview filmed last week.

### Rabin defends peace accord with PLO

WASHINGTON, Apr 17: Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said on Sunday there was no alternative to working with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat to continue the Mideast peace process, reports Reuter.

"We have one alternative, to work with the partner which is ready for peace, which is headed by Chairman Arafat." Rabin said on ABC-TV's "This Week with David Brinkley."

Rabin was responding to criticism of his government's 1993 peace agreement with Arafat following militant attacks against Israel like last week's suicide bombing that killed seven Israelis and an American woman.

"The PLO stopped terror. Terror today is carried out only by the Hamas and the Islamic Jihad," Rabin said.

The Israeli leader said it was now up to Arafat, and the Palestinian authorities, to prove they are able to maintain law and order in the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

"I don't believe that he (Arafat) has tried seriously." he

added. Earlier Sunday, Israeli forces killed three members of the militant Hamas movement. Meanwhile, Arafat's Palestinian authority fought the guerillas

in court, jailing Hamas activists

for the first time.

Rabin's comments were endorsed by Nabil Sha'ath, an aide to Arafat. "I agree 100 per cent with Prime Minister Rabin that this is an irreversible peace process, And our bottom line is to make it work," Sha'ath said on the same programme.

He said the Palestinians wanted Israeli settlements in Gaza and the West Bank re-

Dennis Ross, the US State Department's special Mideast Coordinator, said on the same broadcast most of the Mideast parties remained determined to work toward peace. He said the United States would continue to help.

### Turkish troops kill 23 Kurds

TUNCELI, Turkey, Apr 17: Turkish troops have killed 23 Kurdish guerillas in a huge offensive against their mountain stronghold in the eastern province of Tunceli, military officials said today, reports Reuter.

The Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) fighters were killed on Sunday night near Alibogazi ravine, a virtually impenetrable rebel stronghold. the officials said.

About 25,000 Turkish troops backed by assault helicopters moved in on Alibogazi, a 30 km (20 mile) gash in the Munzur mountains, on Sunday as part of a push against the PKK in Tunceli running in parallel with Turkey's crossborder drive in Iraq.

Military officials said they believed PKK Regional Commander Semdin Sakik may have been killed or wounded.

He had not answered radio messages from other rebel units' and PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan for the last three days. they said.

#### Adhikari in Beijing Nepal to seek economic aid from China

BEIJING, Apr 17: Nepalese Prime Minister Man Mohan Adhikari arrived here today for a five-day official visit aimed at securing economic aid for the cash-strapped Hi-

malayan country, reports AFP. Adhikari's visit comes at the invitation of Chinese Premier Li Peng, who will hold talks with his Nepali counterpart on Tuesday following an official welcoming cer-

According to Nepali Foreign Ministry officials, the visit will focus on the presentation of a 15-point plan for aid to fund a range of projects in Nepal, and boosting two way trade between the two nations.

Adhikari, who heads a five month-old communist government, is also scheduled to meet with Chinese President Jiang Zemin during his stay.

### OSCE team arrives in Grozny

MOSCOW. Apr 17: Delegates of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe due to set up a permanent human rights mission in Chechnya. arrived this weekend in the capital Grozny, a television report said, reports AFP.

Upon arriving, the OSCE Special Envoy for Chechnya, Istvan Gyarmati. said he was outraged by Russian army tactics in the recent seizure of the village of Samashki in western Chechnya, the Russian television station NTV said. Witnesses have accused the

army of carrying out summary executions last week and setting fire to houses with their residents still in them. Samashki had held out for weeks against Russian attacks and was one of the last remaining pockets of resistance in the republic's western lowlands.



Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao (R) and President Shankar Dayal Sharma (C welcome Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani (L) at the Presidential Palace vesterday. Rafsanjani is the first Iranian head of state to visit India since the 1979 Islamic Revolution. - AFP photo

## Exempt Hajj flights from UN air embargo, urges Gaddafi

TRIPOLI. Apr 17: Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi and his country was ready to fight to enable Libyan pilgrims to fly directly to Makkah in Saudi Arabia, Islam's holiest shrine.

"They (the Christians) launched a crusade when they accused Muslims of preventing them from reaching Jerusalem. We are ready for a war to reach Makkah." Gaddafi told Reuters in an interview on Sunday night.

He added that the flights to Makkah must be seen as exempt from a UN Security Conneil air embargo imposed on his country over the Lockerbie affair.

The ban on flights to and from Libya is part of sanctions. including arms sales, imposed on the North African country in 1992 after it refused to hand over two Libyans wanted in connected with the 1988 bombing of Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie. Scotland, in which 270 people died. The pilgrimage (haji) sea-

son is in early May, and Libyan pilgrim flights are expected to take off from several Libyan airports later this week, travel sources said.

Since the air travel embargo. Libyan pilgrims have flown there from other countries after leaving Libya by land or sea. As a political statement, some Libvan pilgrims took a camel train through Egypt in 1994 and others went

### Mario Soares in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, Apr 17: Por tuguese President Mario Soares arrived in Islamabad today to begin a three-day official visit, reports Reuter.

to Jerusalem in 1993. Gaddafi said his country

had run out of patience on the direct flights issue after three years of the ban. "We gave them (Security

Council members) an opportunity when our pilgrims went to Jerusalem and Makkah by camels, where we suffered and some pilgrims died en route, but that did not move their conscience. We are forced now to go to the pilgrimage and will do it each year directly through Libyan airspace whatever the price." Gaddafi said.

Wearing flowing, traditional Libyan robes and speaking on the green of the Azizia barracks in Tripoli, Gaddafi said he sees the pilgrims' flights as an exception which does not mean that Libya intends to violate the Security Council

## Off the Record

### "Safe limits" for alcohol consumption rejected

LONDON: Doctors have rejected "safe limit" guidelines for drinking alcohol, BBC TV reported yesterday, says Xinhua. Current recommendations state that men should consume

no more than 21 units a week, and women 14 a week. But the British Medical Association said the level should be renamed "low risk" because the hazards and benefits will vary individually.

The comments follow a Department of Health announcement that drinking regulations set up in 1987 are being reviewed.

#### 'It's like Moses parting the waves ....."

JINDO. South Korea: As the sun teetered atop the low hillside and the drumbeats and the singsongs ceased to drone, the sea parted, reports AP.

Praying and dancing, singing and clapping, tens of thousands of people leapt onto a path of rainbow-coloured pebbles that the sea had opened to reveal.

"It's like the Bible." breathed one woman. "It's like Mosses parting the waves."

Except that unlike the Red Sea, the Yellow Sea does encores every spring, creating a bridge between Jindo and Modo islands.

Scientists say the 2.8 (1.7 mile) road that appears for an hour at dusk for two consecutive days every year - Easter Sunday and Monday this time - results from the pull of gravity and natural changes that are part of spring.

Folks here say it's Ppong Halmoni, or Gradma Mulberry, wanting to be reunited with her family.

According to lore, she lived in a small village at the bottom of a mountain teeming with tigers. The villagers, fed up with the tigers one day built a raft. packed up their belongings and sailed off to Modo.

But they forgot Gradma Mulberry in the bustle. Left behand, she prayed and prayed to the Dragon Lord to be reunited with her family. Some say she died of joy when her prayers were answered

some 500 years ago. Others say she tarried too long on the miraculous road and was swallowed up by the sea. At a small wooden shrine at the beach where women come

to pray, a painting shows her dressed in white, her greying hair neatly braided into a bun.

Women light sticks of incense to call forth her soul to grant their wishes, and prostate themselves before an altar laden with watermelons, pears, rice cakes and fish.

### 'Pink Telephones"

BRUSSELS: The chief executive officer of Belgian telephone company Belegacom NV has been charged with inciting 'debauchery and prostitution' by leasing sex phone lines,

the public prosecutor's office said on Monday. A spokesman told Reuters the charges against Belegacom's Bessel Kok were identical to those laid against the stateowned company's chairman Benoit Remiche in February.

The "Pink Telephones," as they are called, generated a 1.4 billion franc profit for Belegacom last year.

### Chinese arms sale to Iran worries US

WASHINGTON. Apr 17: The Clinton administration is worried about the possibility of China selling Iran technology that could help the Gulf country develop a nuclear arsenal, The Washington Post reported. savs AP.

The newspaper quotes unidentified officials in its Monday editions as saying Secretary of State Warren Christopher will raise objections to a pending China-Iran deal Monday when he meets with Chinese Foreign Minister Gian Qichen in New York.

Both are attending the opening of a four-week international conference on extending the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The paper said the potential Chinese-Iranian nuclear deal would be similar to one signed last January between Russia and Iran calling for con-

struction in Iran of two 300-

A Western specialist said

megawatt pressurized water reactors. It reported that under

likely terms of the new deal and Iran's pledge to abide by the Non-Proliferation Treaty or NPT - the reactors and associated nuclear fuel would remain under international inspection. But US officials argue that any enhancement of Iran's nuclear capabilities could assist a secret weapons effort.

"China is technically not doing anything that conflicts with the NPT and its international obligations," the Post quoted one senior officials as saying. "But we have the same kind of concern ... (and) we think it would be in their selfinterest" to cancel further negotiations.

China maintains it is pursuing only "normal cooperation... in peaceful areas" with Iran and denies any wrongful trade in nuclear technology.

#### Khmers kill MOSCOW. Apr 17: When Aspects of N-material smuggling Germany and Russia had a row about people caught snunggling

caught carrying plutonium, a much more sensitive substance which in all probability had come from military installations of the former Soviet

> to cause any panic," a Western expert noted. But it was a sign that there are large amounts of unsuper

vised radioactive material in those countries. The point will not have been lost on delegates meeting

in New York on Tuesday for

revision and extension of the 1970 Nuclear Non-Prolifera tion Treaty which 177 states have ratified.

Threats of "nuclear terrorism" mouthed against Moscow by Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev are generally dismissed here as one big

demanding the agency use the government's nuclear policy.

build a nuclear weapon. graphite moderated reactors That explains the fury of the which could leave by-products

nuclear project

clear Research Institute in Moscow, the "closed" cities of Arzamas 16 and Chelyabinsk 70. as well as the three power plants producing plutonium. "are all still vertiable fortrethat stealing plutonium from a generator "would be an imposmust be very vigilant."

ex-Soviet scientists. The funding is for more than 8,000 research workers in the military nuclear domain in Cold War days, to pay them a daily wage in dollars free of tax while they

seeking to get hold of atomic arms, acts as a safety valve, explained Viktor Alessi.

#### Tajik rebels to talk with Moscow MOSCOW, Apr 17: Two

prominent Tajik Islamic rebels will join negotiations here with representatives of the Moscow backed government in Dushanbe after a week of clashes that left nearly 250 dead, Muslim opposition sources said on Sunday, reports AFP.

Mohammad Khimmatzadeh will join talks today planned at the urging of the UN envoy for Tajikistan, Ramiro Piriz Ballon.

# 3 cops, 8 civilians

Cambodia's Khmer Rouge guerillas killed three police men and eight civilians in a spate of New Year violence in the country's northwest a senior army commander alleged "On the night of April 14.

radioactive material special ists agreed there was a need to boost controls but played down the more lurid aspects worthy of an action-packed political thriller, reports AFP. in most cases the material intercepted is unenriched

balt 60, radioactive substances

used in medicine or metal-

lurgy. They are a danger to the health of the person transporting them, but can in no way be used to make a bomb. But tension rose appreciably

last year when three men were

The amounts involved and the quality were not sufficient uranium, cesium 137 and co-

But they stir uneasy fears that the chaos prevailing in Russia will allow organised crime to spread a contraband network and that political cells abroad will succeed in laying

their hands on the means to

United States when Russia agreed in January to supply

A member of Greenpeace Japan Emi Ueno (R) negotiates with an unidentified officer of the

Science and Technology Agency at a gate of the agency in Tokyo yesterday. Greenpeace

wanted to present a giant toilet seat to the agency's director-general, Makiko Tanaka,

iran with a nuclear power station. President Boris Yeltsin admits the contract will be the thorniest issue at his summit with President Bill Clinton scheduled here in mid-May. And yet the plant being

supplied is of the pressurised water type which can be used only to generate electricity. It is in fact the same type as the United States is proposing to North Korea in place of convertible to military use. Russian and Western experts insist the chances are

AFP/UNB photo

"almost nil" that traffickers could slip sensitive supplies to Iran under cover of a civilian They say the Kurchatov Nu-

#### sible tasks. But all the same we An international science and technical centre has allocated 13.6 million dollars for

work on conversion projects. Paying them directly, when they could be exposed to tempting offers from countries

Akbar Turkjanzadesh and