

**BRIEFLY****Yeltsin, Clinton meet Wednesday:**

The Russian and US Presidents are to meet in Moscow on Wednesday under strong domestic pressure to take hard lines on issues ranging from Russian nuclear technology exports to the war in Chechnya. AFP reports from Moscow.

Both President Boris Yeltsin and his US counterpart Bill Clinton face elections next year and they are being pressed to act tough during their summit, to be held the day after massive World War II commemorations in Moscow.

**LTTE kills 6 troops, 4 civilians:**

Tamil Tiger Guerrillas mounted fresh attacks against security forces in eastern Sri Lanka yesterday, killing at least six soldiers and four civilians, the military said in a statement. AFP reports from Colombo.

Gunmen of the Rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) attacked the statement said adding that four civilians were also killed in the crossfire.

**State prosecutor killed in Algiers:**

A lone gunman, believed to be Muslim militant, has shot dead an Algerian state prosecutor in Algiers, an Algerian newspaper reported today. Reuter says from Tunis.

Liberte Daily said Djamel Amar Aissani, 35, was killed on Saturday morning before the eyes of his two children outside their house in the Algiers district of El Mouradia.

**3000 drug dealers held in China:**

The South China province of Guangdong arrested 3,000 drug dealers and 18,000 users in a recent two-month sweep, the Yangcheng Evening News newspaper said. Reuter reports from Beijing.

During the crackdown authorities closed 570 underground drug shops and 1,900 parlours where the drugs were used and seized more than 450 guns, the Saturday edition said.

**2 die in Russian train derailment:**

Two people died when a freight train derailed and caught fire on the Trans-Baikal rail line in Siberia, new agencies said Sunday. AP reports from Moscow.

The accident happened Saturday night near the Omutnaya station in the Amur region, they said.

**Flood claims 42 in Indonesia:**

Flooding in North Sumatra, Indonesia, claimed at least 42 lives and left 17 people missing until Saturday. Xinhua reports from Jakarta.

Floods and landslides in Labuhan Batu and Tapanuli Selatan districts have also injured about 500 people and forced 5,000 people to flee their homes, according to reports reaching yesterday quoting spokesman for the South Tapanuli administration Sarmadhan Harahap.

**2 Greenpeace activists detained:**

Israeli police detained two of several Greenpeace activists trying to block a ship from dumping toxic waste into the Mediterranean yesterday the environmentalist group said. Reuter reports from Jerusalem.

A Greenpeace spokesman said police pulled the two activists from inflatable boats circling an Israeli ship off the coast of Haifa carrying toxic waste from the Haifa Chemicals Ltd company.

**20 Germans held during clash:**

Police arrested 20 people on Saturday as they broke up a fight between leftists and neo-Nazis who were marking a half century since Germany's World War II defeat. At least two people were injured. AP reports from Munich, Germany.

All but one of the arrested were leftists, police said.

**Blast in Latvian synagogue:**

Unknown attacker hurled a bomb into a synagogue in the Latvian capital on Saturday damaging the building and its contents but causing no casualties, an eyewitness and a Jewish community leader told Reuters, in Riga.

This was done by barbarians we do not know why synagogue president Mihails Arons said. The eyewitness said she saw the device thrown from a passing car through the synagogue window shortly before dawn.

**Strong quake jolts C Java:**

A strong earthquake jolted central Java early Saturday, but there were no immediate reports of damage or casualties. AP says from Jakarta.

The quake, which had a preliminary magnitude of 5.6, struck the ancient city of Yogyakarta shortly after midnight Saturday, said Sumber Harto of the Meteorology and Geophysics Agency.

**Violence claims 25 in Brazil:**

Twenty-five people were killed Friday as a wave of violence put a stranglehold on this city, it was the second consecutive day that on that the city had twenty five homicides, the Rio daily O Globo reported on Saturday. AP says from Rio de Janeiro.

Both city and state authorities appeared helpless. The wave of homicides came some 40 days after the beginning of Operation Rio 2, in which the army and armed forces were supposed to put a stop to widespread violence.

**Milosevic talks to US mediator:**

Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic had talks late Saturday with US mediator Robert Frasure on the latest developments in the situation in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, his office said. AFP reports from Belgrade.

An official statement issued through Tanjug news agency said Frasure, the US representative on the five nation contact group on the former Yugoslavia, gave Washington's viewpoint on the latest fighting which saw Croatian troops recapture the Serb-held Croatian enclave of western Slavonia.

**Student hurt in gas blast dies:**

A school boy who was critically injured in last month's deadly gas explosion has died, officials said Sunday. AP reports from Seoul.

The death toll remained unchanged at 101, however, because a set of unidentified remains that rescue officials had counted as separate body turned out to be body parts from other victims.

**'Israel's plan for Jerusalem dangerous'**

CAIRO, May 7: Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat today attacked Israel's plans for Jerusalem as "very dangerous" and criticised demands by some US congressmen that Washington move its embassy to the city from Tel Aviv, reports Reuter.

What Jerusalem is facing now is very dangerous ... What is happening there violates the resolutions of the UN Security Council and the General Assembly, Arafat told reporters at Cairo airport as he left for Gaza after an Arab League meeting on Israel's plans to confiscate land in east Jerusalem.

Foreign ministers at the Arab League's extraordinary meeting on Saturday agreed to seek an urgent UN Security Council meeting to stop Israel confiscating 53 hectares (131 acres) of Palestinian-owned land in East Jerusalem for Jewish housing.

**Dissidents launch all-out offensive against Rao**

NEW DELHI, May 7: Alarm bells are ringing for India's beleaguered Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao as his critics launch an all-out offensive to oust him as leader of the ruling Congress (I) Party, reports AFP.

The dissidents are increasing making bold attacks on the 73-year-old Rao, blaming him for the inertia that has gripped the Congress following a series of stunning election defeats in half-a-dozen states.

"There is no question of compromise," said K K Tewari, a former federal minister and a spokesman for the dissidents, who have announced a rally here on May 19 to split the 109-year-old party.

"Earlier, Rao's supporters kept threatening us," he added. "Now, everyone is running around appealing for unity."

"But for unity, Rao must go

lock, stock and barrel as the Congress president. This is our minimum demand. If this cannot be accepted, then we will not rest," Tewari said in an interview.

Rao suffered a shock this week when K Karunakaran, an unabashed loyalist until recently, echoed the dissident's demand, saying it was time the party got "a working president."

The appeal was immediately taken up by Sharad Pawar, an influential Rao opponent, and Rajesh Pilot, an outspoken junior minister who wants the premier to make up with his

growing critics.

But one party official said that would be difficult. "Whatever Rao says now matters little to his critics," said the official, who asked not to be identified. "They want the PM to go as party President. The PM is not going to oblige them. So there is no meeting ground."

To make matters worse, Congress MPs opposed to Rao want changes in the country's budget for fiscal 1995-96 and a vote in parliament on their amendments, a move which has the potential to bring down the government.

**Christopher denies move to recognise Castro govt**

WASHINGTON, May 7: Secretary of State Warren Christopher denied on Saturday that the Clinton administration was moving methodically towards recognition of President Fidel Castro's government in Cuba, reports Reuter.

"That is false," Christopher declared on the Cable News Network programme Evans and Novak.

US officials are bracing for a struggle with Congress over Cuban policy, firmly resisting attempts by Republican lawmakers to tighten sanctions on the communist state.

Key Republicans are backing legislation meant to further isolate Cuba and damage its economy with the goal of

bringing down Castro.

But President Bill Clinton angered many conservative members of congress this week when he ended a decades long right for Cuban refugees to enter the United States instead returning those picked up at sea back to Cuban authorities.

Senator Jesse Helms chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee and co-sponsor of the new bill has warned the administration might be softening the US stand against the communist state.

But Christopher said the administration was living within the terms of the Cuban democracy act.



Friends of Bosnian Amel Hodzic mourn during his funeral at Sarajevo's Kovaci cemetery on Saturday. Hodzic, 17, and Bosnian soldier Mehmed Carbo were killed May 3 by a sniper in the Bosnian capital.

— AFP/UNB photo

**7 shot dead in UP**

NEW DELHI, May 7: Maoist guerillas Saturday shot dead three policemen at a village in northern India and then killed four men who witnessed the massacre, the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported, says AFP.

The attackers stormed Gorkha village in the state of Uttar Pradesh, seized the policemen and tied them up with ropes and gunned them down from point blank range, the news agency said.

They also rounded up an army soldier on leave and three other villagers who had witnessed the shooting and shot them as well before escaping, the police said in the Hindu Holy City of Varanasi.

Local officials said the gunmen were Maoist guerillas, but gave no further details.

**BJP against allowing alien newspapers into country**

NEW DELHI, May 7: India's main opposition group, the Hindu Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), is strongly opposed to allowing foreign newspapers and news agencies into the country, the Press Trust of India said today, reports Reuter.

"We have strong reservations particularly about the print media since the printed word counts a lot," the news agency quoted party President L K Advani as saying in an interview.

"Foreign news agencies may pollute news at its source," Advani was quoted as saying.

Advani supported a cabinet resolution passed in 1956 that bars foreign news agencies from sending news directly to subscribers, PTI said.

**Angolan govt, rebels pledge peace**

LUSAKA, May 7: Angolan President Jose Eduardo Dos Santos and rebel leader Jonas Savimbi told the world Saturday they were burying the hatchet and were ready to work together for peace after two decades of bitter strife, reports AFP.

"Savimbi and myself displayed during our discussions good political will to move hand in hand to consolidate the peace process ... the meeting we held was a big success and the result was beyond my expectations," Dos Santos told a press conference after their meeting here.

A smiling Dos Santos said they had succeeded during their four and half hour meeting in resolving their problems.

Savimbi — who has led UNITA for almost three decades said he had been moved by the cordial atmosphere which prevailed during their meeting and the reception Dos Santos gave him.

**Plan to amend Pak blasphemy law receives setback**

ISLAMABAD, May 7: Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's plan to amend the country's blasphemy law has received a setback as legislators in a key Pakistani province joined religious parties in opposing the proposed government move, reports AFP.

Benazir, who replaced the conservative government of former Premier Nawaz Sharif in October 1993, has said the law should be revised to prevent its abuse and allay fears of persecution among the religious minorities in Muslim Pakistan.

The law, promulgated in 1965 by then military ruler Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq, lays down the death penalty for defiling the Prophet Mohammad (SM).

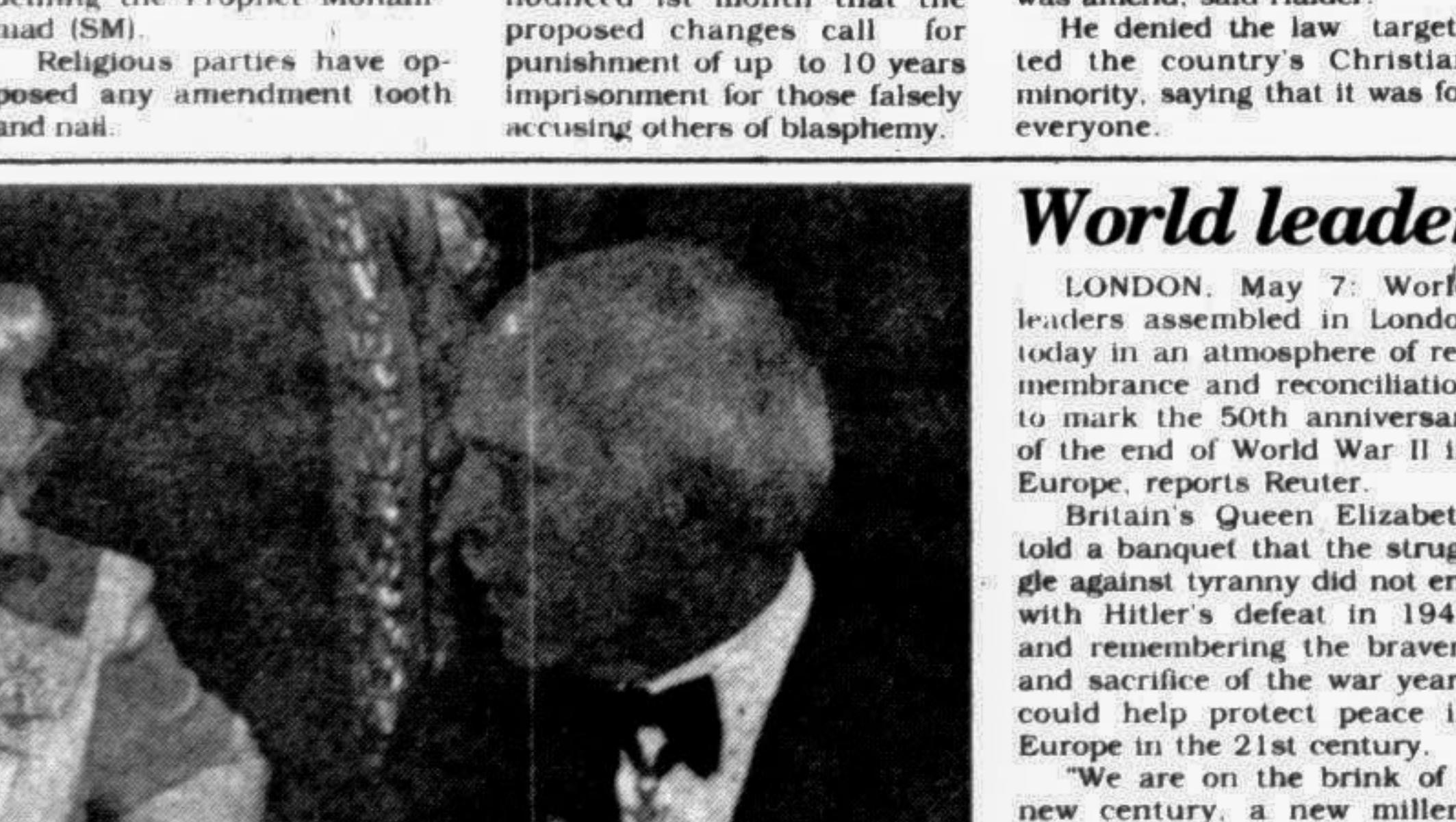
Religious parties have opposed any amendment tooth and nail.

As a safeguard against abuse of the blasphemy law, another amendment proposed that a case be registered by the police only after a judicial inquiry by a magistrate finds sufficient ground to initiate the proceedings, Rizvi said.

His statement triggered angry reaction from the religious parties. Hamid-ul Haq, spokesman for the Milli Yaqtehi (National Solidarity) Council, grouping over a dozen religious parties, said a country-wide protest campaign would be launched on May 29 if the government introduced the proposed changes.

It will be the government's "worst mistake" if the law was amended, said Haider.

He denied the law targeted the country's Christian minority, saying that it was for everyone.



Britain's Queen Elizabeth II chats with King Hussein of Jordan during the banquet Saturday held at the city of London's Guildhall to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II in Europe.

**World leaders in London to mark VE Day**

LONDON, May 7: World leaders assembled in London today in an atmosphere of remembrance and reconciliation to mark the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II in Europe, reports Reuter.

Britain's Queen Elizabeth told a banquet that the struggle against tyranny did not end with Hitler's defeat in 1945 and remembering the bravery and sacrifice of the war years could help protect peace in the 21st century.

"We are on the brink of a new century, a new millennium. It is up to us to set it on a peaceful, confident and prosperous course," she said on Saturday.

German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Israeli President Ezer Weizman listened as the Queen spoke of the untold millions of casualties, both servicemen and civilians in the most devastating war in history.

But British Prime Minister John Major will stay away from

next week's military parades in Moscow marking the end of the war in Europe, a spokeswoman said, she said Major's absence was due to scheduling problems and was not a protest at Russia's military campaign in Chechnya.

Decisions by Kohl and French President Francois Mitterrand not to go to Moscow have been viewed by some as a protest against the Russian offensive.

Veterans from the allied forces were the heroes of the opening day of public commemorations of VE Day (Victory in Europe) in Britain before the dignitaries take over today with a service of reconciliation in St Paul's Cathedral, a lunch at Buckingham Palace and a service in Hyde Park.

On Saturday the huge London park welcomed with enormous affection one of modern Britain's strongest links to the war years, the Queen's mother now 94.

**First multi-party polls in Ethiopia**

ADDIS ABABA, May 7: Ethiopia on Sunday holds the first multi-party general election in its 2,000-year history, set to return the former guerrilla ruling coalition to power, reports Reuter.

The Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) led by President Meles Zenawi ends four years of transitional rule with a controversial test dividing Ethiopia into nine ethnic-based federated states.

Most of the opposition is boycotting the poll, making an EPRDF victory inevitable but human rights groups are up in arms at the EPRDF's failure to end completely violations that made Ethiopia's Marxist rulers a pariah for 19 years.

A total of 2,832 candidates are standing including more than 900 independents. Results will be announced on May 23.