

## BRIEFLY

**King Fahd for Islamic unity:**

King Fahd of Saudi Arabia called for Islamic unity as two million Muslims from around the world ended the main rituals of the annual hajj pilgrimage Wednesday. AFP reports from Mina, Saudi Arabia.

"We hope that all Muslims get together, unite their works, strengthen their will and go together on the right path," King Fahd said in a speech carried by the Saudi Press Agency.

**UNSC retains sanctions on Iraq:**

The Security Council on Friday retained sanctions against Iraq for the 25th time in nearly five years following new revelations over Baghdad's failure to comply in disclosing past weapons programmes. Reuter reports from United Nations.

"The review was not encouraging in the weapons area and declarations on biological weapons are not credible," British Ambassador Sir David Hannay said. In the chemical weapons area there are some doubts about whether the latest Iraqi declaration is in fact complete.

**Blast at Narita Airport in Tokyo:**

A bomb exploded at Tokyo's Narita Airport yesterday damaging part of terminal building. But there were no immediate reports of casualties, Jiji press said. AFP reports from Tokyo.

The device, believed to have been set off by a timer, made a hole in the ceiling of a third-floor toilet in the number two terminal, the report said. Airport officials and police were not immediately available for comment.

**Israeli planes attack Lebanon:**

Israeli planes hit guerrilla-controlled hills in South eastern Lebanon with rockets overnight, security sources said Saturday. Reuter reports from Rashaya Lebanon.

They said the planes fired a total of four rockets at hills near the town of Mashghara, used by guerrillas of the pro-Iranian Hizbollah to launch raids on Israel's occupation zone in south Lebanon. There was no immediate word on casualties.

**6 guerillas surrender in India:**

Six wanted guerillas surrendered to the leader of the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh Saturday, and walked away with their freedom, plots of land and 550,000 rupees (17,700 dlr) in cash. AP reports from Hyderabad.

The surrender was the first payoff for the newly elected state chief minister, N.T. Rama Rao, who has suggested amnesty for any of the 400 to 500 guerillas of the People's War Group who give themselves up.

**3 militants killed in Cairo:**

Police killed three suspected Muslim militants Friday in a raid on their hideout in Cairo, the third clash this month in the Egyptian capital. AP reports from Cairo.

The Interior Ministry said the men were plotting assassinations and bombings during the four day Feast of the Sacrifice, which marks the culmination of the annual Muslim pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia. It ends Saturday.

**Austria to buy Popper's library:**

Austria is buying 6,000 books and letters belonging to the man who once called himself the world's happiest philosopher, AP reports from Vienna.

Austria will pay approximately 1.05 million dlr for the library of Sir Karl Popper, who was born in Vienna in 1902 and fled Austria before its Nazi annexation in 1938. Popper died last year in his adopted English home at the age of 92.

**Blast in Burundi prison kills 14:**

A grenade blast in a prison in troubled northern Burundi killed 14 prisoners and wounded four, the army said yesterday. Reuter reports from Burundi.

A spokesman said the hand grenades exploded in Busoni prison in Kirundo province on Thursday evening. He gave no details of the attack. Earlier on Thursday, a gunman killed a soldier from the Tutsi-dominated army in Kamenge, a northern suburb of the capital Bujumbura and a stronghold of militants from the Hutu majority.

**32,000 Afghans return:**

Some 32,000 Afghans who fled fighting in Kabul last year returned in the last four weeks, a UN refugees spokeswoman said in Geneva Tuesday. AFP reports from Geneva.

UNHCR spokeswoman Christiane Bethiaume said that refugees were turning at the rate of about 1,000 a day because life has become more normal and humanitarian aid is coming in.

**Gold mine mishap leaves 100 dead in South Africa**

ORKNEY, South Africa, May 13: Gold mining in South Africa is tough and deadly work, as made dramatically clear this week when more than 100 workers plunged down a shaft to their deaths, reports AP.

For Johannes Panyane, mining also is the only way to earn a living. He said Friday he was resigned to returning underground at Vaal Reef No 2 Shaft, site of the fatal accident. "I never know where my next meal is coming from," Panyane said. "Every job has got its risk."

Miner E.J. Nxumalo lifted his shirt to show scars on his back saying he had been injured by falling rocks in an accident in No 2 Shaft in February. But he, too, said he would return to work when the shaft reopened because he had to provide for his wife and three children.

"Everyday, I am afraid," Nxumalo said. Recovery teams

were still bringing mangled bodies to the surface Friday, two days after a mine locomotive went into a tunnel closed to locomotive traffic, broke through safety barriers and plunged down the shaft. It landed on an elevator carriage full of workers, snapping the cable to send the carriage crashing to the bottom of a 2.3-kilometer (1.4 mile) shaft near Orkney, 180 kilometers (112 miles) southwest of Johannesburg.

More than 50 bodies had been recovered by Friday evening, and mine officials said it could take another day to get out the rest, believed to number near 50.

The locomotive driver was not on his vehicle when it fell. He was not injured, but remained hospitalized Friday and was described as suffering from shock. Mine officials refused to identify him, saying it was for his safety.

**Communism may return to Bulgaria, warns president**

SOFIA, May 13: The president, battling the new socialist government on issues ranging from possible NATO membership to land ownership, warned Friday that communism could return to this Balkan land, reports AP.

Disputes between President Zhelyu Zhelev, former leader of the anti-Communist Union of Democratic Forces, and the Socialist government of Premier Zhan Videnov have paralysed government in this poor country of 8.5 million people on the southeast edge of Europe.

Zhelev has vetoed four pieces of legislation since the Socialists, the former Communists, won December elections.

**US vows to block proposed UN resolution  
UNSC urged to stop Israeli confiscation of Arab land**

UNITED NATIONS, May 13: The PLO and Arab states Friday condemned Israeli orders expropriating Arab-owned land in Jerusalem and urged the Security Council to take action to end the confiscations, reports AP.

But the United States vowed to block a proposed resolution circulated Friday, saying any UN move would be counterproductive to the Palestinian-Israeli peace process.

Palestinian observer Nasser al-Kidwa, in remarks to the council, also criticised efforts in the US Congress to relocate the US Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. President Clinton has opposed the move.

In an rare open debate, about 20 countries addressed the council Friday and almost all condemned Israel's announcement last month that it would confiscate 140 acres (50 hectares) of Arab-owned land in east Jerusalem. The session was recessed late Friday and is expected to resume Monday.

"Israel must understand that it is not possible to continue seizing Jerusalem while it demands normal relations with its neighbours and its friends," al-Kidwa told the council.

He called on the council to adopt a resolution calling for Israel to rescind the expropriation orders and desist from such acts in future.

Palestinians want to make the eastern part of Jerusalem the capital of a future state, but Israel views the city as its indivisible capital.

The city's status has been left to the final phase of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.



Israeli peace activists protest at the limit between East and West Jerusalem on Friday against the confiscation of Arab lands in Jerusalem by the Israeli government. PLO chairman Yasser Arafat has taken the Palestinian campaign against land confiscation to the UN after Israel grabbed another 53 hectares at the end of April and announced its plan to seize much more. — AFP/UNB photo

**Elimination of arsenals  
NPT confce fails to evaluate progress of five N-powers**

UNITED NATIONS, May 13: A global conference on a key nuclear treaty ended early today with delegates unable to agree on a final report about how well the pact has worked over the past five years, reports Reuter.

The month-long forum had already taken its crucial decision on Thursday — to extend indefinitely the 25-year-old nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), considered the linchpin of this century's arms control agreements.

"There were no winners and losers in this conference. The treaty won," said the conference president, Jayantha Dhanapala, in his closing remarks.

The treaty, which came into force in 1970 for 25 years, had to be extended indefinitely or

for fixed terms.

Nevertheless, the failure to produce a final document to review the treaty's accomplishments and shortcomings highlighted sharp differences among delegations, especially in evaluating progress by the five acknowledged nuclear powers to eliminate their arsenals.

The review document is not legally binding but carries political weight and serves as a report card on how well the treaty is working. The NPT requires a review every five years.

The 178-nation treaty officially sanctions five nuclear powers — the United States, Russia, China, France and Britain — to keep their weapons but not for ever. They promise eventually to elimi-

nate all nuclear weapons while the rest of the treaty members pledge not to develop them.

Some states, particularly in the third world, were critical at the slow pace of disarmament, fearing that once they agreed to a permanent extension they would lose any leverage over the nuclear powers.

Ironically, one of the accomplishments of the conference was to approve a South African proposal for more frequent and stringent reviews of the treaty's provisions.

"It is our sincere hope that this unfortunate development will not constitute a preview of what will happen in the review conferences, which we have all agreed to strengthen," said Indonesia's UN ambassador Nugroho Winmurtis.

**US, Russia agree to review CFE treaty**

MOSCOW, May 13: The United States and Russia agreed Wednesday to review a key treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe but a US official insisted that Moscow must comply with the pact until it comes into force later this year, reports AFP.

The Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) treaty, which comes into force in November, restricts levels of heavy weapons that a country can keep in any one area and the issue was among those discussed Wednesday by US President Bill Clinton and Russian leader Boris Yeltsin.

Russia has hundreds more and armoured personnel carriers than allowed by the CFE treaty in Chechnya alone and Moscow has warned it may have to abrogate the treaty to look after its security interests.

The United States supports Moscow's desire to renegotiate the treaty, which was agreed by the former Soviet Union when the region's security situation was totally different.

But a CFE review will only be held in early 1996 and if Russia is to stick to the treaty it will have to carry out a major redeployment from Chechnya and the rest of its southern flank by November.

The CFE was signed by the US-led North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and Russian-led Warsaw pact in 1990, before the collapse of the Soviet Union and the eruption of several wars on Russia's southern flank.

**Govt forces kill 200 Taleban**

KABUL, May 13: Government-controlled Kabul radio said on Friday that 200 opposition Taleban fighters had been killed and 180 captured in fighting in Nimroz province, in southwestern Afghanistan, reports Reuter.

It said forces loyal to President Burhanuddin Rabbani inflicted the losses on the Taleban Islamic militia after capturing Farah province north of Nimroz on Wednesday.

The radio, monitored in Islamabad, said pro-Rabbani forces were advancing towards the provincial capital of Zaranj on the Iranian border and had captured 20 Taleban vehicles with a large quantity of ammunition.

No independent account of the fighting was available. The Taleban emerged in the southern province of Kandahar in October and swept through 10 provinces to reach the dates of Kabul in February after dislodging the Hizb-i-Islami militia of opposition leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar from its strongholds around the Afghan capital.

But Afghan government forces forced the Taleban to retreat out of rocket range of Kabul in March and have scored several victories against the Islamic student militia since then.

**22 die from sun stroke in Sindh**

ISLAMABAD, May 13: At least 22 people died from sun stroke in last four days as the entire southern Sindh province remained in the grip of sizzling heat during Eid holidays, local press reports said today, reports Xinhua.

The worst hit areas were Hyderabad, Mirpurkhas, Nawabshah, Badin, Thatta, Nourshero Feroz, Shikarpur, Khairpur, Kandh Kot, Umer Kot, Moro, Rohri and Shahdad Kot where hot and dry winds were blowing across due to a low pressure.

Prices of ice and cold drinks rose high with the rise of temperature and people were seen standing in queues to buy ice.

According to sources of the Met office in Karachi, low pressure will continue for some more days and temperature may further rise in upper Sindh.

**Off the Record****Lioness scales fence of zoo**

OAKLAND, California: A 115-kilogram (320-pound) lioness scaled a zoo fence, forcing the evacuation of about 560 visitors, but simply paced back and forth until it was shot with a tranquilizer dart and recaptured, reports AP.

"A zoo director's worst nightmare is a predator's escape," said Joel Parrot, director of the Knowland Park Zoo.

The lioness, named Maddie, went over a 3.7-metre (12-foot) chain-link fence topped with barbed wire Thursday. The zoo's visitors at the time included 260 schoolchildren.

The animal paced along the fence before its recapture within about an hour.

The lion exhibit will remain closed while a double fence is installed and the zoo figures out how to prevent the animals from climbing out of the enclosure.

**Girl friend's care ends his coma**

ROME: A 23-year-old Italian has emerged from what doctors said was an irreversible coma after four years of care and caresses from his girlfriend, newspapers reported on Friday, says Reuter.

They said Valerio Vasilari, who had been in a coma in the northern city of Modena since a road accident in November 1991, was now communicating by simple sign language and moving his arms and legs.

"I had no reason at all to hope until I noticed on one of the monitors that his heart beat faster when I talked to him," the girlfriend, 20-year-old Cecilia Orlandi, told Corriere Della Sera newspaper. "The doctor said it was just coincidence."

Valerio's mother Franca added: "They spend hours together and it's like that for four years. I've never managed to count how many kisses she gives him. All I know is that she's saved his life."

**In search of serial rapist**

VERMILION, Alberta: Trying to use DNA fingerprinting to catch a serial rapist, investigators are asking for blood samples from men in this town of 3,800 people, reports AP.

None of the 90 men asked to give a sample so far has refused, said Cpl Craig Smith of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in Edmonton.

The target of the search is a rapist who assaulted three victims between May 1992 and November 1994.

The Mounties want to eliminate possible suspects by comparing their DNA to genetic material found in the rapist's bodily fluids left at the scenes of three rapes.

"We'll take hundreds of blood samples if we need to," Smith said. "This is the way we're going to solve this one."

The rapist isn't likely to be caught through a blood sample but could give himself away trying to escape testing, said Joseph Wambaugh, author of "The Blooding," about a 1987 hunt for a killer in a British village using DNA testing.

"I don't think he'll walk in and hope he'll beat the genetic fingerprinting. I'm sure he's not going to be that stupid."

**UN peacekeeping measures****Ghali seeks review of mandate in Bosnia**

SARAJEVO, May 13: UN chief called for a full review of their peacekeeping mandate in Bosnia on Friday and hinted that the embattled 22,000-strong UN force could be withdrawn, reports Reuter.

UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali met the UN mission's diplomatic and military commanders in Paris to assess its crumbling morale and sense of importance under armed attack and harassment.

He said he would seek a Security Council review of the mandate in Bosnia because of increased fighting and attacks on peacekeepers since a ceasefire between government and Serb forces ended on May 1.

His spokesman in New York, Joe Sills, said that "what we are being asked to do (in Bosnia) is becoming untenable

the gap is widening between the mandate and the resources that we have and what is expected of us."

Sills did not say outright that Boutros-Ghali would urge a withdrawal of the mission and Security Council President Jean-Pierre Merimee said he thought it was unlikely.

France and Britain, which contribute the largest troop contingents, are unilaterally threatening to pull their men out but even a partial withdrawal would be an immense military risk requiring intervention by NATO and the United States.

Military strategists believe the Muslim-led government, its forces handicapped against the Serbs by a UN weapons embargo, have most to lose from a UN departure.

**NPT won't work unless Israel joins: Egypt**

CAIRO, May 13: Egypt, which mobilised opposition to the indefinite extension of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, called the pact's approval untenable Friday unless Israel joins it, reports AP.

The treaty was extended indefinitely Thursday without a vote by countries gathering at the United Nations.

But Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Moussa said dozens of nations opposed the treaty, including all the Arab states.

"The treaty's credibility depends on its universality and solutions for its shortcomings such as Israel's keeping its nuclear facilities outside international supervision," he said.

The treaty's renewal was considered a diplomatic victory for the United States, who had sought its indefinite — and unconditional — extension. Some Third World countries had demanded faster cuts in

existing nuclear arsenals. In the months leading up to the conference, Egypt had tried to muster support from Arab and other Third World countries for its campaign not to support extension unless Israel joined the treaty.

Israel has never acknowledged a nuclear-weapons capability but is widely believed to have an arsenal of up to 300 warheads. The dispute soured already cool relations between the two neighbours.

In view of Arab concerns, the conference adopted a resolution calling on all Middle East states that have not signed the treaty to do so. Moussa called it a first step in freeing the region of nuclear weapons.

Meanwhile, AFP adds: Fundamentalist gunmen wreaked havoc in a village street on Friday as clashes between militants and police left seven people dead.

**Lankan civil war looks more threatening than before**

COLOMBO, May 13: Nearly four weeks after Sri Lanka's truce collapsed, the 12-year civil war looks more threatening than it did before the government's peace initiative began, reports AP.

Ethnic Tamil rebels have escalated the fighting, introducing surface to air missiles and deploying scuba-diving suicide bombers to sink two warships. Military intelligence warns the guerillas could be preparing to use chemical weapons.

Western diplomats say the use of missiles by what was once a ragtag guerilla army changes the tactical and strategic implications of the war in this island nation off the southern tip of India.

President Chandrika Kumaratunga, who was elected

last year after campaigning against the previous government's refusal to talk with the rebels, persuaded the Tigers to begin peace talks with a promise of Tamil autonomy.

But a three-month ceasefire broke down April 19 after four rounds of negotiations.

The missile attacks, which shot down two transport planes and killed 90 people, forced the government to ground most of its air force.

For years, most of the fighting has been contained in the north and east, leaving the industrial south at peace to prosper on the strength of foreign investment.

Now the government is warning that the rebels could revive a campaign of terror in Colombo. Thousands of Tamils

have been detained and questioned since the truce collapsed, and military checkpoints have been set up across the city.

On Thursday, a ban went into effect against small vessels entering the harbour for fear that they could be used as floating bomb platforms to destroy ships.

The president has accused the rebels of planning to assassinate her. When she travelled to India earlier this month, she secretly boarded an Air Lanka flight to Dubai and London and diverted it to New Delhi to let her off.

The 100-day cease-fire appears to have benefited rebel leader Velupillai Prabhakaran and left Ms Kumaratunga open to criticism for being too accommodating and failing to re-

build her forces — as the guerillas apparently did.

The Tigers had scored some notable successes before the cease-fire began January 8.

In September 1993, they blocked a major army drive from the Elephant Pass base toward the rebel stronghold of Jaffna city, killing 120 soldiers.

Two months later the rebels attacked Pooneryn, a key military base controlling access to the rebel-held peninsula across the Jaffna Lagoon. They killed or captured 750 soldiers, and though they lost nearly as many of their own fighters, they seized a lot of army and naval equipment.

A rebel suicide unit struck terror in the navy last September by destroying its

largest ship off the north-western coast.

In the peace talks, Kumaratunga's negotiators went a long way to meet rebel demands. The government partially lifted an economic embargo on Jaffna Peninsula, eased restrictions on fishing, announced a \$40 billion reconstruction programme for the war-ravaged north.

But that was not enough to keep Prabhakaran at the peace table. He refused to discuss a political settlement to the war unless the government dismantled the Pooneryn base and allowed armed guerillas to move freely through the east, an area where they lost much of their control two years ago.

Many analysts conclude that Prabhakaran agreed to the cease-fire only to rebuild his

forces, as he also did during truces in 1985 and 1990.

"The Tigers used every subterfuge and strained every sinew to obstruct the commencement of a political dialogue," Deputy Defence Minister Anuruddha Ratwatte told a special session of Parliament on Friday.

Ratwatte said the government remained committed to negotiating a peace.

Many countries, including the United States and China, have criticised the rebels for breaking the truce and urged them to return to the negotiating table.

But intelligence reports say the insurgents are now building up forces for an assault on either the Pooneryn base or the Elephant Pass camp.

**Mexican govt, rebels talks resume**

SAN ANDRES LARRAINZAR, Mexico, May 13: Government and rebel negotiators are set to resume peace talks Saturday aimed at ending the 16-month uprising in Chiapas, reports AP.

Zapatista rebel negotiators showed up late on Friday, but mediators said the talks would not start until Saturday.

The first round of talks ended April 23 with rebels charging that the government came looking for surrender, not dialogue.

The government proposed grouping the rebels in three areas and housing and feeding them for the duration of the talks, which by some estimates could last through the year.