China's N-plant resumes work: The number one reactor at southern China's Daya Bay nuclear power station, shut down since mid-December due to a design fault discovered during refuelling, has resumed operation, Xinhua reported, AFP says from Beijing.

The agency said the 900-megawatt reactor at the country's first major nuclear power plant had Begun generating electricity at 4:21 pm (0821 GMT) Sunday after its equipment met the relevant safety requirements Wednesday.

Blast kills 2 Israeli soldiers: Two Israeli soldiers were killed and two wounded when a bomb exploded while they were on patrol today, pro-Israeli security sources said, Reuter from Mariayoun.

The roadside bomb exploded at about nine am as the patrol, backed by armoured vehicles, approached an Israeli fortified outpost at Tallousa in Israel's south Lebanon occupation, zone, the sources said.

Ex-ROK diplomat seeks refuge in NZ: A sacked South Korean diplomat yesterday filed in application for refugee status in New Zealand, his lawyer said Reuter reports from Wellington.

Roger Chambers, barrister for sacked vice-consul Choi Seung-lin, told Reuters: "He at about two o'clock this afternoon filed an application for the grant of refugee status in New Zeland

Pak kidnappers free a German: Tribal kidnappers freed a German engineer early Monday, eight days after taking him, two other Germans and a Pakistani driver hostage, AP reports from Peshawar.

A powerful tribal chief handed over Gunter Mayer, 56,

and the driver to authorities shortly after dawn, saying kidnappers whom he did not know had given him the two hostages. Mayer and the driver were the only hostages

Bear kills 2 hikers in Alaska: A bear startled while feeding on a freshly killed moose fatally mauled two hikers at a state park. A third hiker escaped by climbing up a tree, AP reports from Alaska.

"In all probability it was a brown bear, State Trooper Brad Brown said. "They are territorial and they like to protect their food.

Belgian cops arrest 40: Belgian police have raided 20 Chinese restaurants and arrested 40 people this weekend as part of an inquiry into possible traffic in illegal workers, a national police spokesman told Belgian television on Sunday, Reuter reports from Brussels.

The spokesman said the raids — which involved around 400 police — were carried out after it became apparent that there were more people working in Chinese restaurants in Belgium than there were registered Chinese residents in the country.

Floods claim 5 in Tokyo: Massive rains in Japan over the weekend triggered floods and landslides, claiming five lives, national police said Monday, AP reports from Tokyo.

Four were killed in two landslides in western Japan on Monday. The first engulfed three construction workers building a logging road in Toyama Prefecture (state), 255 kilometres (159 miles), west of Tokyo, a local police spokesman said.

15 Tuareg rebels killed in Niamey: Over 15 former Tuareg rebels have been killed in fighting with Arab militiamen in northern Niger, local officials and witnesses said Sunday, AFP reports from Niamey

The clash occurred on June 26 in Bushland near Tassara 530 kms northeast of Niamey, according to a local official in neighbouring Tahoua, itself 400 kms [250 miles] northeast of the capital.

Lightning damages ANA plane: Lightning damaged a cockpit window of an All Nippon Airways (ANA) airbus A-320 yesterday, forcing the plane bound for Hokkaido Island to make an emergency landing at Nagoya airport, in central Japan, an ANA spokesman said, AFP reports from Tokyo.

The 94 passengers and crew aboard were unhurt, the official said

Tamil rebels kill 8 soldiers: Sri Lanka's Tamil Tigers shot and killed eight soldiers in a clash in eastern Batticaloa Monday, the military said, Reuter reports from Colombo.

The troops confronted a group of Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam [LTTE] at Kopaveli, southwest of Battiacoloa, the military said.

Radioactive water may have leaked into Bombay subsoil

BOMBAY, July 3: Radioactive water leaked from an atomic power plant on the outskirts of Bombay for at least 45 days until it was shut down on April 15, the Indian Express reported Monday, reports AFP.

The waste water leaked into a storm drain and may have seeped into the subsoil water system, exposing about 3,000 inhabitants of a nearby village, the newspaper said in a front-page report.

A Gopalakrishanan, chairman of the government's Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB), acknowledged there had been a leak but said it occurred within the premises of the Tarapur atomic power station.

It was a small leak, he told AFP. "It happened within the plant. None of the workers have been injured. It is nothing unusual. This happens all over the world." "We have an inventory of

"Practically nothing got out of

Residents of Ghivali village, located near the plant, however told the Express that the radioactive water may have contaminated ponds and wells in the area and had killed nearly 20 fowl, cattle

clay within the plant."

office in the East China

a global empire of medicine

heaving and wriggling with

life. Others are pickling qui-

etly in large glass bottles or

sonous," Xu says with glee as

"This one is very poi-

laid out drying in the sun.

snakes.

Tudjman threatens to evict UN peacekeepers

ZAGREB, July 3: President Franjo Tudiman on Sunday renewed a threat to evict UN peacekeepers, and said he would not resume internationally-mediated negotiations with a rebel Serb leader, reports AP.

The statement from Tudiman's office was in line with increasingly hawkish utterances from Croatian officials who lately have emphasised a military rather than a negotiated reintegration of Serbheld territories in Croatia.

Negotiations between Croatia and the rebel Serbs broke down after the Croats recaptured a chunk of Serbheld territory in early May.

In January, Tudiman gave the United Nations an ultimatum for peacekeepers to leave or be placed on Croatia's internationally recognised borders, which would symbolise

WASHINGTON, July 3:

US intelligence officials say

they have strong evidence

his government's authority over the rebel Serb-held

The United Nations complied, changing the mandate. But so far, no UN troops have been deployed to the borders. The new mandate expires November 30.

A statement from Tudiman's office said the president told international mediators Carl Bildt and Thorvald Stoltenderg in talks Sunday that he would not allow the UN force to stay if the mandate does not start to be implemented.

Currently, UN peacekeepers are inserted between Croatian and Serb troops as a buffer. But since the Croatian offensive in May, both sides have massed troops and weapons, restricted UN movements and even commandeered UN outposts and

US intelligence officials say

China supplied medium range

missiles to Pakistan

clear warheads to threaten ci-

ties in neighbouring India,

UN officials have been negotiating with both sides to try and get them to restart talks which had made some progress on economic cooper-

But Tudiman said he would not negotiate with the rebel Serb leader, Milan Martic, who recently ousted a moderate rival considered more conciliatory in negotiations with Zagreb.

Tudiman said certain conditions had to be filled before the Croatian government would consider resuming talks with the Serbs.

The conditions were: starting to implement the UN mandate, opening of an oil pipeline through Serb-held territory and the vital railway link connecting the capital with the southern coast. That

that intelligence officials were

reluctant to push the infor-

mation forward for political

Reuter adds from Beijing,

China flatly denied today a

US newspaper report that

quoted US intelligence offi-

cials as saying they had strong

evidence Beijing had given

Pakistan complete medium-

less," a spokesman for the

Chinese Foreign Ministry told

"Such a report is ground-

range ballistic missiles.

line passes through the rebel Serbs' self-proclaimed capital

Croatian Serbs earlier conditioned resumption of negotiations with the government ation before they broke on withdrawal of Croat troops from a strategic mountain overlooking Knin. That has put the town within Croat artillery range for the first time since the 1991 war in which the Serbs seized about one-third of Croatia.

The blitz offensive to recapture some of the territory taken by Serbs in 1991 won Tudiman some political collateral. But he remains under pressure from his own hardliners, who are eager to regain control of all Serb-held terri-

Failure to appear to be taking firm action could weaken his position as Croatia heads toward elections.

US envoy's fresh bid to unblock Israel-Syria talks

BEIRUT, July 3: US envoy Dennis Ross is due to start a new swing through the Middle East on July 9 in a fresh bid to unblock Israeli-Syrian negotiations, Lebanese officials said Sunday, reports

There were no other details available about the visit by the US State Department's Middle East coordinator

Lebanon's Prime Minister Rafic Hariri returned Sunday from a meeting in Damascus where he held talks with Syrian leaders including chief-of staff Hikmat Shehabi.

Shehabi wrapped up three days of talks in Washington with his Israeli counterpart Amnon Shahak on Thursday. They discussed security arrangements to accompany an Israeli withdrawal on the Golan Heights occupied since

Russian, Chechen teams resume talks in Grozny

MOSCOW, July 3: Russian and Chechen peace negotiators resume talks in the war-shattered Chechen capital Grozny today in a bid to reach a settlement to end the bitter six-month conflict, reports AFP.

ITAR-Tass news agency said a member of the Russian delegation, Arkady Volsky, went "into the mountains late Sunday to meet Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev.

Volsky was expected to urge Dudayev to accept a Russian "zero option" initiative, under which all current political leaders in the wartorn republic .- including Dudayev as well as Moscow's own proteges - would resign before new elections are held.

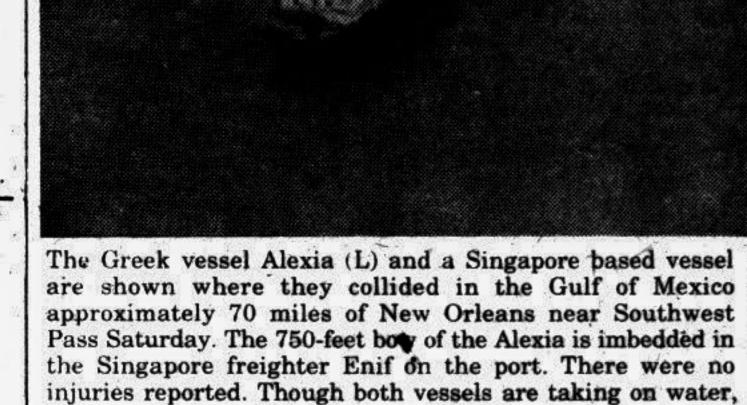
NATO won't allow Yeltsin to scupper expansion plan

MOSCOW, July 3: NATO Secretary General Willy Claes said in an interview broadcast Sunday that the alliance would not allow Russian President Boris Yeltsin to scupper plan to enlarge the military organisation, reports AFP.

Claes said that he was prepared to be frank with the Russians, and that he was prepared to implement the partnership for peace programme over Yeltsin's objections despite his respect for the Russian president's point of view.

Claes made the remarks during an interview from North Atlantic Treaty Organisation headquarters in Brussels. It was broadcast Sunday

Russia has formally joined the partnership for peace programme formed by NATO for former Warsaw Pact nations who wanted to join the USled alliance.



Off the Record

they are in immediate danger of sinking according to the

- AFP/UNB photo

They attend their own funerals

COLOMBO: Two Sri Lankan soldiers walked into their home towns and found themselves attending their own funerals, the Island newspaper said on Monday, reports Reuter.

In separate incidents, the two men, a sergeant and a private, had been presumed dead when they failed to return to barracks on the northern island of Mandaitivu after Wednesday's attack by Tamil rebels which left more than 100 soldiers dead.

In fact, the two had been on leave and the army had sent the bodies of two unknown dead soldiers in sealed coffins instead, the newspaper said.

"While the relatives of the two soldiers were mourning by the bier of the sealed coffins, the duo walked in very much alive creating a tumultuous situation," the newspaper said.

Seals are big on fidelity too!

WASHINGTON: Fate had driven them apart but seven years later, they found each other again, on the same Windblown Scottish isle where they had met. He could have played the field. But, no. He wanted her, reports AP. More would have expected it from such a slippery character. He's part of that sea going breed that comes ashore, gets into fights, makes off with a doe-eyed partner and dumps her like a rock.

But the story of S2 and J8 - two gray seals - may challenge the conventional wisdom about polygamy among mammals

Until now, humans have been regarded as one of the few arguably monogamous mammal species, however lousy some may be at it. Now a study contends seals are big on fidelity, too. British researchers, in a study published in the journal

Science, concluded "many pairs of seals establish durable tiles, recognising each other between (mating) seasons and coordinating their behaviours.

Seals mate again shortly after giving birth — during the same shore leave, so to speak - so colonies are full of vulnerable young during the angry macho rituals of courtship. Amos said it's as if the female is saying to her previous

partner, "Right, I'm having you, you produced a good pup last year. Go away, everybody else. Game's over."

China's military exercise worries Taiwan confirm the generality of the TAIPEI, July 3: A senior

Taiwan military official said today arch rival China is conducting a military exercise off its east coast, heightening tension at a time when relations are already strained. "We know they have been

engaging in the military exercise, but we don't know exactly how long it will last or how big the scale is," he official, who did not want to be named, told Reuters.

Several local newspapers said the exercise, called the 'East Sea Five," had started on June 26 and was being conducted in the air and at sea off the coast of China's eastern Zhejiang province.

The exercise was last seen some 250 miles (400 km) north of the tense 220 kmwide (137 mile) Taiwan Straits which separate this island from China, the newspaper The official said he could

newspaper reports and did not deny details contained in China has not ruled out using force against Taiwan,

which it has viewed as a renegade province since the island split from the mainland at the end of the Chinese civil war The mass-circulation China

Times newspaper reported top military officials as saying China's military exercise may be intended as a show of strength to Taiwan?

The ruling Nationalist Party-owned central daily news quoted an unnamed senior military official as saying the exercise was "political and psychological warfare."

Taiwan's stock market caught a bout of nerves. The weighted index was down 1.32 per cent to 5,373.06 in

mid-morning trade.

Khmers launch major offensive

guerillas today launched a large-scale offensive in the northwestern province of Battambang, police and military officials said, reports

fought their way to within 20 kms (12 miles) of this provincial capital, Cambodia's second largest city, they said.

rebels were taking part in the offensive, they said, adding that fighting was concentrated on Boeung Ampil, a Commune about 20 kms (12 miles) south of Battambang town, on national route 10.

Streams of ambulances could be seen coming and going down the road.

Turkish troops kill 30 Kurds

DIYARBAKIR, Turkey July 3: Turkish troops killed 30 Kurdish guerillas Sunday as the government stepped up attacks against the insurgents, the regional governor's office said. Two soldiers were killed, reports AP.

The clashes occurred in the southeastern Sirnak, Siirt and Van provinces, the Diyarbakir-based governor's office said.

Security forces killed 49 rebels in several clashes last

Meanwhile, the rebels killed three policemen in an ambush in eastern Tunceli province on Sunday, the Anatolia news agency said. The policemen were patrolling the hills, surrounding the provincial centre.

what leaked," he added. the plant.

Gopalakrishanan told The Express that the accident occurred at the waste immobilisation plant because of "fault planning and execution," but denied any danger to the vil-

"I am not condoning anyone," he said. "It is an error, and the AERB's safety committee is examining it."

and dogs.

Gopalakrishanan denied the deaths. "It is also absolutely incorrect to say that people have been affected. Nearly 90 to 95 per cent of the leak got absorbed in the

that china has given Pakistan "The evidence I have seen reason. The Clinton administracomplete medium-range balis incontrovertible that M-11s listic missiles, the Washington have been delivered and are tion acknowledged that Pak-Post reported in its Monday there," the paper quoted one istan has long sought the M-US official as saying. 11s to counter the future deeditions, reports Reuter. The Post quoted officials ployment of India's Prithvi, Intelligence sources told the the paper that satellite reas saying the intelligence another missile capable of carconnaissance photographs, inrying nuclear warheads, the community had mounting proof that storage creates at tercepted communications paper reported.

they said.

Base contain more than 30 Chinese-made M-11 missiles. If the shipments are officially confirmed Washington could be forced to impose tough sanctions against China the officials said, but added that the Clinton administration was ignoring their evi-

Pakistan's Sargodha Air Force

dence so far. Pakistan could someday deploy the missiles with nu-

KARACHI, July 3: The

ethnic Mohajir Quami Mo-

vement (MQM) has agreed to

hold talks with the Pakistani

government on how to

restore peace in the violence-

torn city of Karachi, an MQM

spokesman said today, reports

leader Altaf Hussain, living in

self imposed exile in London

had given a green light for the

talks expected to start on

Thursday. It was not immedi-

ately clear where the talks

much of the violence in

Karachi on the MQM which

the city's majority Mohajirs

the Urdu-speaking descen-

dants of Muslims who mi-

grated to Pakistan from India

Meanwhile an imam was

enjoys strong support among

The government blames

would take place.

at partition in 1947.

The spokesman said MQM

Reuter.

and human intelligence reports supported the view that M-11s have been in Pakistan since November 1992.

Since then, according to classified data obtained by The Post, the Pakistani military had been building storage sheds for the missiles and mobile missile launchers, related maintenance facilities and housing for launch crews. * One official told the paper

shot dead today in the latest

violence in Karachi where an

ethnic faction said it was

ready for peace talks with the

Mohammad Yusuf, 40, was

killed inside the Khalilia

Mosque in Orangi town where

Pakistani police and paramili-

tary troops have been besieg-

ing militants of the ethnic

Mohajir Quami Movement

shot dead in overnight vio-

lence in districts central and

west, bringing the death toll

for July to 34, Police said. At

least 950 people have been

killed in Karachi this year,

more than a third of them in

mal Dehlavi, Editor of the

Urdu newspaper Amn, would

lead the MQM team, whose

An MQM leader said Aj-

At least four people were

(MQM) for several days.

Police said senior imam

government.

Reuters by telephone. He declined further comment. Govt-MQM talks likely Thursday

demands would include

"acceptance of the rights of

Mohajirs, including an end to repression and the release of jailed MQM activists." Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto last month named Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Nabi Dad Khan to head a committee that would

negotiate with the MQM. The rampant violence in Karachi, Pakistan's biggest city and its industrial and commercial hub, is widely seen as Benazir's biggest challenge since she took power in October 1993.

The MQM and government held talks last year, but an agreement reached in October was never implemented.

The MQM said in a statement it hoped the government would create a conducive atmosphere for talks.



Moroccan women, some of them pregnant, lie Sunday at the headquarters of a union building III Kabat as they enter their fourth day of hunger strike. Some 92 PhD men and women started a hunger strike to back up their only demand: "Employment." - AFP/UNB photo

Xu plans global empire of medicine made from snakes

HESHAN VILLAGE, China he hoists a sack whose writhing tenant seems eager July 3: Do you suffer from acne, itchy skin, pimples or to leave it 'It is much in derough skin? Xu Zhiwei has mand, several hundred yuan." Each year, Xu's Longlife just the remedy snake cream. Group turns 200 tons of Impotence? No problem He sells an aphrodistac made snakes into handbags, wallets, belts, ties, meat, wine, health from serpents penises, reports

From his Spartan village ics The target for 1995 group province of Jaiangsu, Xu plans sales is 135 million yuan (16.3 million dollar, including l and cosmetics made from million dollar in exports. Sales in 1994 were 120 million yuan (14.6 million dollar) Down the corridor in a smelly room lie thousands of and exports were 600,000

toods, medicines and cosmet-

them in green sacks, still dollar By the end of the century. Xu hopes to have 500 million yuan (60 million dollar) in turnover with 5 million dollar in exports, with up to 80 per cent of the total from sales of

snake health foods, medicines and cosmetics. "I see our main growth in

Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Southeast Asia," he told Reuters over a lunch of fried, boiled and smoke snakemeat and snake

"Look at Japan, a big snake importer, buying several thousands tonnes year," said Xu, whose name sounds something like "shoe." To improve sales into

these markets, Xu is looking for experienced importers and joint-venture partners who can help manage their pharmaceutical and medical regu-With those obstacles out

of the way, Xu thinks over-

seas customers will be squirm-

among them a sexual restorative made from powdered snake penises. "The sexual prowess of snakes in well-known. After

ing to buy longlife products,

one mating with the male, a female snake can become pregnant for the next six years," he added, showing a visitor a dried snake penis ready for pulverising. Longlife exports snake to 6 tonnes. powder to Japan, South Ko-

other animal leather to the United States and western Europe. The group comprises 15 companies, four of them joint ventures, with assets of 48 million yuan (5.8 million

dollar and a workforce of

The group, a collective of which Xu owns half, has leased 13.3 hectares (33 acres) of land to create "the snake garden of the orient," which will triple snake production

Xu wants to develop the rea, Taiwan and Hong Kong park and its snake restaurant and goods made of snake and into a tourist attraction to lure visitors away from Suzhou, one-of China's main tourist spots just 40 km (25 miles to the south

Just 20 years ago all this snake fever was illegal. In the ultraleftist cultural revolution of 1966-76, catching snakes

capitalism" and banned de-The 1995 target for profits and taxes is 20 million yuan spite its long history in the (2.4 million dollar), against 11 million (1.33 million dollar) in Born in 1953, the year of

the snake in China's horoscope, Xu was a prime victim of this hysteria. The son of a rich peasant, he was vilified as a class enemy. He said his father was persecuted to death by Red Guards. China's reform era turned

things around. Xu entered the Communist Party in 1989 and became village party chief in 1990.

This puts the decisionmaking in the hands of one person, which is efficient," he said. "Party secretary helps me get bank loans and solve many other problems. It al. improves my credibility

BATTAMBANG (Cambowas regarded as "the tail of dial, July 3: Khmer Rouge

By mid-morning, they had It was unclear how many