

BRIEFLY



Two women light candles staging a protest in Leipzig, Germany on Monday. With their protest Pax Christi, the Refugee Council of Leipzig and Bosnian refugees who live in Leipzig want to draw attention to the dramatic situation in Bosnia. The banner in the background says "Bosnia is dying — the world watches". — AFP/UNB photo

Akihito to visit WW II memorials: Emperor Akihito was to leave for Nagasaki Wednesday, starting a pilgrimage to pray for people who died in the Japanese areas most heavily damaged in World War II. AP reports from Tokyo.

Because of lingering controversy over the wartime role of his father, the late Emperor Hirohito, the trips have been timed to avoid actual anniversaries of World War II events in Nagasaki, Hiroshima and Okinawa.

Russia, Iran to extend N-contract: Russia and Iran are to sign an agreement extending a contract for the Russians to build a nuclear power station in Bouchehr, Iran, the Interfax News Agency reported Monday. AFP says from Moscow.

Quoting a Russian Nuclear Energy Ministry official, Interfax said the extended agreement would include the delivery of nuclear fuel by Russian to the plant and the treatment of nuclear waste from the centre by the Russians.

China, Japan talk disarmament: China and Japan today held their first round of talks on disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, the Japanese embassy said. Reuter reports from Beijing.

Tokyo proposed the talks after it protested against a nuclear test China conducted on October 7, 1994 and China recently agreed, an embassy official said.

Gabonese vote in referendum: Gabonese citizens voted in their first referendum for constitutional reforms since the central African nation gained independence from France in 1967. AP reports from Libreville, Gabon.

Voters on Sunday were asked whether they wanted reforms that would ensure fair elections and curtail some powers of autocratic President Omar Bongo.

Lightning kills 10 in Vietnam: A bolt of lightning killed 10 people foraging for shellfish on a beach in southern Vietnam, an official news report said Tuesday. AP reports from Hanoi.

Four of those who died in the accident Saturday were members of the same family, the state-run Vietnam News reported. Two of the others were also related, it said.

Russian FM leaves Belgrade: Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev left Belgrade yesterday after talks with Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic and urged all sides in the Bosnian conflict to show restraint, Reuter reports from Belgrade.

Kozyrev, who has opposed Western air strikes against Serb forces, told reporters on his departure that he was satisfied with his talks in Belgrade. Russia and Serbia were absolutely committed to the view that the Bosnian war could only be resolved by peaceful means, he said.

Tigers kill 4 Lankan troops: Tamil rebels ambushed a military patrol, killing four soldiers and injuring five in northwestern Sri Lanka on Tuesday, military officials said, AP reports from Colombo.

The soldiers were returning from a night operation when they were attacked shortly before dawn at Illavankulam village in Puttalam district, 145 kilometres (90 miles) north of Colombo.

Drought hits northwest China: A severe drought in northwest China's Gansu province has left 3 million people and 2 million head of cattle without water, the official China Youth Daily reported Tuesday, AP reports from Beijing.

Residents of Longdong and Longzhong have to go at least 10 kilometres (6 miles), in some cases as far as 40 to 50 kilometres (25-31 miles), to get water, the report said. The drought is even disrupting classes for nearly 10,000 primary school students in more than 20 countries, the report said.

2 more children rescued in Lanka: Officials at Colombo airport rescued two children who may have been kidnapped to be used as jockeys in camel racing in the Middle East, police said Tuesday, AP reports from Colombo.

The officials stopped two Sri Lankan men from taking six-year-old Mohamed Abdul Aziz and 10-year-old Ahmed Ismail Nizam to Dubai in the United Arab Emirates on Saturday. "We aren't sure yet whether they were being taken to be camel jockeys, slaves or to be sexually abused," said Premilla Divakara, police superintendent.

Management instt wins Magsaysay: The Manila-based Asian Institute of Management, Asia's leading school for advance management education, has been named winner of the 1995 Ramon Magsaysay award for international understanding, the awards board announced Tuesday, AP reports from Manila.

The institute was cited for "setting regionwide standards for excellence and relevance in training Asian managers for Asia's business and Asia's management." Although the institute started as a clone of the Harvard Business school, it was able to evolve its own distinguished style of management which is geared towards Asia's unique needs, the board added.

Govt troops in Zepa agree to surrender to Serbs: UN

SARAJEVO, July 25: Government soldiers in the embattled eastern Muslim enclave of Zepa have agreed to surrender to Serb rebels, the United Nations said Tuesday, reports AP.

UN spokesman Alexander Ivanko said a UN team was on its way to the isolated enclave to confirm the report from peacekeepers and to make arrangements to evacuate thousands of women, children, elderly and wounded.

Zepa, which has been under heavy artillery bombardment for nearly two weeks, is the second UN-declared "safe area" to fall to the Serbs recently.

Ivanko said local government troops accepted the

Serb surrender conditions Monday evening and agreed to hand over their weapons. Under Serb conditions outlined last week, Muslim men will be detained to be used for future prisoner of war exchanges.

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Shelling had continued Monday and there were reports of heavy exchanges of fire around Zepa town itself.

The surrender of Zepa will leave just one eastern Muslim enclave, Gorazde, which Western allies have vowed to defend against Serb aggression.

According to UN estimates, there may be between 10,000 and 16,000 civilians

in the enclave. The Serbs put the population at 7,000. The United Nations has said it could not guarantee the safety of evacuees.

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an unbroken swath of territory from the Serbian border west to Sarajevo, the capital.

UN personnel in Bosnia, however, have virtually ruled out airstrikes on the remote mountainous Zepa enclave and other UN "safe areas" UN spokesman Lt Col Chris Vernon said Monday there could be no airstrikes because there is no forward air-traffic controller with the Ukrainians. Such controllers are needed to guide planes to target.

The news of Zepa's surrender came as British and French soldiers were digging in above Sarajevo, training sophisticated weapons on rebel Serb guns, in the first deployment of the rapid reaction force (RRF).

UK press report on Iraq's N-arms not authentic: UN

UNITED NATIONS, July 25: There is no credible evidence that Iraq has a secret nuclear programme a UN agency said Monday dismissing a British press report on the subject earlier this year as lacking in authenticity, reports AFP.

The International Atomic Energy Agency said in a report released at UN headquarters that a Sunday Times report in April suggesting Iraq had resumed its nuclear programme was unsubstantiated.

The report, which gave a detailed response to the allegations in the press said the Times based its report on documents that were not authentic.

After the press report was published the United States cited the allegations as another reason to maintain tough sanctions on Iraq imposed after Baghdad's invasion of Kuwait.



US Secretary of Defence William Perry (R) flanked by Canadian Defence Minister David Colenett (C) hold a joint press conference Monday on the flight line of Langley Air Force Base, VA, United States, as Honour Guards stand to the rear. Both men discussed development in Bosnia shortly before the arrival of delegates to the Defence Summit of The Americas. — AFP/UNB photo

Kukis flee home as Nagas threaten to kill them

GAUHATI, July 25: Hundreds of Kukis tribespeople in a remote northeastern state have fled from their jungle homes after a rival group threatened to kill them, officials said Tuesday, reports AP.

Panic spread among the estimated 35,000 Kukis living in Nagaland state after the rival Naga tribespeople asked them to quit the area by Monday, police and government officials said on condition of anonymity.

A genocidal feud between two rival tribes has turned the hill state into the biggest hot-spot in northeastern India, where four other insurgencies are just ebbing.

Worries about the safety of the Kukis the National Human Rights Commission ordered the federal and state governments to protect the lives of the tribespersons.

400 Karen rebels desert KNU

MAE SOT, Thailand, July 25: Myanmar's embattled Karen National Union (KNU) guerilla group has been hit by a rash of defections to a rival organisation allied to Myanmar's military government, a guerilla source said on Tuesday, reports Reuter.

About 400 KNU guerillas have defected to the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) since early July, the source said.

The DKBA was formed late last year by several hundred Buddhist guerillas who mutinied against the Christian led KNU and joined forces with Myanmar troops to fight their former comrades.

The report of the defections came as the KNU began a congress at which old guard leaders were expected to be purged.

The KNU have been fighting for autonomy since 1949 a year after Myanmar gained independence from Britain.

US to keep pressure on Myanmar junta to restore democracy

WASHINGTON, July 25: The United States, pleased and surprised by the release of freedom fighter Aung San Suu Kyi, will maintain pressure on Myanmar's military rulers for return to civilian government, a top official says, reports AP.

"The (military) regime is, as you know, illegal... our position is very clear, privately and publicly on what we think should be the outcome in Myanmar a restoration of the people's mandate", Assistant Secretary of State Winston Lord told a US Senate panel Monday.

"Yes, yes and yes," Lord replied when asked if the 1990 election, won in a landslide by Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy, was free and fair and had a clear result.

Generals who seized power in 1988 refused to surrender control despite the 1990 balloting, which was regarded as a referendum on their rule.

The release July 10 of Suu Kyi after nearly six years of house arrest "is only the beginning of what promises to be a long, slow process," Lord said. But now "there is some reason to hope that Myanmar might take the steps it must to emerge from a long period of isolation and oppression."

"Our ultimate goal, one that we will continue to express clearly, remain the same: a stable, democratic Myanmar that respects international norms," he said.

Lord and Robert Gelbard, assistant secretary of state for narcotics affairs, also said President Clinton intends to work with Burmese organisation to stamp out narcotics production and trafficking.

Such cooperation would compromise neither "our human rights policy in Myanmar nor the rights of our own citizens to be free from heroin," Gelbard said.

To encourage military-civilian dialogue, the administration intends to "maintain the existing US measures in place in Myanmar for the time being," Lord said.



Chechen people shake their fists and shout slogans demanding the independence of Chechnya during a rally in zrogny on Sunday. Negotiators attempting to resolve the seven-month-old conflict in Chechnya emerged from "very productive" talks on Sunday claiming they were on the verge of signing a political accord. — AFP/UNB photo

Water molecules in Jupiter!

ROME, July 25: Italian scientists have detected water in the upper atmosphere of Jupiter after a fragment of a giant comet smashed into the planet last year, Italy's National Research Council said on Monday, reports Reuter.

The state body said the discovery would interest researchers pursuing theories that a similar cometary collision created the conditions for life on earth.

"What might have happened here four billion years ago, following a bombardment by swarms of comets, could have occurred and may be occurring in millions of planetary systems of the galaxy," the council said in a statement.

Off the Record

After all it's Dylan Thomas' love letter

LONDON: An unpublished love letter by the Welsh poet Dylan Thomas that was found among old newspapers during World War II sold for 3,910 pounds (6,245 dollar) on Monday. Sotheby's auction house said, reports Reuter.

A book store owner from Swansea, Wales bought the letter to Dylan's future wife Caitlin which was dated, "Friday morning, 1 think." It was expected to fetch up to 2,500 pounds (3,993 dollar).

Sotheby's said the letter, thought to have been written between 1934 and 1937, had been rescued by a fish seller who discovered it among newspapers given to him to wrap his fish.

The dog repaid its debt

WELLINGTON: A New Zealand dog, saved from death as a puppy by his owners repaid their charity by saving two members of the family from a house fire on Monday in the south island town of Palmerston, reports Reuter.

Hannah, who was rescued from possible death at an animal shelter by Wayne and Rosa Carrington when she was one year old, woke Rosa at around 2.30 am by whining and jumping on her bed.

She was nuzzling me and quite upset, trying to get my attention, Carrington said.

Carrington whose husband was working a night shift, said she got out of bed to check what was disturbing the dog. She heard the crackling sound of the fire in the lounge, grabbed her baby daughter and Hannah and fled from the house.

I know if Hannah had not been there I may not have woken up and if I had I don't know what stage the fire would have been at, she said. The fire destroyed two thirds of the house and smoke extensively damaged the rest.

She has returned the favour, Wayne Carrington said of Hannah's actions.

His ignorance is to blame for his fate

CHARLESTON: A postal carrier who refused to deliver mail to a couple with AIDS has been fired after holding on to fears he could catch the virus from their metal mail slot and licked stamps, reports AP.

"It's his own ignorance that lost him his job," said Pat Grounds, who along with husband Fred were snubbed by the carrier. "He did it to himself."

Tim Snodgrass, a 10-year mail carrier, refused to serve the couple after they moved into a home for people with AIDS in late June. Snodgrass said he was afraid of cutting himself on the mail slot and becoming infected from envelopes of stamps the couple had licked.

The Centre for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta says there are no known cases of AIDS being spread through saliva.

Postmaster Richard Esslinger, who 10 days ago suspended Snodgrass with pay after an AIDS education class failed to change his mind, announced the firing Monday.

Taiwan begins wargames amid China's missile test

TAIPEI, July 25: Taiwan has started its own navy wargames, firing shells off the island's northern coast while China pursued its controversial missile exercises nearby, reports said today, says AFP.

The nationalist navy fired cannon shells today at the start of a four-day drill, some 20 nautical miles off the northeast fishing town of Suao, the ruling Kuomintang (KMT) central Daily News said.

The drill will last until Friday, when China is to end its week-long missile exercise, the newspaper said. The rival exercises come at a time of heightening tension between the two, China has attacked President Lee Teng-hui for seeking independence and threatened military force if such a step was taken.

A military source, speaking on condition of anonymity, told AFP the nationalist naval exercise — involving warships, cannon shell and guns — is a routine exercise, which has nothing to do with China's ongoing missile drill near Taiwan's Pengchiayui island.

The source, however, declined to give the number and type of the ships and weapons used.

Both the Defense Ministry and the navy headquarters were reluctant to confirm the reports.

Meanwhile, leaders of the main opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) leaders went to the impact area where China is conducting its missile drill in separate protest boats today.

Reuter adds, Taiwan state television said today China had test fired two more missiles toward a target area about 140 km (85 miles) north of Taiwan, taking the number of missiles launched from China so far to six.

"China yesterday morning test fired two missiles," Taiwan's Chinese Television System (CTS) said.

Talks on Chechnya stalled without signing accord

GROZNY, July 25: Russian and Chechen negotiators suspended peace talks Tuesday without signing a long-awaited political agreement, a news agency reported, says AP.

The breakdown in talks followed Chechen leader Dzhokhar Dudaev's televised criticism of the negotiators as "hair-splitters" who had not accomplished anything in five weeks of talks.

Dudaev's remarks Sunday helped sour the atmosphere at the talks, with both sides accusing the other of stalling an agreement at the negotiations that are taking place in Grozny, the Chechen capital.

A source within the Russian delegation told the Interfax news agency the talks had been suspended without the signing of the political agreement on the fu-

ture of Chechnya's relationship with the Russian Federation.

The talks will be resumed on Saturday after both sides consult with their respective leaders, the ITAR-Tass news agency reported.

An earlier report says Russian negotiators on Tuesday threatened to suspend peace talks with Chechen separatists, jeopardising the signing of a long-awaited political agreement, news reports said.

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A source within the Russian delegation told the Interfax news agency the talks would be suspended.

Move to replace monument with Gandhi's statue fuels anger

NEW DELHI, July 25: An Indian government proposal to replace a monument built by the British with a statue of Mahatma Gandhi has angered conservationists eager to preserve the capital's heritage, reports AFP.

Last week a ministerial panel decided to mark the 125th anniversary of the birth of the apostle of non-violence, and opponent of colonialism, by erecting a 16-foot (4.8 metre) statue on the site of a stone canopy which once housed a statue of King George V.

The government decision was aimed at ending nearly

30 years of controversy over a suitable downtown site for a Mahatma Gandhi statue. Instead, it has only led to another row.

Town planners are up in arms against razing the stone canopy to install a statue of India's independence hero.

"We have reason to believe that the canopy will be pulled down in the middle of the night so the country will be presented with a fait accompli," said Sayed Shaif, a member of the Urban Arts Commission here.

The canopy and the nearby India Gate arch, an imposing sandstone memorial to Indian troops killed

during World War II are among New Delhi's most notable landmarks and tourist attractions.

The canopy was constructed after New Delhi was made the Indian capital in place of Calcutta in 1911 and the statue of King George V was later installed under it.

The statue was removed after India became independent in 1947 but the canopy remained. There have been a number of demands over the years to give King Gorges' former place to the man who helped drive the British out.

But the proposal remained on paper for decades. A black

stone statue of Mahatma Gandhi carved some time back was installed in the Parliament House because none was clear what do with the canopy.

Now the authorities have finally decided to do away with it.

"By interfering with the existing design, we are mutilating the urban development of the city," said AGK Menon, director of the School of Planning and Architecture.

"If the statue comes up, the canopy and the landscape of Delhi would both be destroyed," he added.

of Delhi is planning to appeal to the Supreme Court to prevent the canopy's demolition.

Others oppose a Gandhi Memorial being erected near a war monument.

"To install a Gandhi statue is an easy, cheap and vulgar way to remember him," argued Shaif. "The only way we can do Mahatma Gandhi justice is to follow his principles."

The government, determined to put up the statue on the 125th anniversary of Gandhi's birth on October 2, has not commented on the controversy. But it has the full backing of the dwindling group of Gandhians.

"Ever since India got independence, people have been wanting a Mahatma Gandhi statue there," said B N Pande, chairman of the Gandhi Memorial Society.

"King George's statue was removed only for this purpose."

Pande ridiculed those opposing the removal of the canopy from the India Gate hexagon.

"The canopy has no value, none at all," he told AFP. "Those who want it would have been happier had the British been still ruling our country. People's feelings are more important."