

International

BRIEFLY

Hiroshima mayor for N-test ban:

The mayor of Hiroshima will mark the 50th anniversary of the atomic bombing of his city on August 6 by calling for a total ban on nuclear weapons tests...

Ghali's effigy burnt in Delhi:

Muslims in New Delhi burnt an effigy of Boutros Boutros-Ghali on Friday to protest what they called the inability of the UN chief to prevent the attack on Bosnian Muslims...

PLO-Israel talks resume Sunday:

Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat said Thursday that Israeli-PLO peace talks would resume next week in the southern resort area of Eilat...

Composer Miklos Rozsa dies:

Miklos Rozsa, the Academy Award-winning composer of the score to 'Ben-Hur' and dozens of other films, has died of pneumonia. He was 88...

Filipino govt, rebel talks end:

Peace talks between the Philippine government and autonomy-seeking Muslim guerillas ended on an inconclusive note Friday with negotiators planning to meet again in September...

Vietnam 7th member of ASEAN:

Vietnam was formally welcomed in Bandar Seri Begawan yesterday as the seventh member of the association of southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)...

Singapore hangs 2 Indians:

Two Indian nationals convicted of drug trafficking were hanged at dawn Friday in Changi Prison, the Central Narcotics bureau announced...

Advani meets Israeli President:

The President of the BJP, L K Advani yesterday met the Israeli President, Ezer Weizman and expressed satisfaction over the improved relations between the two countries...

Kerala minister quits:

A minister in the southern Indian state of Kerala has quit in a rare show of honesty after a court found him guilty of corruption...

3 troops die in ROK chopper crash:

A South Korean army UH-1H helicopter crashed in North Chungcheong province Friday, killing three soldiers and injuring two others...

US gives \$11m aid to PLO:

The United States gave PLO head Yasser Arafat's Palestinian authority \$11 million dollars on Thursday for the first stage of a 40 million dollars waste-water processing project...

Sakigake Party leader quits:

Japanese Finance Minister Masayoshi Takemura handed in his resignation as leader of the Sakigake Party yesterday...

30 immigrants held in Germany:

Thirty illegal immigrants apparently from Sri Lanka were found stacked like sardines in an abandoned truck on a highway in Saxony, eastern Germany...

Tories lose key by-election

LONDON, July 28: Britain's ruling Conservatives suffered a big defeat in a key parliamentary by-election today...

Oil-rich desert nation still paying for Gulf War

LONDON, July 28: Five years after Iraqi tanks rolled into Kuwait, this oil-rich desert nation is still paying for the Gulf War...

5 more executed in Nigeria

LAGOS, July 28: Five more people have been executed in Nigeria, bringing to 54 the number of 'common criminals' executed since Saturday...

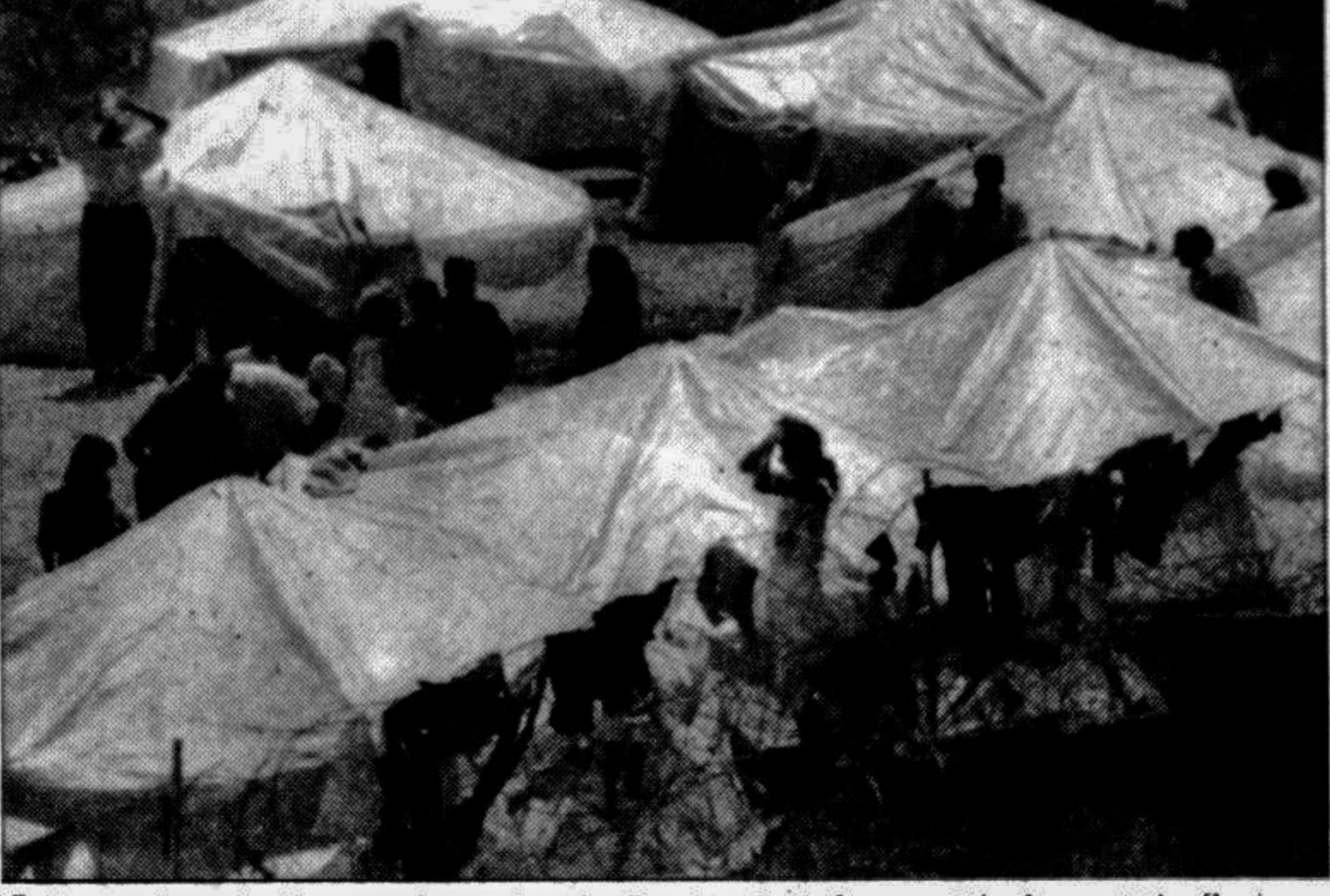
Taiwan should study need of N-defence programme: Lee

TAIPEI, July 28: Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui said Friday the island should study whether it needs a nuclear arsenal to defend itself...

Lee did not elaborate. But Hsu Hiy-yun, chairman of the government's Atomic Energy Council, said Taiwan has said it would not develop nuclear weapons...

Any attempt by Taiwan to develop a nuclear capability would likely draw a strong response from China, which regards the island as a rebel province to be retaken by force...

Lee's remarks come amid tensions heightened by a visit Lee paid to the United States last month and recent Chinese missile tests in seas north of Taiwan...



Refugees from the Zepa enclave taken by Bosnian Serb forces settle down at the Zenica refugee camp on Thursday following their overnight arrival after hundreds of refugees were transported out of the UN 'safe area' now under Serb control.

New moons found around Saturn

WASHINGTON, July 28: Astronomers discovered two new moons, and perhaps two others, in Hubble Space Telescope photos of Saturn...

Amanda S. Bosh of the Lowell Observatory near Flagstaff, Arizona, and Andrew S. Rivkin of the University of Arizona announced Thursday they spotted the new moons over Saturn in photos snapped May 22...

During a ring crossing, Saturn's dust rings are seen edge-on and the bright reflected light of the rings is dimmed. This lets astronomers more easily see the tiny, independent moons...

Bosh said two of the new moons in the photos may be previously discovered bodies known as Atlas and Prometheus...



US President Bill Clinton (R), South Korean President Kim Young Sam (L) and retired Gen. and Korean War veteran Raymond Davis (C), chairman of the Korean War Memorial, salute during dedication ceremonies for the memorial on the Mall in Washington, DC on Thursday.

The newspaper said 50 per cent of respondents want to maintain the status quo, in which both Beijing and Taipei regard Taiwan as part of mainland China...

The newspaper said 20.7 per cent of respondents want Taiwan reunified with China, a goal Taipei and Beijing both say they are committed to eventually...

The newspaper said the poll had a margin of error of 3.4 percentage points. President Lee's popularity remained a high 80 per cent, the newspaper said...

President Lee's popularity remained a high 80 per cent, the newspaper said, despite a recent barrage of accusations from China that he is trying to steer the island toward independence...

The China Times said that 12.4 per cent of 852 people polled Wednesday and Thursday said they want the island to declare itself independent, down 6 percentage points from a similar poll conducted in mid-July before the missile tests...

Chandrika urged to postpone peace package

COLOMBO, July 28: Sri Lanka's influential Buddhist clergy asked the government to delay unveiling a peace plan to resolve the island's ethnic conflict...

The heads of three key Buddhist sects here wrote President Chandrika Kumartunga demanding a postponement of a political package aimed at ending the bloodshed which has claimed over 50,000 lives since 1972...

This is time when the entire strength and the undivided attention of the government should be devoted to the task of pursuing the military operations against terrorism to their logical conclusion, the monks said.

Dostum assures support for UN peace efforts

ISLAMABAD, July 28: The powerful Afghan Uzbek warlord Rashid Dostum has assured his full support for the UN peace efforts in Afghanistan...

Dostum, leader of the opposition party Jumbush-Milli, gave his assurance to the UN special envoy to Afghanistan, Mahmud Mestiri, who travelled to the Jumbush Headquarters in Mazar-i-Sharif on Thursday.

Dostum and Mestiri exchanged views on the current situation in the country and various peace proposals raised by some Afghan factions and foreign countries.

Mestiri underlined the need to establish a lasting ceasefire in Afghanistan and continuation of talks among all the factions.

Mestiri had already held talks with Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani.

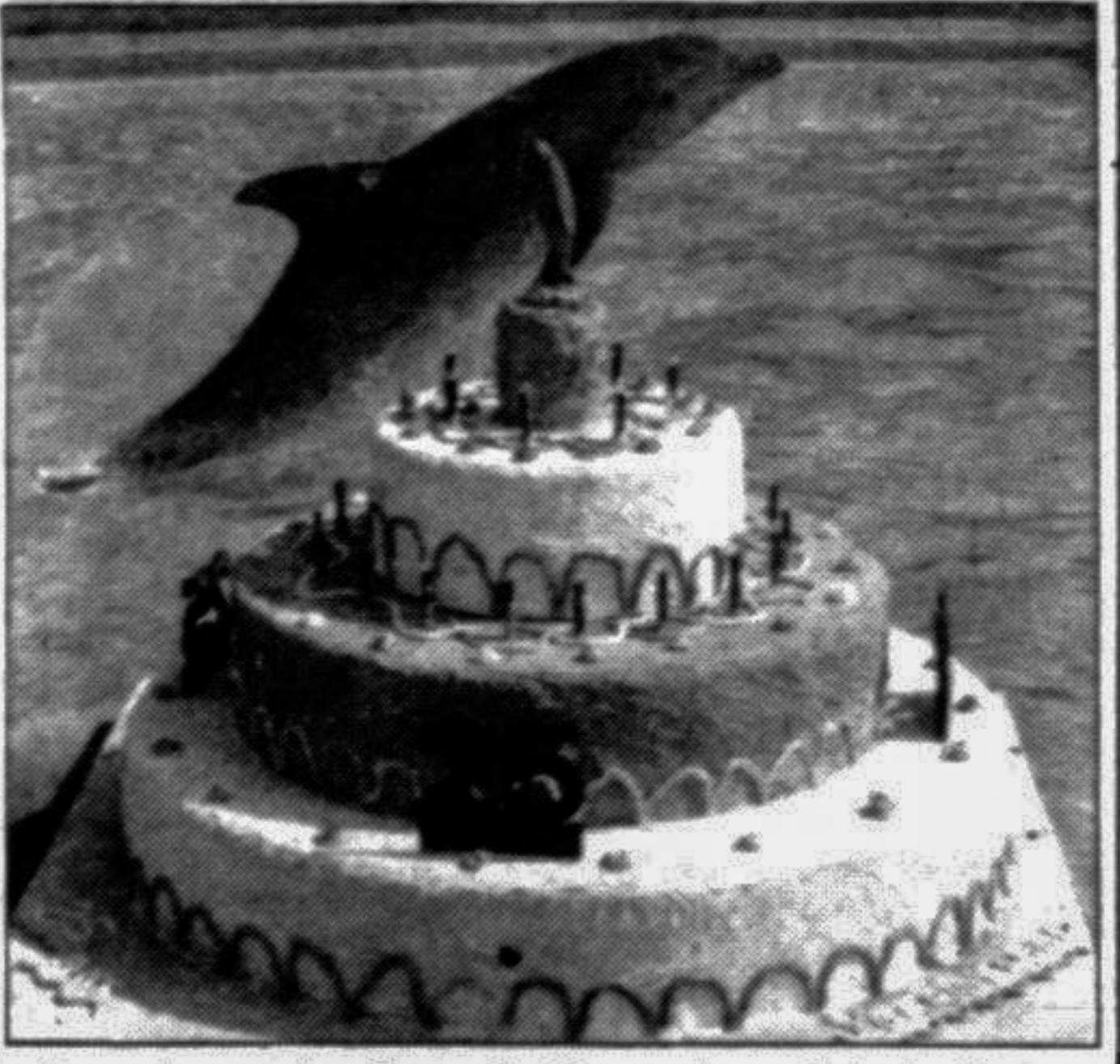
Senate proposes sending MNLF men to Bosnia

MANILA, July 28: The head of the Philippine senate's foreign relations committee today, proposed sending Muslim insurgent guerrillas to Bosnia-Herzegovina as part of a Philippines contribution to any UN peacekeeping effort there...

The statement of senator Blas Ople came amid negotiations between the main Muslim insurgent group, the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) for autonomy for Muslim-populated regions, under which guerrilla forces would be integrated into the Philippine military...

Ople said in a statement that the MNLF and other Muslim insurgent groups 'could be tapped for volunteers who will serve' under Philippine military troops in a UN peacekeeping force in that war-torn region.

Off the Record



A dolphin of the Marineland aquatic park in Antibes, southeastern France, jumps Wednesday next to a cake baked in celebration of the 25th anniversary of the park's creation...

Clapping mother of all exercises!

NEW DELHI: A 74-year-old Indian businessman is trying to get into the Guinness Book of World Records by clapping continuously more than 5,000 times, a ritual he says is highly recommended for better health...

Bajaj, who calls clapping 'the mother of all exercises,' said it has wiped out cataracts in his eyes, brought down high blood pressure and improved his memory.

The businessmen's 'clap walk' every morning attracts curious onlookers as well as a growing number of fans who follow him clapping their hands.

As it shows little too much of pop superstar

LOS ANGELES: A revealing shot of Michael Jackson floating naked in water in his latest music video has been altered because it shows a little too much of the pop superstar, the Los Angeles Times reported on Thursday...

That's the secret of its beauty

LONDON: Danish researchers reported yesterday that they had found out why gold keeps its glitter for so long. The secret's in the molecules, reports Reuter.

S African Muslims protest Western policy on Bosnia

CAPE TOWN, July 28: South African police fired birdshot and rubber bullets at Muslim marchers in Cape Town on Thursday during protests against Western policy on Bosnia...

About 200 South African Muslims threw sticks and stones at the US Embassy during the protest.

Witnesses said a 19-year-old was grazed in the leg when police with dogs opened fire on the angry crowd. There were no reports of anyone else being injured.

'They were using pieces of wood trying to break a window and throwing stones and rocks,' one witness said.

Ople said in a statement that the MNLF and other Muslim insurgent groups 'could be tapped for volunteers who will serve' under Philippine military troops in a UN peacekeeping force in that war-torn region.

The result came in the Littleborough and Saddleborough constituency in northern England, which the conservatives won with a 4,494 vote majority at the 1992 general election. It cut the Conservatives' overall majority in the House of Commons to just nine.

Oil-rich desert nation still paying for Gulf War

KUWAIT, July 28: Five years after Iraqi tanks rolled into Kuwait, this oil-rich desert nation is still paying for the Gulf War, reports AP.

Kuwait tapped its multi-billion-dollar bank account to restore the comfortable, leisurely lifestyle that existed before August 2, 1990, the day Kuwaitis call 'The Black Thursday.'

On the beach where Iraqi tanks were parked, Kuwaiti children now play in manicured parks. Young men on jet skis buzz through the water.

But reconstruction expenses have been huge, reaching tens of billions of dollars and saddling Kuwait with an almost 4 billion dollar budget deficit this fiscal year.

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The government plans to levy income taxes and will require citizens to pay for services they have received free for decades, such as medical care.

No one is pleading poverty, but for the first time in its 34 years of independence, Kuwait must worry about how it spends its money.

Economist Jassem al-Saadoun said the government was too eager to please people after the 1991 liberation by the US-led coalition, squandering huge sums on salary hikes and debt forgiveness.

He told The Associated Press that up to one-quarter of the more than 70 billion dollar spent since liberation was unjustified.

5 more executed in Nigeria

LAGOS, July 28: Five more people have been executed in Nigeria, bringing to 54 the number of 'common criminals' executed since Saturday...

The five, including a Chadian national, were executed in public by firing squad on Wednesday in Yola, capital of the northeastern Adamawa state.

Most of the men, aged between 29 and 32, had been in prison since 1992 and were sentenced to death recently for acts of 'banditry'.

On Saturday, 43 'common criminals' were executed in Lagos high security Kirikiri prison according to press reports.