

International

Polls aimed at impressing the West
Kashmiri leaders reject Delhi's move to hold elections

BRIEFLY

NASA delays launch of shuttle: NASA said Friday it has indefinitely delayed the launch of the Endeavour because o-ring seals were damaged by heat in the last two launches.

Diarrhoea claims 12 in Indonesia: An outbreak of diarrhoea in the east Javanese district of Lumajang has killed 12 people, and 253 others have been hospitalized.

UN to reduce troops in Lebanon: The Security Council voted unanimously Friday to reduce its peacekeeping force in Lebanon by 10 per cent and extend the mandate of the mission by six months.

22 hurt in Turkey prison riot: Leftist inmates armed with clubs and bottles took over a prison in this western town on Friday, clashing with soldiers and leaving 20 people injured before calm was restored.

British Defence Secy to visit US: British Defence Secretary Michael Protillo will travel to Washington Monday for a series of talks on the Bosnian conflict.

2 Rajneesh followers found guilty: A federal jury on Friday found two former followers of free-love guru Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh guilty of conspiracy to commit murder in a 1985 plot to kill a federal prosecutor.

4 die in Australian plane crash: All four people aboard a light plane were killed when it crashed near the town of Wagga 400 km (250 miles) southwest of Sydney.

King Hussein to visit Egypt: King Hussein of Jordan is to visit Egypt and hold talks with President Hosni Mubarak in the Mediterranean city of Alexandria on Tuesday.

Angolans condole Pedle's death: Over 10,000 Angolan people including Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos and parliament Speaker Franca Vandunem, Friday went to the Luanda provincial building to express their condolences on the death of Defence Minister General Pedro Maria Tonha Pedale.

Ghali for extending Haiti mission: The United Nations should extend its mission in Haiti to maintain stability until the nation's next president is inaugurated in February.

Khmers suffer heavy casualties: Khmer Rouge guerrillas have suffered heavy casualties while retaking parts of areas taken from them by government forces.

Ireland frees 12 more IRA men: Ireland on Saturday released another 12 Irish Republican Army prisoners early in an bid to restart the stalled Northern Ireland peace process.

Suu Kyi accepts post of UNESCO special adviser

PARIS, July 29: Myanmar opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi has accepted in principle the post of UNESCO special adviser on democracy and human rights.

Federico Mayor has long been trying to obtain Aung San Suu Kyi's release, the statement added.

ASEAN welcomes communist Vietnam as its new member

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, Brunei, July 29: The Association of Southeast Asian Nations ASEAN, born 28 years ago partly as a bulwark against the spread of communism in the region, welcomed its first communist member, Vietnam, on Friday.

from the six other members, formalised the admission by signing the ASEAN declaration. "As a full member of ASEAN, Vietnam undertakes to fulfill all obligations and responsibilities of a member country according to the targets, objectives, principles and regulations," Cam said.

navy blue caps hoisted the Vietnamese flag — a yellow star on red background — as a 39-member brass band played the Vietnamese national anthem. As the poorest member of ASEAN, Vietnam hopes to gain from the experience of the other members, among the world's fastest growing economies.

members in dealing with a common adversary, China, which has disputes with several ASEAN members over the Spratly Islands, believed rich in oil and mineral resources, in the South China Sea. In January, China seized a Philippine-held reef in the Spratlys, sending alarm signals in ASEAN.

confrontational dialogue among countries claiming the Spratlys, a Philippine state said. On Saturday and Sunday, the foreign ministers will hold their annual conference and on Tuesday sit down again to talk about regional security with 12 other nations, including the United States and China.

fills the goal of ASEAN's founding fathers to make it a club of all 10 Southeast Asian nations. In addition to the seven members, Cambodia and Laos have observer status and Myanmar has accepted to a friendship treaty, a mandatory clause for joining.

Calcutta bldg collapse toll rises to 25

NEW DELHI, July 29: Nearly 25 people were killed when a portion of a five-storey apartment block collapsed in the eastern Indian city of Calcutta on Friday.



German top model Claudia Schiffer (R) and (2nd R to L) Helena Christiansen, Clara Bruni and Elle McPherson pose Friday, after they gave a joint press conference to present the 'Portugal Fashion 95', in Portugal yesterday evening.

'US won't block further private visits by Taiwan President'

WASHINGTON, July 29: The Clinton administration will not try to block further private visits to the United States by Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui, Secretary of State Warren Christopher said Friday.

next week in Brunei with Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen. "We're going through a period of difficulty in this important relationship," Christopher said in a speech at the National Press Club.

are made on the tape." The secretary of state repeated the administration's call for the early release of Wu, saying: "I hope it will happen in the near future, although I don't want to make any predictions on that score, nor would I want to set any kind of a deadline."



A Muslim refugee woman from the besieged town of Zepa sits on the ground in the town of Zenica on Friday where they are waiting to be moved to a permanent place to stay.

India tightens safety measures at N-power plant

BOMBAY, July 29: Indian nuclear scientists have tightened safety measures at a state-run atomic power plant following a leak of radioactive water from its waste disposal unit in April.

Nigerian junta arrests another HR activist

LAGOS, Nigeria, July 29: Another leading Nigerian human rights activist has been arrested in the military government's renewed clampdown on free speech.

Off the Record

Sexy secrets of Di's bedroom LONDON: Buckingham Palace will try to stop a former employee of the Prince and Princess of Wales profiting from publication of details of the couple's private life.

Shy Jackson shows all LOS ANGELES: The King of Pop is keeping his crown jewels to himself. Michael Jackson, whose talent for controversy seems keener these days than his hit-making ability, reportedly did a nude scene in his new video, 'You Are Not Alone,' that revealed his genitals.

Miss ugliness BRASILIA, Brazil: Wanted: homely women. Only the really ugly need apply. A poor northeastern town is protesting a lack-of-beauty pageant, with contestants competing for the title of 'Miss Ugliness.'

ASEAN, Papua New Guinea slam French N-test plan He said developed countries should now reassess their contribution to the destruction of the environment.

Libya blasts UN for maintaining sanctions

LONDON, July 29: The Libyan authorities have attacked as illegal and unjust a decision by the UN Security Council Friday to maintain sanctions against Libya.

HR group accuses Kuwait of driving out nomadic Arabs

NICOSIA, July 29: A US-based human rights group on Saturday accused Kuwait of systematically discriminating against hundreds of thousands of stateless Arabs in a bid to drive them out of the country.