

# BRIEFLY

**Marcos Junior gets 7-yr jail:** A Manila court yesterday sentenced Ferdinand Marcos Junior, son of the late Philippine dictator, to a total of seven years in jail on tax evasion charges. Reuter reports from Manila.

The court also ordered his immediate arrest for failing to show up for the sentencing. Clerk of Court Gina Palamos said Marcos was found guilty beyond reasonable doubt of violating the internal revenue code for failing to pay income taxes from 1982 to 1985.

**8 of a family dies in Jaipur:** Eight members of a family were killed and seven others injured when the truck carrying them overturned near Darra, about 47 kms from Kota, last night, police in Jaipur said yesterday. PTI reports from Jaipur.

The truck, laden with stone slabs, was going to Jalgaon in Maharashtra from Kota overturned while offering right of way to a vehicle coming in the opposite direction. The victims were crushed under the stone slabs and died on the spot.

**Major blast rocks Russia:** A major explosion rocked the Far Eastern Russian city of Vladivostok early yesterday blowing up six vehicles, the Interfax news agency reported. AFP reports from London.

Five cars and a minibus were destroyed or damaged in what the agency, monitored by the BBC in London, called a major act of terrorism. The explosion took place in a car park belonging to the Dalzavodservis joint stock company.

**6 burned alive in Maharashtra:** Six people were captured and burned alive during a clash between rival groups in local elections in the western state of Maharashtra, police said Monday. AP reports from New Delhi.

An armed group of 400 people attacked rival supporters on Sunday in Nasik district, 160 kilometres (100 miles) east of Bombay. They locked six people, including an old woman and a minor girl, in a house and set it ablaze, police said. Police arrested 36 people, including 21 women.

**Grammy winner guitarist dies:** Laurindo Almeida, whose classical compositions won him five Grammys and who was hailed as one of Brazil's greatest guitarists, has died of cancer at age 77. AP reports from Los Angeles.

Almeida, who moved to the United States nearly 40 years ago, helped popularise music's bossa nova style, which combines Brazilian music with jazz.

**Referendum in Kazakhstan Aug 30:** The former Soviet republic of Kazakhstan will hold a constitutional referendum on August 30, according to a presidential decree published at the weekend. Reuter reports from Alma Ata.

A draft of the constitution, expected to hand sweeping powers to President Nursultan Nazarbayev, will be published on Tuesday following a month of public debate.

**Volcano erupts in Indonesia:** A volcano on Indonesia's remote island of Sulawesi has erupted, killing a 14-year old boy, the official Antara news agency said yesterday. Reuter reports from Jakarta.

It quoted a local government spokesman as saying the boy was killed by a falling coconut tree as volcanic mud and debris swept down the slopes of mount Soputan early on Sunday. There were no other reports of casualties.

**India to bolster defences if US gives \$370m arms to Pakistan**

NEW DELHI, July 31: India will have to strengthen its defences if the United States supplies a proposed 370 million dollars weapons package to Pakistan. Foreign Minister Pranab Mukherjee was quoted today as saying, reports Reuter.

Last week a US official said the Clinton administration, trying to remove an irritant in ties with Pakistan, wanted to deliver 370 million dollars of military equipment to Islamabad.

"If arms are supplied to Pakistan, I'm afraid we shall also have to prepare ourselves," Mukherjee told The Asian Age daily in an interview.

"We shall also have to match their striking power because we have to keep our

**Dissidents plan no-confidence against Rao**

NEW DELHI, July 31: A rebel faction of India's ruling Congress party plans a no-confidence motion against Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao's government, the press trust of India (PTI) said, reports Reuter.

Congress rebel leader N D Tiwari told PTI the motion would focus on "rampant corruption in the highest echelons of government and the powerful nexus between criminals and sections of the political leadership."

Tiwari said inflation and unemployment would also be raised in the motion today, the first day of the monsoon session of parliament.

The Bharatiya Janata Party, the largest opposition party, said in a statement that it would raise issues such as criminalisation of politics, violence in the Himalayan state of Jammu and Kashmir and rising prices, among others, during the month-long parliament session.

**PLA won't give up threat of force against Taiwan**

BEIJING, July 31: China's defence minister Chi Hao Tian said today the People's Liberation Army (PLA) would not give up the threat of force against rival Taiwan if the island tried to declare independence, reports Reuter.

China's army "will not undertake to give up the use of force" in settling the Taiwan issue, Chi told a reception to mark Army Day on August 1, the Xinhua news agency reported. He said the army would "not sit idle" and allow foreign forces to meddle unchecked in China's internal affairs to effect an independent Taiwan and would also step in if Taiwan authorities were bent on what he called "slitting China".

**MQM doesn't attend Islamabad talks**

KARACHI, July 31: Pakistan's ethnic Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM) said it would not attend talks today with the government to discuss ways of halting violence in Karachi because some of its conditions had not been met, reports Reuter.

The fifth round of the talks, which began on July 11, was due to be held in Islamabad on Monday starting at 11 am (0600 GMT). "No MQM member from the negotiating team has left for Islamabad, nor is anyone scheduled to go," a party spokeswoman said.

**Suu Kyi urges int'l community to press junta restore democracy**

BANGKOK, July 31: Myanmar opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi says that countries must interfere to some degree in Myanmar's affairs if they are sincere about helping the cause of democracy, reports AP.

"If they do not interfere in the internal affairs of another country then how far can they help us achieve change?" she asked in an interview that appeared Monday in the Thai newspaper The Nation.

Speaking Sunday in Yangon, Suu Kyi cautioned that interference should not go so far as to affect a nation's sovereignty.

Suu Kyi noted that coun-

**Israel asks US to extradite Hamas detainee**

JERUSALEM, July 31: Israel has asked the United States to extradite a leader of the militant Palestinian group Hamas who is suspected of carrying out attacks on Israeli soil, a spokeswoman for Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said Monday, reports AP.

Mousa Abu Marzuk, 45, was arrested July 25 at New York's Kennedy Airport. A US resident for 14 years, Abu Marzuk holds a permanent resident visa, but immigration officials want to expel him. A hearing was scheduled for Monday.

"We have already informed the US Justice Department that we intend to request his extradition," said Rabin's spokeswoman, Aliza Goren.

**Cuba denies secret agenda with US**

HAVANA, July 31: Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina attacking the US trade embargo on his communist ruled island denied there is a secret agenda for normalising relations between Washington and Havana, reports Reuter.

There is no political game of ping pong between Cuba and the United States, Robaina said in an interview published on Sunday in the Juventud Rebelde newspaper.

His remarks were in response to charges by some US congressmen that recent migration talks contained a hidden agenda for ending Washington's tough Cuban policy.



A Bosnian Croat soldier and his dog stand guard in front of the post office which has been converted into military headquarters in the village of Glamoc on Sunday. The Croatian army took control of the village from the Serbian army during intense fighting the past week. — AFP/UNB photo

# Chandrika's peace plan 'giant step' towards separation: JVP

COLOMBO, July 31: Radical Sinhala group today called for a referendum on political proposals to end Sri Lanka's civil war and described the government's peace package as a "giant step" towards separation, reports AFP.

The Sinhalese People's Liberation Front, or JVP, which has led two unsuccessful insurrections said concessions to minority Tamils envisaged by the government amounted to a betrayal of the nation.

"The government is preparing to unveil a package that will pave the way to disintegrate the country. This so called settlement to the ethnic conflict is a giant step towards the creation of Eelam (a separate Tamil state)," the JVP said.

Any proposals must go to a referendum, the JVP said in a statement that put the group with other extremist Sinhalese and Tamils who oppose the government plan. The statement came as

President Chandrika Kumaratunga scheduled meetings with Tamil legislators and the main opposition United National Party (UNP) to discuss a plan to end 23 years of fighting which has claimed over 50,000 lives.

In 1987, the JVP led street protests against a peace plan that called for the creation of provincial councils and granted limited autonomy to Tamils.

Nearly 100 people died in protests in August 1987.

The plan eventually fell with the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) abrogating an agreement and returning to their guerilla war.

Kumaratunga's latest package, leaked to the press last week, envisages a federal set up with extensive legislative powers to eight regions. It effectively gives Tamils the right to determine their affairs.

The country's influential Buddhist clergy has already

asked President Kumaratunga to delay unveiling the proposals until the LTTE has been defeated.

Kumaratunga met Buddhist leaders at the weekend to discuss the issue but details of the meeting were not known. Officials said she guaranteed the sovereignty of the state and the special status accorded to Buddhism.

Western diplomats said the government's proposals showed very extensive devolution of powers that should be acceptable to "any reasonable person."

A mainstream Tamil Party that originally launched the sessionist demand for a separate state called Eelam welcomed the proposed moves of Kumaratunga as a "bold attempt."

The Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) whose separatist demand was later hijacked by the LTTE, said the government proposals were a "significant advance on all previous political

solutions."

Political analysts said recent military victories could help Kumaratunga win over the hawks among the Sinhala community and the Buddhist clergy who oppose concessions to Tamils.

However, too much of a military victory against the LTTE may back fire on the government with the hawks arguing that it may not be necessary to grant concessions if the LTTE was crushed, diplomats said.

"That danger of a military euphoria clouding the political issues is always there. But it looks like the government is looking at the long term effects rather than the short term gains," an Asian diplomat said.

The LTTE already maintains a de facto state in the northern Jaffna Peninsula from where they have driven out dissenting Tamil politicians as well as majority Sinhalese and minority Muslims.



Foreign ministers of the seven-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) stand with linked arms for photographers at the end of the 28th ASEAN ministerial meeting in Bandar Seri Begawan Sunday. From L to R Domingo Siazon of the Philippines, S. Jayakumar of Singapore, Kasem Kasemseri of Thailand, Prince Mohamed Bolkhia of Brunei, Ali Alatas of Indonesia, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi of Malaysia and Nguyen Manh Cam of Vietnam and ASEAN Secretary General Ajit Singh. — AFP/UNB photo

**Change in life-style the television way**

KUALA LUMPUR: The lives of Malaysians are going to change after 1996. By that year, Malaysians will hesitate to leave their sitting room, reports Bernama.

This was because by then, the nation is going to experience and be exposed to more television channels than they can bargain for.

Indonesia, Thailand and Brunei are already ahead of Malaysia in the field of satellite communications.

Recently, Malaysian Information Minister, Mohamed Rahmat said amendments to the broadcasting act 1988 was being amended to pave the way for Malaysians to own satellite dishes and receive up to 30 television channels and it would be tabled in parliament this December.

He said what was also being considered in the amendments are the types of satellite dishes to be allowed and to what extent the policy against violence, horror and sex (vhs) will be applied to cable and satellite television.

At present, viewers in the east Malaysian states of Sabah and Sarawak are using the satellite dishes illegally.

However, Mohamed said the issue on the illegal use of satellite dishes will be solved automatically, once the amendments to the act are implemented.

At present, there are already four television channels two government channels and two private stations.

**Hillary adores adoptions instead of abortion**

WASHINGTON: Echoing her husband's "common ground" theme, Hillary Rodham Clinton said Saturday that people who disagree about abortion should unite around an effort to encourage adoptions, reports AP.

"Instead of yelling at one another about abortion, we should spend our energy making adoptions easier," Hillary wrote in her second newspaper column of a new weekly series.

Hillary, a strong supporter of abortion rights, suggested a goal of placing 100,000 children in adoptive homes each year for the next five years. She also lamented the historical bias against interracial adoptions.

The first lady recalled that the first time she met Mother Teresa, it was after the nun had delivered a strong speech against abortion at the National Prayer Breakfast in 1994.

"Although we differ on some issues, we found common ground on adoption," Hillary wrote. "So we sat and talked about how to find homes for the hundreds of thousands of American children who need loving families."

Hillary and her daughter, Chelsea, this spring visited Mother Teresa's orphanage in New Delhi, India, where rows of cribs were stacked three-deep in places but the babies were clearly well cared for.

Since then, Hillary has helped Mother Teresa open a Washington home for children awaiting adoption.

**Dudayev rejects military accord with Russia**

MOSCOW, July 31: Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev has rejected a Russian-Chechen military accord, saying it has no legal basis, reports said today, reports AFP.

Interfax news agency said Dudayev told the Radio Svoboda (Radio Freedom) western radio station that the accord reached early Sunday by Russian and Chechen negotiators in Grozny cannot have any legal authority.

Reuter adds: Russian officials said today that a military agreement signed with rebel negotiators in Chechnya still stood despite reports that separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev had rejected it as invalid.

**Dictator Saddam is a product of Iraqi society**

LONDON, July 31: "As thou art, shalt thou be ruled." The admonition of 7th century Islamic leader Imam Ali to his early Muslim followers haunts modern-day Iraqis who have fled the rule of Saddam Hussein, reports AP.

For years, critics of the Iraqi leader blamed him almost exclusively for the decline of a country blessed with an educated work force, a long history of advanced civilisation and vast oil wealth.

But now, 16 years after Saddam seized power, Iraqi exiles are beginning to echo the prophesy of the ancient Muslim philosopher-warrior! They are recognising that Saddam's rule has depended not only on his brutality, but

also on the submissiveness and even active support from many of his subjects.

"Saddam is not something that came out of nowhere," said Salem Chalabi, a lawyer who was co-author of a plan to put Iraqi leaders before a UN war crimes tribunal. "Saddam is a product of Iraqi society."

Indeed, despite numerous attempts to overthrow him, Saddam has maintained enough support among Iraq's 18 million people to survive the five years since his ill-fated invasion of Kuwait on August 2, 1990.

Since he became president in 1979, his regime has wiped out entire Kurdish villages with poison gas, deposed tens of thousands of

Iraqis of Persian origin and tortured and executed dissidents.

This has generated plenty of opposition, to be sure. An estimated 2 million Iraqis — more than 10 per cent of the population — have fled the country to escape Saddam's reign.

Others have paid a heavy price for resisting inside the country, including Shi'ite Muslims in the south, Kurds in the north, and even Saddam's fellow Sunni Muslims.

But since he started wielding considerable power behind the scenes in the early 1970s, Saddam has won and held the support of a broad cross-section of people — academics, scientists, tribal chiefs, factory workers,

were simply cowards, charges author Kanan Makiya, whose 1988 book, "Republic of Fear," described the party's strongarm methods.

If an Iraqi wanted a scholarship or a promotion, he or she could win it by informing on friends or relatives, Makiya asserted in an interview in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

That created "mountains and mountains of paperwork whose sole purpose is to make larger and large numbers of people accomplices in the criminality of the regime," he said.

Saddam also played to widespread feelings of Iraqi chauvinism. When he launched a war against Iran

in 1980 and when he invaded Kuwait in 1990, many Iraqis cheered.

"Iraqis thought they were the best Arabs," said Mir Basri, a historian and former head of the small Jewish community in Iraq.

In the 1980s, when Saddam started deporting people of Persian origin, "very few people said, 'This is wrong,'" said Hani al-Fkeiki, a one-time Saddam ally. "On the contrary, they would go and occupy his house or steal the contents."

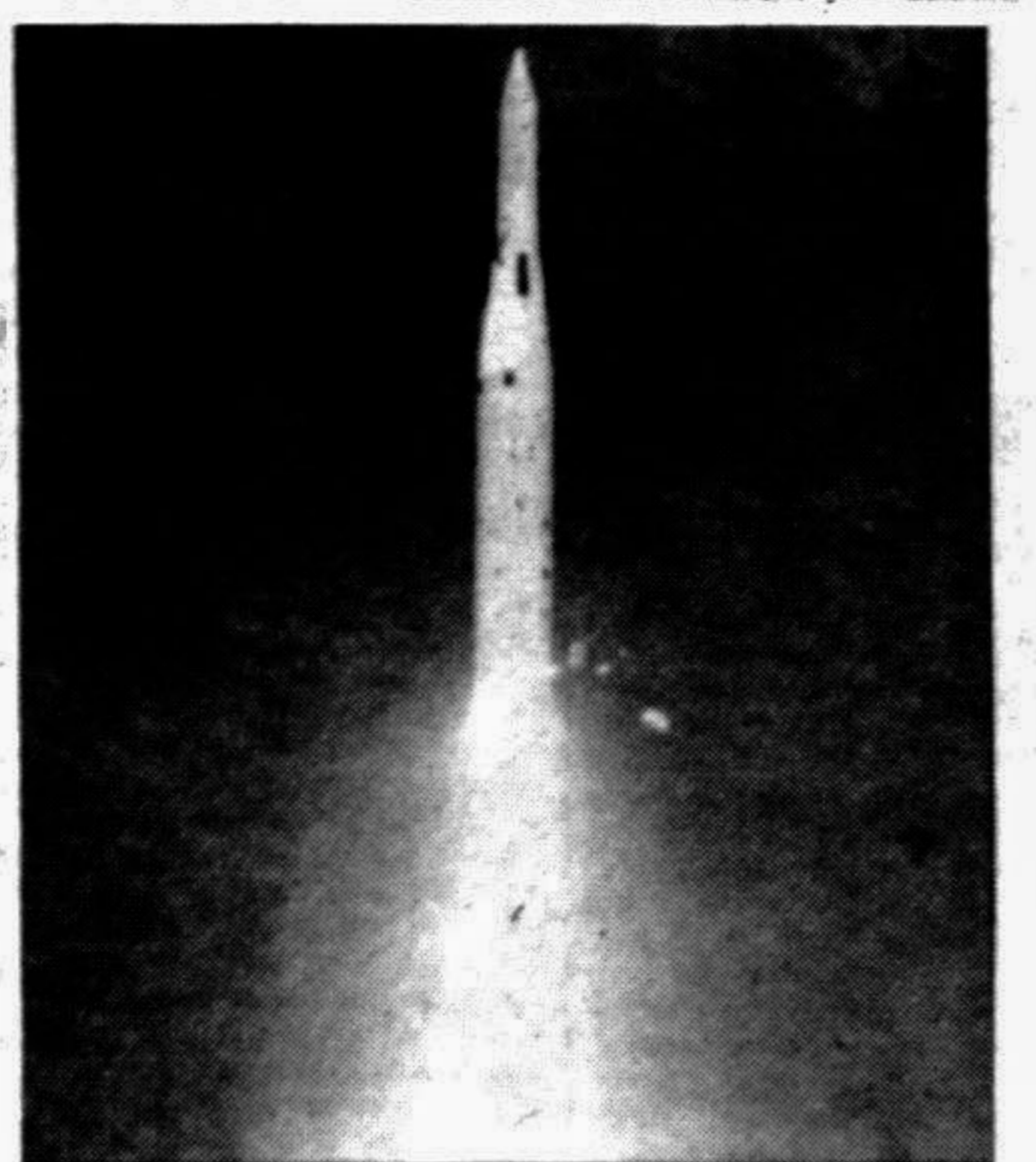
Al-Fkeiki, who took part in the 1963 coup that installed the Baath Party cited a series of television appearances in the early 1970s by prominent professionals.

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The new version of the Arrow anti-missile, built by the Israel Aircraft Industry (IAI), is successfully fired from a base in central Israel on Sunday, to verify the launch procedure and ground control. The joint US-Israeli project was launched in 1988 to cope with threats from all kind of missiles and particularly against missiles with chemical warheads. — AFP/UNB photo

# Off the Record

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