# BRIEFLY

Pranab arrives in Male: Indian Foreign Minister Pranab Mukherjee who arrived in Male on a three-day visit on Friday will back more aid for the Indian Ocean archipelago of the Maldives, the Indian High Commission said, Reuter reports from Male.

Mukherjee is attending the annual meeting of the Maldives-India Joint Commission, set up three years ago to discuss Indian assistance to the Maldive islands and strengthen bilateral ties.

3 die in Toronto subway mishap: A subway train slammed into the rear of a stopped frain during the Friday evening rush hour, killing three people and injuring more than three dozen, police said. AP reports from Toronto.

At least 38 people were taken to the hospital, including a critically injured mother and her child. Emergency crews battled high temperatures to pry passengers from the tangled mass of steel. At least three passengers were still trapped early Saturday. The collision occurred along the Spadina-University line between the Dupont and St Clair West stations in the uptown area of Forest Hill.

20 drown in Jhelum river: At least 20 people were drowned Friday when an overloaded boat capsized in the river Jhelum some 100 kilometres (some 60 miles) from Jhelum city in the Punjab province, press reports said Saturday, AFP reports from Islamabad.

According to police sources, the boat was carrying 47 passengers and 20 have been rescued. Some dead bodies were recovered but others were swept away in the flooded river, they said. One of the survivors said the boat was overloaded.

Floods leave 15,00 dead in China: Summer flooding in seven Chinese provinces has left at least 1,500 people dead and affected some 125 million others, official figures showed Friday. AFP reports from

Beijing. The figures were provided by local officials in the provinces of Anhui, Guangdong, Guizhou, Hubei, Hunan, Jiangsu and Jiangxi in the south and Shandong in the east and Liaoning in the northeast.

4 die in Austrian train mishap: At least four people died and around 100 were injured late Friday when a landslide swept away a bridge only seconds before an inter-city train hurtled onto it in Western Austria, television said in Vienna, AFP reports from Vienna

TV reporters said the locomotive and the three first carriages of the Vienna to Bregenz Express Train plunged into a ravine when the bridge was swept away near the village of Braz, some 30 kilometres (18 miles) from the Swiss border.

China executes 9 criminals: Nine people convicted of committing murder and robbery were executed in southern China's Guangzhou city, it was reported yesterday, AFP reports from Hong Kong.

The convicts, from Hunan, Henan, Guangzi and Guangdong, were executed soon after death sentences pronounced on them "for their heinous crimes" were confirmed by a superior court in Guangzhou, the Chinsbacked Wen Wei Po said.

**Troops kill 14 Kurdish militants:** The army has killed 14 Kurdish militants during raids in the southeast along the borders with Iran, Iraq and Syria, official sources said yesterday. AFP reports from Ankara.

The raids took place in Hakkari and Van along the Iraqi and Iranian borders, and in Mardin near Syria as well as in the eastern regions of Bitlis and Bingol, the Anatolian news agency said, quoting officials in Divarbakir.

JKLF rejoins Hurriyat confce: The outlawed Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) has rejoined the all-party Hurriyat Conference (APHC), PTI

reports from Sreenagar. The announcement to this effect was made by the JKLF president. Mohammad Yasin Malik, while addressing a Zuma jamaat at historic Hazratbal Mosque in Sreenagar.

Cambodia seizes 71-kg heroin: Cambodian authorities have seized 71 kilograms of heroin (15 lbs) with an estimated street value in the United States of 15.6 million dollars - the country's largest drug bust ever - and arrested five alleged smugglers, officials said yesterday. AFP reports from Phnom Penh.

The seizure of the heroin on Friday from a boat in the southwestern province of Koh Kong was announced by Justice Minister Chem Sgnoun at a signing of an anti-narcotics agreement with the United States.

## Saddam blames son-in-law for grabing money

BAGHDAD, Aug 12: In a statement read on Iraqi Television. President Saddam Hussein on Friday accused a son-in-law who defected to Jordan of having stolen millions of dollars, reports AFP.

General Hussein Kamel Hassan stole several million dollars from the traqt people by setting up fake companies. the President said. "He would be better off dead than to live in dishonour."

Jordan granted General Hassan, the former Industry Minister and a key aide his brother and their wives -Saddam's daughters political asylum on Thursday.

Saddam said the companies were set up at the beginning of the year and attracted individuals by promising them interest rates of up to 25 per cent.

They were closed down by authorities a few months later after causing the ruin of

Friday that his country's mago on despite "traitors."

Arabian newspaper said today that President Saddam Hussein's regime was on the verge of collapse following the defection of senior Iraqi aides to Jordan and urged the Iraqi people to overthrow their government.

Senate urges France to call off N-tests

International

Clinton endorses total ban on nuclear testing

WASHINGTON, Aug 12: President Clinton says his decision to support an end to even small-scale nuclear testing should make it easier to negotiate a worldwide test ban, reports AP.

"A comprehensive test ban is the right step as we continue pulling back from the nuclear precipice, a precipice which we began to live with 50 years ago this week." Clinton said Friday.

The president announced that US negotiators in Geneva would seek a "zero yield" test ban that bars even the smallest of nuclear explosions, despite a belief among some advisers that limited testing could help ensure the

Kurd factions

reach accord to

end dispute

12 : Two warring Kurdish

factions Friday reached an

agreement aimed at ending a

bloody 15-month territorial

dispute that has claimed

more than 2,000 lives in

Kurdistan (PUK) and the

Kurdistan Democratic Party

(KDP) said they had pledged

to maintain and make per-

manent a ceasefire, to demil-

itarise the city of Erbil, the

PUK-controlled Kurdistan

capital, and to agree on col-

lection and distribution of

media attacks, to respect the

rights of one another's fol-

lowers and to release all de

tainees held during hostili-

ties," the two factions said in

West is more

corrupt than

Asia: Mahathir

Prime Minister Mahathir

Mohamad has strongly criti-

cised an American news re-

port listing Malaysia, China,

Indonesia. Thailand and the

Philippines among the most

corrupt Asian nations, it was

"They (in the West) only

reported Saturday, says AP.

see other people as cor-

rupted. But if they were to

look in the mirror they will

see they are more dirty," the

Star daily quoted Mahathir as

strong critic of the West

since he become prime min-

ister in 1981, was quoted as

saying Westerners are racial

supremacists who can only

perceive non-Western gov-

Mahathir, who has been a

saying.

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 12:

a joint statement.

"They also agree to cease

border tariffs.

The Patriotic Union of

northern lraq, reports AFP.

DROGHEDA, Ireland, Aug

safety and reliability of the US nuclear arsenal.

He tried to ease such concerns by promising to exercise 'supreme national interest rights" to withdraw from the treaty and conduct tests if the United States ever loses confidence in the safety of a critical nuclear weapon.

Clinton said it was unlikely that would be necessary, since he was establishing new annual reporting and certification requirements to ensure US nuclear weapons remain sale and reliable.

Ashton Carter, the assistant secretary of defence for international security policy said the Energy and Defence

Departments would keep the Nevada Test Site in condition to allow a quick resumption

of testing. AFP adds, the US Senate adopted a resolution Friday calling on France to call off a series of nuclear tests in the South Pacific that is supposed to resume in Septem-

Introduced by Democratic Senator Daniel Akaka of Hawaii, the non binding "Sense of the Senate" resolution was attacked as an amendment to the 1996 defence spending

It says France should abide by the current international moratorium on nuclear test explosions refrain from

proceeding with its announced intention of conducting a series of nuclear tests in advance of a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), and initiate preparations to close its underground test sites at the Muroroa

In a statement, the sena tor said that because of the urgency of the situation, he insisted that the resolution be adopted before the Senate began its summer break Friday.

and Fangataufa atolls."

He cited reports that France has readied four of the eight planned nuclear tests and said it was likely the first of them could be detonated later this month.



Creation soldiers, armed with brooms walk downtown central Glina Friday, Croatian troops that earlier were engaged in offensive which swept the whole territory formerly known as Krajina region, now take part in the cleaning of the city. - AFP/UNB photo

### US, Russia to coordinate latest bid to solve Y'slav crisis leaders on the US plan, will

MOSCOW, Aug 12: Top US and Russian officials have agreed to get together to try to coordinate their latest diplomatic efforts to solve the Yugoslav crisis, reports Reuter.

Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev will meet US national security adviser Anthony Lake on Sunday in the Black Sea resort of Sochi in the hope they can find common ground on the way to establish peace.

Washington and Moscow have hurriedly come up with separate peace initiatives since a Croatian offensive that of Krajina last weekend appeared to radically alter the balance in the four-year conflict in former Yugoslavia.

Lake, on a tour of Western European capitals to brief

now include Russia on his agenda following a telephone conversation on Thursday between Kozyrev and US Secretary of State Warren Christopher. "We expect a serious dis-

cussion in Sochi on how to coordinate the latest initiatives by Moscow and Washington on settling the Yugoslav crisis," a Foreign Ministry official told Interfax news agency. Russia's traditional close

links with its fellow Slav Serbs and pressure from the US Congress for an end to retook the Serb-held enclave the arms embargo against the Bosnian Muslims have caused tensions between Washington and Moscow - both keen to lead the search for peace.

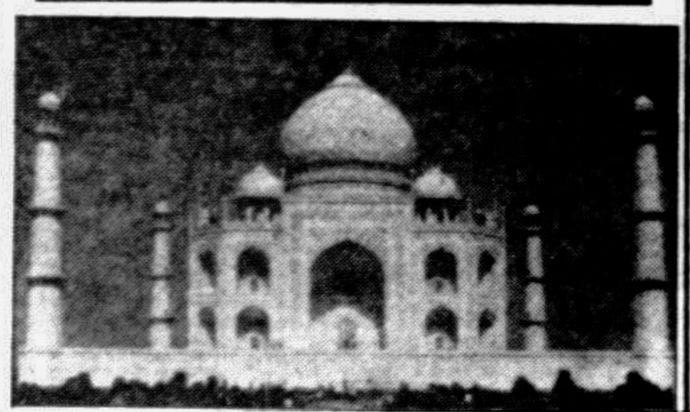
Russian President Boris Yeltsin, fresh from a month's treatment for a heart prob lem and anxious to demonstrate a robust policy on the conflict, called on Thursday for a summit of the heads of Croatia. Bosnia and Serbia.

He said the meeting should pave the way for an international peace conference to be hosted by Moscow and outlined five issues to be resolved. Yeltsin also called

on the international community to lift sanctions against Belgrade and later ordered substantial humanitarian aid to be sent to Serbia to help Krajina refugees.

Initial Western reaction to Moscow's peace plan - outlined on Friday to the United States. Britain, France and Germany — has been muted.

# Off the Record



#### Taj to remain hundreds of years more

AGRA: The Tajmahal is structurally sound and can remain so for hundreds of years to come, according to a study which examined different aspects like pollution around the monument and the quality of its preservation, reports PTL

The brick and the lime mortar used in construction of the monument were still in good condition and largely unaffected by the ravage of time, according to the report on atmospheric and environmental quality and preservation of the Tay prepared by a panel of experts headed by Dr S Varadrajan, former Secretary for Science and Technology

Marble slabs covering the walls, floors, upper sides of the domes and the cupolas as well as the iron dowels holding them in place, were being periodically replaced to counter corrosion.

Cracks on the surface were mostly superfial and at places extending upto the masonry, but those were not

caused by atmospheric pollution, the study revealed. The surface of the Taj was found to be quite resilient. and there is no yellowing, though soot from oil lamps used down the years, as well as suspended particles have left their marks, the report states.

The experts suggested that the monument be kept closed at least once every week or fortnight to allow for its cleaning and maintenance. The use of a mobile crane or platform to facilitate cleaning of the upper part of the dome was also recommended.

#### She was 'miserable as sin' on his arm

NEW YORK: Hugh Grant's arrest with a prostitute left girifriend Elizabeth Hurley feeling "like I'd been shot," reports AP

In her first interview since Grant's arrest June 27, Hurley told Barbara Walters she got the news from her igent just seconds before she spoke to Grant on the

I felt like I'd been shot. I ran put. I think I was in shock." Hurley said in the "20-20" interview that will be broadcast Friday

The Estee Lauder model and actress said she was "miserable as sin" on Grant's arm for the July 11 premiere of his movie "Nine Months." She went because "I don't think you should hit someone when they're down."

#### Painfree injections!

 WASHINGTON: The injection of tomorrow may have more in common with a futuristic toothbrush than an old Jashioned needle, reports Reuter.

Hoping to develop a painfree injection, scientists at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology said they have managed to "inject" three types of medicine with ultrasound through a skin patch in laboratory experiments on cadavers. Their findings appear in yesterday's edition of the journal science.

The next step is tests on live human volunteers, probably starting with insulin in the next six months, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) chemical and biomedical engineer Robert Langer said in a telephone interview.

Traditional ultrasound machines might be used for needle free inoculations at the doctor's office such as pain medication, vaccines and allergy shots. But Langer also has adapted tiny miniaturised ultrasound machines now found

in highter h toothbrushes that sell for around 130 dollars. "You can take the miniature ultrasound part of the toothbrush and fit it into a skin patch the size of a nicotine path or maybe a little thicker," he said.

Patches might even be better than needles or pills because they may be able to deliver medicine at a slow. steady state, or in doses in response to signals in the body.

#### Hutu rebels warn Burundi forces of more assaults

NAIROBI, Aug 12: Hutu rebels said on Friday they killed 60 Burundian government soldiers in an attack in northwest Burundi last month and warned of more assaults to force the military to negotiate, reports Reuter.

Jerome Ndiho, spokesman for the National Council for the Defence of Democracy (CNDD), denied the rebels were involved in the slaughter of at least 30 displaced Tutsi civilians last weekend. Ndiho told a Nairobi news

conference 60 soldiers from the Tutsi-dominated army were killed and large amounts of arms were captured in a day-long battle on July 28 near Muzinda in Bubanza province.

The army said at the time two soldiers were killed in the attack by rebels using 60 mm mortars and other medium weaponry. Ndiho did not say whether there were any rebel casualties.

Ndiho said the army's efforts to regain control of Bubanza province since July 28 had failed and recent gains by the Front for the Defence of Democracy, the CNDD's army, were a warning of more to come. He said the Bubanza as-

sault was part of an offensive since July 28 and aimed at forcing the army to the negotiating table. The army has said it will

never negotiate with the rebels. Ndiho denied rebels were fighting alongside soldiers from Rwanda's former government army involved in last year's genocide of up to an estimated one million Tutsis and mode rate Hutus. Both the army and rebels

have been accused by human rights groups of killing large number of civilians. But Ndiho said the rebels were well-disciplined and had ordered never to attack civil-

#### 14 killed in South Africa

DURBAN, Aug 12: At least

14 more people were killed The British pressure on Friday night in South Africa's volatile Kwazulu-Natal province, including two men burnt to death after being handcuffed together, police

said today, reports Reuter. Police spokesman Bhala

Naidoo said the killings, most of them related to crime, occurred in townships across the province and pushed the death toll to at least 105 in Naidoo said the latest

killings included two men who were bound by handcuffs and burnt to death near Inanda township outside the port city of Durban.

have died in political violence in the province

#### 8 more beheaded in S Arabia

RIYADH, Aug 12: Eight people were beheaded in Saudi Arabia this weekend. including five people convicted of conspiracy to murder and three drug smugglers, reports AP.

The wife, daughter and son of Khaled bin Hussein bin Ahmed al-Nass were beheaded for conspiring with two men to kill him. The two men stabbed al-Nass to death in his sleep, put his body in his car and set the car on fire, according an Interior Ministry announcement is-

sued late Friday. The announcement said the five were executed publicly early Friday in the Gulfside city of Dhahran.

a large number of depositors.

Saddam also pledged on rch towards prosperity would

"Iraq's victorious march will continue despite hard circumstances and betraval by traitors. Saddam said in a statement carried by the official in a news agency.

This march will only go upwards towards prosperity.

We will fight treason, especially that which attacks the resources and fortunes of the people as if they were cattle to be milked. Saddam

Reuter adds: A Saudi

#### ernments as corrupt. Kashmiri rebels urged to release

5 hostages SRINAGAR, Aug 12: Relatives of five western hostages have appealed to. Kashmiri militants "in the name of Allah" for the release of the tourists, now in their second month of captivity. reports Reuter.

In the name of Allah the most merciful, the most gracious, in whom we and you too trust, we make a compassionate appeal to you for the unconditional release of these five innocent and faultless men." the hostages relatives said

"It would be showing great regard for the great values of the faith and you would also be telling the world that humanity is still alive," they

The appeal, written in Urdu, was being placed as an advertisement in Kashmiri newspapers on Sunday and distributed to news organisations in Srinagar.



New Leatand Navy ship Tui prepares to sail from Auckland on Saturday for Mururoa, where it will support the "protest flotilla" of private boats opposing the resumption of French nuclear tests on the atoll. New Zealand Prime Minister Jim Bolger (foreground 2nd R) and opposition leader Helen Clark (foreground right) wave to the two Members of Parliament on board the boat. AFP/UNB photo

#### Smoking-related cancer deaths up by 33 pc in last 10 yrs Poland, where tobacco Junior Health Minister dust since it was unveiled Industry Association.

LONDON, Aug 12: In a world where tobacco is posed strict curbs on ciblamed for a death every 10 garette sales to young people. seconds, US President Bill a move swiftly challenged in Clinton's bid to cut teenage smoking was hailed on Friday by campaigners battling the scourge of lung cancer, re-

Smoking already kills three million people a year around the globe and the World Health Organisation (WHO) warned that figure could soar to 10 million within four decades.

ports Reuter.

"Tobacco is an equal opportunity killer," said a WHO spokesman in Geneva. "Half of the adolescents, whether they are boys or girls, who start smoking and smoke throughout their lives, will be killed by tobacco."

On Thursday, Clinton procourt by the tobacco industry as unlawful.

"Children are especially susceptible to the deadly temptation of tobacco and its skilful marketing," Clinton said as he proposed a nationwide ban on sales to anyone under 18.

WHO has long canvassed for tough global action and its spokesman said: "The WHO approves of any anti-smoking campaign, in particular those aimed at young people."

Progress in cutting smoking among youngsters has been patchy in Europe, where governments' commitment varies widely.

consumption is among Europe's highest, plans a tight new anti-smoking law. banning sales to under 18's and smoking in many public places. "Clinton's move is in the

right direction," said Health Ministry expert Taduesz Parchimowicz. Smoking is on the rise in Russia, where Marlboro man is ever present on advertising

hoardings. Health Ministry expert Galina Tkachenko said smoking-related cancer deaths had risen 33 per cent in the

last 10 years. Teenagers start smoking at 15, she said. A planned European Union ban on tobacco advertising has been gathering

position from Britain, Germany and the Nether- metro, cinemas and some Smoking and Health) dislands. Britain argues that the

several years ago due to op-

commission's idea of a statutory ban is unnecessary. The British government negotiated a voluntary agree-

ment with tobacco firms to cut down on sponsorship of sporting events. Using comedian John Cleese, it also launched a campaign last year to persuade parents of young children to stop smoking. "It is a lottery people can-

not afford to play. Of 1,000 young smokers, one will be murdered, six will die in litical attempt to put ciroad accidents but at least garettes in the same league 250 will be killed before with hard drugs," said Ernst Brueckner of the Cigarette their time by tobacco," said

Spain bans smoking in the

Baroness Cumberlege.

domestic flights but it is generally allowed in the work place. Sweden only allows publicity "in moderation" at the point of sale. In sharp contrast, Italy has

no national ban on smoking in public places. In Germany, where around a quarter of the population

smokes and 135 billion cigarettes are sold annually, the industry shrugged off Clinton's clampdown. "The measures announced in the US are primarily a po-

group ASH (Action on

agreed: "We see it as a clear statement that tobacco should never be viewed as merely a consumer product again. France cracked down on smoking with a 1992 blanket

ban on direct tobacco advertising and a ban on smoking in public places. But it is still an entrenched national habit. In the land that gave the world the gauloise, the national committee against to-

bacco addiction hailed Clinton for "realising that tobacco addiction is a disaster despite pressure from big multinational tobacco com-

the week.

More than 1,000 people