

International

North Korea releases South's ship, 21 crew

SEOUL, Aug 13: North Korea released a South Korean rice-aid ship and its 21 crew today after officials from both sides reached agreement late on Saturday in Beijing, a spokesman at the Unification Ministry said, reports Reuters.

The ministry spokesman said the ship had left the northern port of Chongjin today at 10 am (0100 GMT) as agreed with the Stalinist North.

"The ship should reach our port of Pohang around 3 pm (0600 GMT) tomorrow," he said.

"South Korea also agreed to resume rice aid to the North as earlier scheduled," the spokesman told Reuters.

The spokesman said the agreement was reached with the North after three days of talks in Beijing on the return of the Samsun Venus and its crew, held by the communist North on spying charges.

North Korea agreed to return the ship and crew after the South expressed regret

for the incident and assured the North it would not recur, the spokesman added.

Under an accord signed in Beijing last June, South Korea is supplying 150,000 tonnes of free rice to the North to ease what Seoul says is a chronic food shortage and to improve ties. Half has been shipped to the North already.

North Korea abruptly cancelled on Wednesday a third round of talks on rice aid that were scheduled to start the next day in Beijing, accusing a crewman on the 9,400-tonne Samsun Venus of illegally taking photographs.

Pyeongyang said the crewman, who it named as Ri Yang Chon, took photographs of port facilities when the ship docked at Chongjin in early August.

North Korea's Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said on Sunday Ri Yang Chon took 14 photographs and had admitted to premeditated espionage.

Defector General may not disclose military information

Iraq offers arms secrets to UN

BAGHDAD, Aug 13: Iraq today asked the head of the UN disarmament commission to visit Iraq immediately and receive weapons secrets it says were hidden by a minister who defected last week, reports AFP.

Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz said Industry Minister Hussein Kamel Hassan who defected to Jordan last week had hidden important information from UNSCOM, the UN special commission on disarmament.

He said Iraq "sent an invitation to (UNSCOM chief Rolf) Ekeus so that he comes to Baghdad urgently because we are ready to give him information that Hussein Kamel had hidden," according to the official Iraqi news agency. The Industry Minister held information back "with the aim of compromising Iraq's relations with UNSCOM," Aziz said.

Reuters adds: Hussein Kamel Hassan's defection has

shaken his father-in-law Saddam Hussein's regime but the former official who holds Iraq's deepest military secrets may not be willing to share them with the West, reports Reuters.

Analysts said the lieutenant general, who made a dramatic call on Saturday to Iraqi soldiers and civilians to help overthrow Saddam, could jeopardise the influence he hopes to maintain at home if he hands over Iraq's carefully-guarded secrets.

"Getting Iraq's deepest secrets might be a tough nut to crack," said Phebe Marr, a senior fellow at the Pentagon's Institute for National Strategic Studies and author of a history of Iraq.

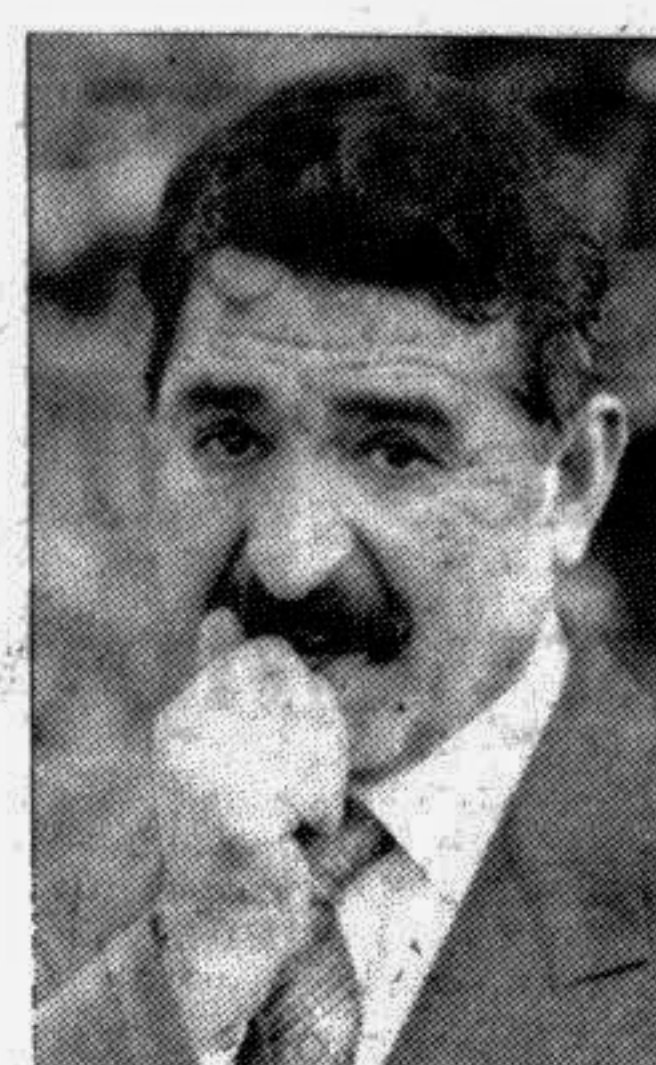
She said, Hussein Kamel risked being branded a traitor by military men left to face deteriorating conditions in Iraq and weakening his influence within a potentially significant core of nationalist opposition to Saddam outside

Iraq. US officials refused to say whether they had been in contact with Hussein Kamel, who arrived on Jordan's King Hussein's doorstep this week along with his brother, Saddam Kamel Hassan, who is in charge of Saddam's guards, and their wives, both of whom are Saddam's daughters.

At a palace press conference in Amman on Saturday, Hussein Kamel side stepped questions about his contacts with the United States, emphasising that he had been in touch with Iraqi dissidents inside and outside Iraq.

Although he was treated in Amman in February for what Jordanian officials said was a brain tumour, Hussein Kamel, in his early 50s, appeared fit and brimming with bravado.

Some described the brothers' defections in what was already a shrinking circle of loyalty to Saddam as possibly the biggest blow to the



General Hussein

Iraqi leader's stability since he quelled Kurdish and Shi'ite rebellions after the 1991 Gulf War.

"He's about as close to Saddam as you can get," said one state department source with long experience of Iraq.

BRIEFLY



Some 116 Muslim militants walk free from Tora Prison near Cairo on Saturday. Most of them belonged to Gamaa Islamiyya, the main fundamentalist group leading an armed revolt against the state which claimed a failed attempt to kill President Hosni Mubarak in Addis Ababa on June 26. — AFP/UNB photo

Bus collision kills 6 in India: Six people were killed and 12 injured in a head-on collision between a matador and a Haryana roadways bus in Rampur area in Bareilly Sunday morning, PTI reports from Bareilly. The bus was heading towards Nainital, reports said. The injured were admitted to the district hospital in Bareilly.

Palestinian shot dead in WB: Jewish settlers shot dead one Palestinian and wounded two more during a protest over land rights on the West Bank Sunday witnesses said. AFP reports from Beit El, West Bank.

Settlers from Beit El opened fire after 100 Palestinian demonstrators burnt down a cabin the Israelis had erected on a hilltop near the Arab village of Dura Al Qan. Khair Abdel Haliz, 23, was declared dead upon arrival at Ramallah hospital.

Hillary to visit Chile in Oct: US First Lady Hillary Clinton will visit Chile in mid-October as part of a South America tour that also will take her to Brazil, Bolivia, and Paraguay, the weekly Que Pasa reported Saturday. AFP reports from Santiago.

Quoting diplomatic sources, the weekly said Hillary would arrive in Santiago October 14, and two days later would head to Paraguay for a meeting of presidential spouses in Asuncion, to be held as the summit of Ibero-American presidents convenes in Argentina.

9 rebels jailed in Vietnam: Nine "counter-revolutionaries" were given prison terms of between four and 15 years by a court in Ho Chi Minh City. The People's Army newspaper reported Sunday. AFP says from Hanoi.

The four, who had been aligned with the former pro-American South Vietnamese regime beaten 20 years ago, were convicted Saturday of trying to overthrow the government, the army newspaper said.

Journalist shot dead in Algeria: An Algerian woman journalist working for a government newspaper has been shot dead in a town near Algiers, an official Algerian statement said on Saturday. Reuters reports from Paris.

In another Algerian town, a car bomb exploded outside a post office on Saturday, injuring 12 people including three children, the official Algerian news agency APS said.

28 hurt in Venezuela stampede: At least 28 people suffered serious injuries when a crowd of some 10,000 political supporters of President Rafael Caldera went on a stampede in a sports arena, police said Saturday. AFP reports from Barquisimeto, Venezuela.

The stampede was triggered by the explosion of a tear-gas container in an air conditioning duct that went off inside the Domo Bivariano Stadium where members of the ruling Convergencia Party were nominating candidates for December's regional elections.

Sudanese junta reshuffles govt: Sudan's military leader-Lieutenant-General Omar Hassan al-Bashir announced on Saturday he had dismissed his interior minister, police commander and heads of security in a government shake-up. Reuters reports from Khartoum. Bashir's presidential decrees announcing more than a dozen changes were carried by the official news agency Suna. No reasons were given for the reshuffle, believed to be the 10th since Bashir seized power from a civilian government in 1989.

China won't stop N-tests

TOKYO, Aug 13: Chinese President Jiang Zemin has indicated that China would continue nuclear testing until a comprehensive global ban on such tests comes into force, the Japanese daily Asahi Shimbun reported today, says AFP.

China has participated in a "solemn and serious" manner in the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty talks under way in Geneva, Jiang was quoted as saying in an interview with Asahi published.

China will halt nuclear testing after the treaty takes effect, said Jiang, who is also Communist Party chief.

The Geneva talks have been aimed at achieving a comprehensive test ban at the end of 1996.

China conducted an underground nuclear test in May, ignoring a moratorium on testing observed by the other nuclear states since 1992. Then France drew international condemnation after announcing in June that it would resume nuclear testing in the South Pacific in September.

In the interview, Jiang also blamed the United States for strains in Sino-US relations since Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui was granted a US visa for a private visit in June.

King Hussein, US Gen Peay talk ME situation

AMMAN, Aug 13: Jordan's King Hussein met late Saturday with the head of the US army's central command, General James Henry Binford Peay, the official news agency Petra said, AFP reports.

Jordanian Premier Ziad Ibn Shaker and the Commander in Chief of the Jordanian army also attended the talks with Peay, which focussed on the situation in the Middle East, Jordanian, American cooperation and matters of common interest.

The talks came the same day as the first public appearance of General Hussein Kamel Hassan, son-in-law and top military aide of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, who defected to Amman on Tuesday.

Hassan suggested in a press conference Saturday that he had no contacts with United States officials concerning Iraq's chemical and biological arsenal, which he helped build.

However, a Western diplomat told AFP earlier that Hassan had held preliminary contacts with US military officials, who arrived in Amman on Friday.

Greenpeace ship off to Mururoa to join protest

SUVA, Aug 13: Greenpeace flagship Rainbow Warrior II set sail today for Mururoa atoll to join a fleet of ships as protests against French nuclear tests due to begin next month gained momentum, reports AFP.

The unarmed New Zealand navy research ship Tui also left Auckland to join the flotilla, which is expected to number at least 20 vessels from around the world.

A second Greenpeace ship, The Vega, which first went to Mururoa 20 years ago, was due to leave Papeete in French Polynesia, the island group on which the nuclear test series are to be held.

At least 16 other vessels are already on their way from numerous international ports.

Prospects for political solution in Karachi still bleak

KARACHI, Aug 13: The Pakistan security forces said today their crackdown on Karachi militants was reducing violence, but prospects still remain bleak for a political solution to the strife in the country's largest city, reports AFP.

Administration and security officials, boasting several major blows against city gunmen, admitted the battle was not won though.

"We have struck solid blows against the militants," said a senior police official. But he added "it is a long drawn out battle, terrorism has not been eliminated fully."

More than 30,000 police and para-military rangers are

deployed in Karachi, drawing some protests from residents of districts bearing the brunt of the clampdown, who say innocent people are often harassed and detained.

The killings go on in Karachi. But the 11 deaths in the past four days are down from an 10 violent deaths a day in recent weeks.

A senior police official told AFP that 81 terrorists had been killed since January. Federal Interior Minister Naseerullah Babar, put in charge of the crackdown by Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, added that between 400 and 500 militants were in custody.

Among them are 12 for whose arrest the government

placed rewards of millions of rupees. Babar said. According to the minister, almost all of those detained belong to Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM).

Babar said there were still around 1,000 militants still at large. But he declared, "we have broken their backbone" and recalled the killing this month of alleged terrorist leader, Farooq Dada. Police said he was head of the MQM military wing and was wanted for more than 100 attacks.

"They are feeling the pinch after the death of their commander-in-chief Farooq Dada," he said. Faheem Farooqi, billed as another highly wanted terrorist, was arrested last week.

Taiwanese march demanding reunification with China

TAIPEI, Aug 13: More than 7,000 right-wing protesters marched through the Taiwan capital today to demand peaceful reunification with China which has stepped up pressure on the nationalist island, reports AFP.

Protesters shouting "we are Taiwanese, but we are also Chinese," marched from the Chiang Kai-Shek Memorial Hall to Sun Yat-Sen Memorial Hall.

Late nationalist leader Chiang and Sun, founder of the Chinese Republic in 1911, are the main spiritual influences for wingers strongly against Taiwan's independence.

Some protesters, accusing

President Lee Teng-hui of leading a pro-independence trend, demanded the president step down and end his bid to run for a second term, next year.

"Lee Teng-hui is the source of chaos in Taiwan," said Feng Hu-Hsiang executive secretary of the Alliance for Democratic Reform, one of the protest organisers. He added that Lee's policies would bring "a crisis to Taiwan."

"Because of his pro-independence stance, the Chinese communists have stepped up their missile threats against Taiwan," Feng said. Other protesters said Lee should not run for re-

election "for the sake of Taiwan."

China staged one series of missile tests off northwest Taiwan last month in what was seen as an attempt to intimidate the nationalist island after Lee's private visit to the United States in June.

It is to start an even larger series of missile tests this week to apply more pressure. Beijing views Taiwan as a rebel province and vowed to retake it by force if the island declares independence.

Former Prime Minister Hau Pei-Tsun and former Parliament Speaker Liang Su-Jung joined the protest, organised by the alliance and right wing New Party.



An elderly man raising his hands in supplication as some 20,000 Christians gather in the Yoido district in South Korea. Christians met to mark 50 years of liberation from Japanese colonial rule with prayers for peace and the peaceful reunification of the two Koreas, divided by the Cold War since the Japanese surrender. — AFP/UNB photo

Cong (I) in turmoil again

NEW DELHI, Aug 13: India's ruling Congress (I) Party is in turmoil again as its top leaders engage in factional fighting, leaving Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao watching with renewed concern, party sources said, reports AFP.

With general elections expected early next year, a divided but confident opposition is laughing on the sidelines as the 74-year-old Prime Minister tries to balance differences and avoid a revolt arising from several internal crises.

More than 50 Congress MPs have accused Home Minister Shankar Rao Chavan, a Rao confidant, of flirting with two Hindu nationalist parties governing the western state of

Maharashtra.

Chavan, a party veteran, has been under attack since he attended a public function in Bombay on August 7 organised by the Hindu parties to celebrate his 75th birthday.

Angry Congress leaders are baying for Chavan's head.

"The moral of Congressmen will naturally be affected if leaders honey-moon with rival parties," charged Civil Aviation Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad. Congress MPs in Bombay kept away from the birthday bash.

Rao has not commented on the attack on Chavan, and Congress sources say he is more distressed by the refusal of Railway Minister C K Jaffer Sharief to quit the cabinet to do party work.

Sharief, an influential Muslim from southern India, has subtly warned Rao that he would stage a revolt if he was sacked. With general elections expected in early 1996, party sources say, Rao cannot ignore the threat.

To add to Rao's woes, Chavan and Sharief are publicly quarrelling, while a Rao bayer, Sharad Pawar, has put the Congress on the spot by publicly apologising for the 1992 razing of a 16th-century mosque by Hindu fanatics.

Pawar, a former defence minister, offered the apology, apparently without the party leadership's authorisation, while addressing a public meeting about 10 days ago in the northern town of Rampur.

Off the Record

Media phobia

ZURICH, Switzerland: Lisa Marie Presley sat out hubby Michael Jackson European jaunt this week with three young children. Swiss newspapers reported Friday, says AP.

Jackson and an entourage of 10 flew into Zurich on Tuesday after a trip to Disneyland Paris, according to the tabloid Blick. He left early Friday when the media discovered him at the posh Zurich Hotel, said the manager, March Bloch, who had no idea where he went.

The children included two boys aged 9 and 14, said the French-language daily Le Matin. They are the sons of a New Jersey restaurant owner who is a Jackson friend, the newspaper said. The third child was a 12-year-old girl, said Blick, which didn't identify her.

Room service waiters served up four plates of chicken nuggets, Caesar salad and five pancakes with maple syrup on Thursday.

In 1993, a 13-year-old boy claimed Jackson molested him during a five-month relationship. Jackson denied the allegations and has not been charged. The boy and Jackson settled a lawsuit last year for a reported \$15 million.



Faux pas

MANILA: A man visiting a government law enforcement office apparently forgot where he was and used a Philippines flag to wipe his hands — resulting in his immediate arrest, a local daily reported in Manila Sunday, reports AFP.

The Today newspaper said the man, identified as Magdaleno Valde, had gone to the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) office in the southern city of Davao on Wednesday to obtain a police clearance certificate to be used in a job application.

After imprinting his fingerprints on the clearance certificate, Valde looked for a rag to wipe the ink off his fingers. He found an unfolded Philippine flag and allegedly used it to wipe his hands despite warnings from other applicants, the newspaper said.

NBI agents immediately arrested Valde, who could face a year in prison if convicted of violating Philippine laws requiring proper handling of the flag.

A rare auction

LONDON: A vast stolen book collection will be auctioned in Suffolk, East Angles on August 25, as police accepted that they would never trace all the owners, reported The Times newspaper Saturday, reports Xinhua.

Police found some 25 tonnes of books, worth 500,000 pounds (800,000 US dollars), from the home of a worker on a Turkey farm Duncan Jevons.

The 50-year-old Jevons had wandered the whole country for more than 30 years stealing books from libraries, museums and university colleges.

Last year, police arrested Jevons and took possession of about 52,000 books which crammed into his home. Hence Jevons was given a 15-month prison sentence.

Most of the stolen books have been returned to their owners, the remaining 12,000 will be auctioned and money raised from the auction will go to police funds.

World's largest cake

CURICO, Chile: After two days baking, 10,000 eggs and nine tons of flour, Chilean cooks finished on Saturday what they claimed was the world's largest cake, reports Reuters.

Assembled on a gymnasium floor, the round cake weighed 25 tons measured 30 feet (10 metres) across and had a mixture of flavours including coconut, orange and honey.

Organisers of the project financed by a local supermarket chain, said they would seek certification from the Guinness Book of World Records to get their cake into the books next edition.

Cooks in this southern Chilean town made the giant pastry in local bakeries during round the clock shifts after finishing it early on Saturday, they photographed the cake and then invited locals to dig in and enjoy their creation.

Apology for WW II atrocities

Britons voice anger at Murayama's denial

LONDON, Aug 13: British war veterans voiced both anger and confusion after Japanese Prime Minister Tomichi Murayama denied he had formally apologised for his country's treatment of prisoners during World War II, reports Reuters.

Veteran organisations and former prisoners of war (POWs) seeking compensation for their internment by the Japanese vowed to pursue the matter and get an explanation for the apology that never was.

"I would love to know what all this means," said Arthur Titherington, secretary of the Japanese Labour Camp Survivors Association. Murayama, in a letter to British Prime Minister John

Major made public on Friday, expressed his "profound remorse" for his country's actions and the suffering they caused.

But he told reporters on Saturday that the letter written two weeks ago was not an apology, but was meant to congratulate Major on his reelection as leader of the Conservative Party.

British veterans, pressing for a formal apology as the 50th anniversary of the end of the war with Japan approaches on August 15, had already said the letter did not go far enough.

Keith Marin, chairman of the Association of British Civilian Internees, renewed calls for a formal statement.

Asian states plan to ignore end of WW II ceremony

HONG KONG, Aug 13: Many countries across Asia plan to officially ignore the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II on August 15, 1945, reports Reuters.

After this date, some countries were still occupied by troops from the Japanese imperial army while others declared independence.

In Malaysia, the Japanese formally surrendered on August 14.

Korea was liberated from 35 years of Japanese colonial rule on August 15.

China also considers this date as the anniversary of its victory of resistance.

Thailand agreed to allow Japanese forces right of passage through Thailand during

the war in return for Japanese assurances of respect for Thailand's independence.

On December 12, 1941, the Thai government agreed a military alliance with Japan and on January 25, 1942, the Thai government declared war on the United States and Britain.

With Japan's surrender on August 15 the then regent, Pridi Phanomyong, termed the declaration of war illegal and null and void and repudiated all agreements made with Japan.

August 15 means one thing in India — freedom at midnight. It is the anniversary of India's independence and a national holiday devoted to celebrating freedom from the British Raj.