

BRIEFLY

1 die as ferry sinks in Bali Strait: A ferry carrying trucks and motorcycles sank near the tourist island of Bali, drowning one passenger and leaving 10 others missing, officials said Tuesday. AP reports from Jakarta.

However, 22 passengers and seven crew members wearing life vests swam about 1.5 kilometers (1 mile) to the shore at Gilimanuk after the ferry capsized during a storm Monday, said rescue official Arselan Siregar.

Blast kills six in Philippines: Six people were killed when a man lobbed a grenade into a birthday party being held for a local official in the northern Philippines, police said yesterday. Reuter reports from San Fernando, Philippines.

Police have not arrested any suspects and had to motive for the attack, which occurred on Monday evening at San Miguel town in Bulacan Province north of Manila. No one was wounded in the attack.

Kuwait to talk fate of 605 with Iraq: Kuwait officials Tuesday headed for a meeting with Iraqi delegates on their border to discuss the fate of 605 people reported captured during the occupation of the Emirate. AFP reports from Kuwait City.

Duaj al-Anzi, General Manager of the National Committee for Prisoners of War and Missing Persons Affairs, left Kuwait City for the meeting on the Kuwaiti side of the demilitarised zone, officials at his office said.

Neo-Nazi leader jailed in Germany: A German neo-Nazi leader was convicted Tuesday of denying the Holocaust occurred and sentenced to three and a half years in prison. AP reports from Berlin.

In a documentary film called "Profession: Neo-Nazi," Bela Ewald Althans maintained it was a lie that 6 million Jews were killed by the Nazis. The Berlin State Court convicted the 29-year-old Althans of incitement.

Israel eases closure in Jericho: Israel allowed some Palestinians to leave Jericho Tuesday easing a six-day closure on the Palestinian-fueled West Bank enclave, witnesses said. Reuter reports from Jerusalem.

Israeli soldiers checked vehicles on their way out of the city, allowing women, children and men over 35 to leave but turning back others.

DPRK seeks UN emergency relief: North Korea, stricken by four weeks of torrential rains and severe floods, has appealed for emergency relief aid from the United Nations officials in Seoul said Monday. AFP reports from Seoul.

"North Korea has asked UN organisations to dispatch relief supplies," a Foreign Ministry official told AFP.

4 die in Russian plane crash: A Russian sport plane on a training flight crashed outside Moscow, killing four people, a news agency reported Tuesday. AP reports from Moscow.

The Yak-18T crashed Monday near the village of Istomikha about 40 kilometres (25 miles) southeast of the Russian capital, the Interfax news agency said.

No reason was given for the crash.

Flights suspended in 3 NY airports: All flights at New York city's three main airports were temporarily suspended early on Monday night because of a bomb threat police said. Reuter reports from New York.

A spokesman for port authority police had no further details but other officials said the threat was made to Tracon, the Long Island air traffic control centre, that guides landings and takeoffs, for Kennedy, La Guardia and New York airports.

Chechens kill Russian soldier: At least one Russian soldier was killed and another three were wounded during clashes with Chechen rebels, a news agency said Tuesday. AP reports from Grozny.

Russian troops came under fire 11 times overnight in Grozny, the capital of Chechnya, where fighting routinely breaks out after sundown despite a July 30 negotiated on stopping the war, the Interfax news agency said. The military agreement calls for Russian troop withdrawal and rebel disarmament.

Author of "The Neverending Story" dies: Novelist Michael Ende, whose "The Neverending Story" has charmed millions of children, died of cancer, his publisher said Tuesday. He was 65. AP reports from Stuttgart, Germany.

Ende died Monday evening at a hospital in Stuttgart, said the Thienemann publishing company. Ende's most famous book was the "The Neverending Story", which was made into a feature film. He wrote a number of other children's books as well. Ende's works have been translated into 20 languages, including English.

London-Dublin talks on N Ireland deadlocked

BELFAST, Aug 29: Britain and Ireland remain deadlocked about the next step in northern Ireland's delicate political process as the province prepares for a crucial peace anniversary tinged with foreboding, reports Reuter.

Late on Monday in Dublin, the Irish government again urged Britain not to let guerilla arms stockpiles stand in the way of all-party talks to turn today's truces into long-term peace.

The demand by the Irish — Britain's partners in devising long-term strategies for northern Ireland — came after London said IRA guerillas and pro-British extremists must give up their military hardware as a passport to round table talks.

After a three-hour meeting between Irish Prime Minister John Bruton and Gerry Adams, leader of the Irish Republican Army's political wing Sinn Fein, both sides said all-party negotiations were vital to underpin a lasting peace.

"They agreed that the clear priority now was a comprehensive and inclusive all-party talks process in which all parties negotiated and made the compromises necessary to achieve such a settlement."

Typhoon 'Janis' kills 45 in Korean peninsula

SEOUL, Aug 29: Typhoon 'Janis,' which swept through the southern half of the peninsula last weekend, left 45 people dead and the nine missing, reports Reuter.

The centre said 30 of those killed were crushed by landslides. The rest died when they were swept away by strong currents in streams or struck by lightning.

One person died when a train carrying about 440 passengers derailed on a bridge over a swollen river in the central town of Goisan.

Typhoon Janis, which hit land on the peninsula's west coast on Saturday fizzled out near eastern coastal areas of North Korea early on Sunday.

Leila Khalid still possesses revolutionary zeal

ISLAMABAD, Aug 29: Leila Khalid, the firebrand Palestinian who captured the world's imagination by hijacking an Israeli plane at age 25 some 27 years ago, is today a graceful mother of two, but has lost none of her revolutionary zeal, reports IPS.

Although she put aside her weapons in 1982 after getting married, her belief in armed struggle remains unshaken. "We believe that through armed struggle people can achieve their goals, especially when they are under occupation or when dealing with an enemy," she says.

At the conference of women parliamentarians from Muslim countries held here recently, Leila — part of the three-member Palestinian delegation — was the centre of media attention, with journalists flocking all around her.

Of medium height, with short black hair and dark, strikingly bright and steady eyes lined with Kohl, the gutsy armed militant of yesterday is now a calm, confident though slightly bulky 51.

She is a member of the Palestinian parliament as a representative of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), a faction of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) that she started her career with.

Married to a doctor with a background as political as her own, she has also been part of the Palestinian women's movement, and worked with the press and the media as a member of the PFLP.

"I have been involved in many different missions," she says in a low-pitched, husky voice. Hijacking the first plane was just one of four such missions Leila undertook to draw attention to the Palestinian cause.

After giving up arms in 1982, she says, "I was given the responsibility to lead the women's section of the PFLP, and was also a member of the administrative Council of the General Union of Palestinian Women."

Leila is bitter about what she calls the American initiative at the Madrid Conference, which the PLO leadership attended.

Feeling betrayed by the mainstream PLO leadership, the PFLP joined hands with nine other Palestinian factions, some of them factions of the PLO, to form a ten faction alliance "to face the accord and its implementations."

The Oslo Accord, she says, "does not give us 4.5 million Palestinian people the right to return home, and we have not been given sovereignty over our own land. The issue of Jerusalem has been postponed to the end, to the third stage of the negotiations, and Israel still insists that it is the United capital of the Jews."

Then, the (Jewish) settlements in Gaza Strip and the West Bank are still there, all 149 of them, which the Israelis refuse to eliminate. At the end of it, the accord does not give us any independence, although even the

UN resolutions speak of the rights of the Palestinians to return, to self-determination and to establish a Palestinian state including Jerusalem," she adds forcefully.

She says she adopted the path of armed military after attending a training camp for Palestinian freedom fighters in 1966 following fresh incursions by Israel into their territory. However, today she advocates peaceful negotiations to attain the rights of the Palestinians.

As for the hijackings, she says, "we were obliged to do it," one of the aims of the hijackings was to exchange prisoners. In the first one, when she was only 25, the PFLP had no place to take the plane and had to force it to land in Damascus.

But this was not before Leila had made the pilot fly over and circle her birth place, Heifa, occupied by Israel since 1948. In Damascus, the hijackers, calling themselves the Che Guevarra front of the PFLP, negotiated for the release of Syrian prisoners and were detained for forty days before being set free.

The second hijacking, she says, was meant to take the plane to Jordan, but there was a fight on board. "My colleague was shot, and the plane went to London from where I was captured. So there was no exchange."

The second aim of the hijackings was to gain recognition for the Palestinian cause, which, she says, was done.

20 pc cut in Bombay water supply likely

BOMBAY, Aug 29: Bombay officials are considering imposing either a 20 per cent cut in water supplies or running off supplies completely for one day a week to India's commercial capital, a city of 12 million people, reports Reuter.

Officials in the state of Maharashtra, of which Bombay is the capital, said today the cuts would be essential if the region did not get adequate monsoon rains in the next few days.

They said that the cuts could start from September 10, at the end of a major Hindu festival for the elephant-headed God Ganesha, and would remain in force until next July.

Killing of 37 in Sarajevo street

Bosnian President threatens swift retaliation

SARAJEVO, Aug 29: Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic on Monday threatened swift retaliation for a mortar attack that killed 37 people on a crowded street in Sarajevo, state radio reported, says Reuter.

Izetbegovic told the radio "as far as the killers are concerned my message to them is we shall strike back evenly and very soon too."

The president was en route to Paris to discuss new US peace proposals with Washington envoys when Sarajevo was attacked.

At least 37 were killed and 85 wounded when two mortar bombs slammed into the city centre in the worst attack on Sarajevo in more than a year.

The Bosnian government blamed besieging Serb forces for the attack UN officials said they were investigating the incident but said an initial assessment cast suspicion on the Serbs.

Izetbegovic said he heard of the massacre in the southwest town of Mostar and considered calling off his trip.

He accused the international community of allowing the Bosnian Serbs to attack the capital with impunity while refusing to lift a UN arms embargo which has favoured the better armed Serbs.

"I am going to France to ask them how long will this situation last and how long will this violence be tolerated."

I am going to tell them that we shall no longer put up with it, we shall use all available means to get us out of this misfortune I stress all means.

Bosnian Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic proposed suspending the US peace effort and demanded that NATO prove its resolve by bombing

Serb gun positions.

Meanwhile US envoy Richard Holbrooke met Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic for talks on the crisis in former Yugoslavia on Monday evening after offering Washington's condolences for the day's bloody attack on central Sarajevo.

We will discuss with Izetbegovic, our views on how the response to this attack should be dealt with Holbrooke told reporters before entering the Bosnian leader's hotel.

"We have come here tonight on a mission of peace but at very sad time. Holbrooke said. Our first project here is to express our condolences on behalf of President Clinton and the United States government for the outrageous tragedy in Sarajevo."

Greeting him at the hotel entrance, Bosnian Foreign Affairs Minister Muhamed

Sacirbey thanked Holbrooke for the message of sympathy and said I think all of us understand what needs to be done to prevent these types of terrorist attacks.

Their meeting had been delayed nearly four hours while top Bosnian officials debated whether they should participate in Washington's new peace initiative before learning how NATO planned to react to the fresh attack on the Bosnian capital.

AFP adds, Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic told his "parliament" late Monday to take a favourable view of the US peace initiative for the war-torn former Yugoslav republic.

The American initiative as far as we know, takes into account a maximum of Serb interests and I hope our parliament will welcome this offer favourably, Karadzic said on Serb radio in Pale, the Bosnian Serb stronghold.

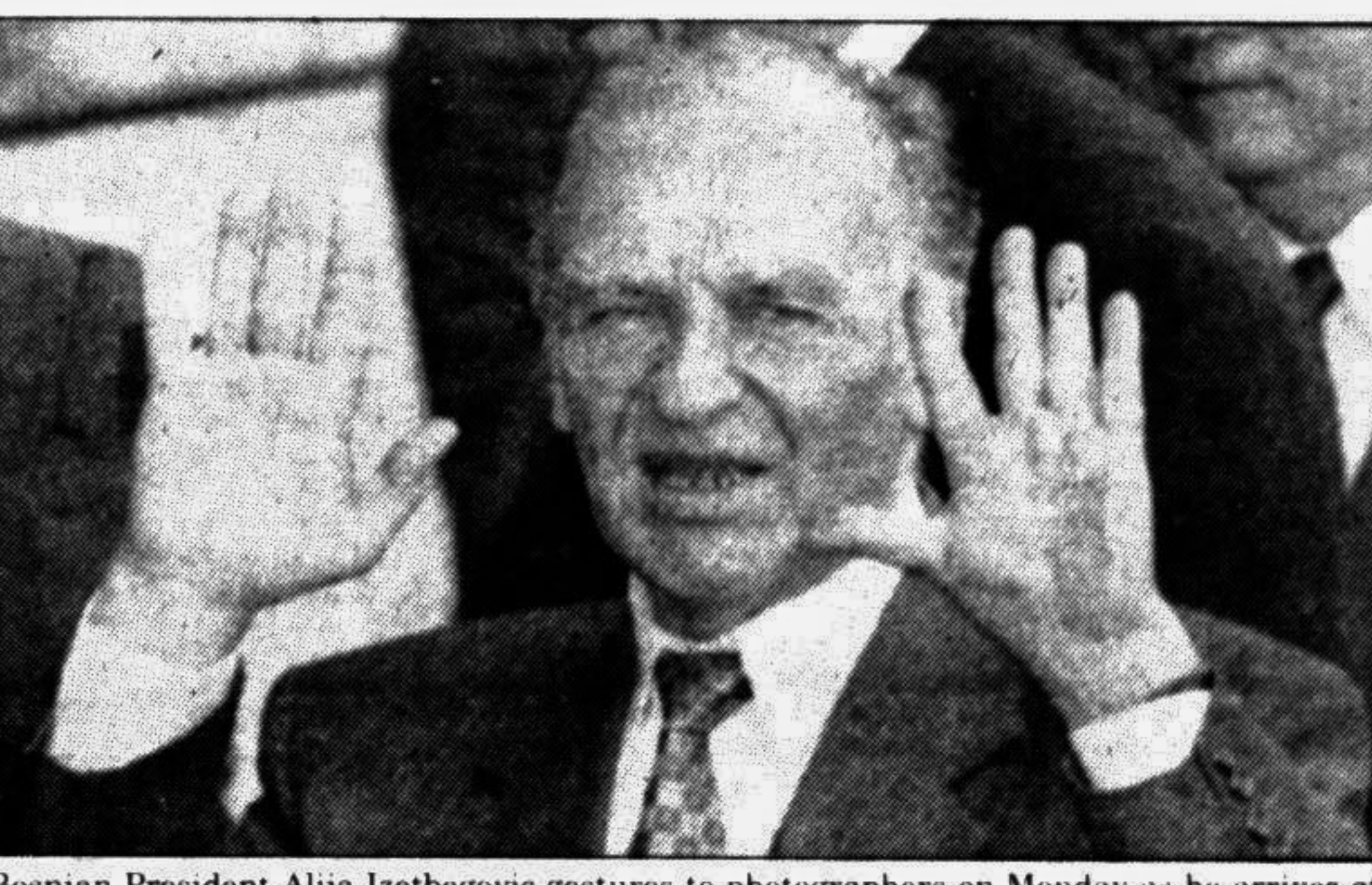
Japan to send troops to Golan Heights

TOKYO, Aug 29: Japan will send troops to the Golan Heights to join United Nations peacekeeping efforts there, the Cabinet decided Tuesday, reports AP.

The Cabinet approval came after Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama's Socialist Party dropped its opposition.

Socialists have traditionally been unwilling to send Japanese troops abroad, even for UN peacekeeping, citing Japan's constitutional ban on the use of force to settle international disputes.

"The government has decided that it is possible for Japan to fully contribute in transportation and commanding roles as expected by the United Nations," said the Chief government spokesman, Koken Nosaka.



Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic gestures to photographers on Monday as he arrives at the Hotel Crillon in Paris. Izetbegovic arrived here for talks with French and US officials on the latest US peace plan for former Yugoslavia. — AFP/UNB photo

Subcontinent passing through dangerous time: Benazir

ISLAMABAD, Aug 29: Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto Tuesday said India was behind the kidnapping of western hostages in Kashmir and warned that the Asian subcontinent is passing through a dangerous time, reports AP.

Speaking to foreign journalists in the Pakistani capital, Benazir said India engineered the kidnapping of six western tourists to discredit Kashmiri separatists and "defame Pakistan."

"The Al-Faran group of Kashmiri militants holding four westerners as hostages we believe is a counter intelligence outfit of India's working to harm the Kashmiri cause and defame Pakistan," she said.

She did not offer proof of

her allegations.

One of the hostages escaped four days after he was captured on July 4 and a fifth hostage, Norwegian Hans Christian Ostro, was beheaded by his captors two weeks ago. The other four are alive and well, a captive told Indian authorities on Monday.

The group is demanding 15 Kashmiri separatists be released from Indian jails.

"The Al-Faran is a despicable group which has done a brutal murder of a hostage and which has crossed the norms of decency and civilised political behaviour by taking recourse to hostages," Benazir said.

Indian says the Al-Faran separatist group has links to Pakistan, although it also has offered no proof of its allegation.

Both Benazir and Kashmiri separatist groups have condemned the kidnappings and denied any knowledge of Al-Faran.

The Al-Faran group was unknown before the kidnappings.

Benazir accused India of arranging the hostage-taking to coincide with a recent debate in the United States Senate over whether Washington should ease military and economic sanctions against Pakistan.

Benazir also warned that Indian Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao may seek to bolster his popularity at home by turning people's attention toward Pakistan.

Off the Record

Mother jailed for feeding baby heroin

RICHMOND, Virginia: A woman who said she fed her 4-month-old son heroin because he was born addicted to the drug has received a harsh 10-year prison sentence, reports AP.

Jacqueline R Edwards, 28, must serve at least 8 years of the sentence imposed Monday by Circuit Judge James B Wilkinson. She pleaded guilty July 12 to distributing heroin to the infant.

Ms Edwards was arrested in April on credit card fraud charges when social workers checked on her four children after the arrest. She told them the youngest child might be addicted to heroin.

Ms Edwards attempted to relieve her son's withdrawal symptoms by putting heroin on her finger and sticking it in the child's mouth.

She said she had been addicted to heroin and cocaine for 12 years.

Sisters turn into brothers

JERUSALEM: The last of four brothers born with a rare genetic defect that left them appearing to be female underwent surgery Sunday to fully become a boy, reports AP.

The youths, aged 10, 11, 12 and 17, were raised as girls in Amman, Jordan. The family first discovered the disorder when the oldest, 17-year-old Mohammed, reached puberty.

Mohammed's voice broke and he began to develop facial hair and a male physique. He was diagnosed as a male whose genitals had never descended from the pubic cavity.

Dr Yousef al-Masri of the El Atchad Hospital in the West Bank town of Nablus operated on Mohammed in 1992, allowing the genitals to descend. Another operation rearranged his urinary tract, and hormone treatment completed the process.

His three younger siblings were recently diagnosed with the same genetic defect, which was caused by low testosterone levels and resulted in a female appearance throughout childhood.

Ariel Ressler, an endocrinologist at Jerusalem's Hadassah Hospital, said the condition is also common among Palestinians in the Gaza Strip's Jebaliya refugee camp because of intermarriage. One in 150 males in the camp is born with the defect, he said.

Love for puppy

OCEAN CITY, Maryland: A Pennsylvania woman who believes her dog fell overboard is offering a dollars 50,000 reward to get him back — dead or alive, reports AP.

Tina Sigaloose, a chiropractor from Thomasville, Pennsylvania, believes her 1-year-old terrier, Baby Huey, fell overboard last Friday while she was in the Delaware Bay on her 12-meter (38-foot) cabin cruiser.

Ms Sigaloose said she didn't see Baby Huey go overboard but suspects the dog fell into the water after he escaped from the downstairs cabin.

The dog was wearing a purple dog collar but no I D tags.

Ms Sigaloose said she has been distraught since the accident and wants to find out what happened so she can put it behind her.

Kamel blamed for blocking Iraq-UN cooperation

BAGHDAD, Aug 29: Iraq again blamed defector General Hussein Kamel Hassan Monday for blocking cooperation between Baghdad and UNSCOM, the UN Mission seeking to eliminate Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, reports AFP.

State television broadcast new tapes which it said were of Hassan telling the ruling revolutionary command council in March to raise problems with UNSCOM and blacken its chairman, Rolf Ekeus.

The defector, Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's son-in-law, also criticised Baghdad's recognition of Kuwait last year, saying it had encouraged UNSCOM to become more aggressive, the television said in a programme entitled "here is the truth."

Hassan had also accused the United Nations and the United States of trying to prevent any lifting of the trade embargo imposed on Iraq after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait and subsequent defeat by US-led UN forces, the television said.

Last Thursday similar tapes were broadcast, allegedly of Hassan urging Saddam to attack Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. Hassan, a former Industry Minister who defected to Jordan on August 8, said those recordings had been doctored.

Since Hassan's defection with another of Saddam's sons-in-law and their wives, Baghdad has become much more cooperative with UNSCOM, putting the blame in Hassan for its earlier opposition.



A stolen bulldozer is deserted by its driver after demolishing part of the thick walls of the jail at Vridsloesille Sunday allowing some dozen inmates to escape. Three of the fugitives were later recaptured. The escapees included murderers and other violent criminals. — AFP/UNB photo

Taleban rebels push govt forces out of Girishk

KABUL, Aug 29: Afghanistan's Taleban militia has pushed government forces out of the strategic southern town of Girishk reversing a government offensive a Defence Ministry spokesman said on Monday, reports Reuter.

The spokesman Dr Abdullah said the Taleban launched a counter attack on Sunday after troops loyal to President Burhanuddin Rabbani and fought their way into Girishk.

By late that afternoon they had pushed us out of the town to positions in Sangilan about 10 km (six miles) further back," he said. We will hold firm at Sangilan and from there we will prepare to recapture Girishk.

Defence Ministry sources said it could take about a week before a decision to resume the attack.

Taleban counter attack came after the government troops had managed to capture about 120 km (80 miles) of territory in an offensive that began on Wednesday.

The Defence Ministry sources said the government forces ultimate goal was to take Taleban headquarters in the main southern town of Kandahar, another 120 km (80 miles) eastward.

Travellers moving through the region reported seeing some 200 government soldiers imprisoned in a compound in Kandahar.