

BRIEFLY

Protesters burn Chirac's effigy:

Protesters burned and effigy of French President Jacques Chirac, shouted insults and threw paint at the French Embassy on Friday to protest France's resumption this week of nuclear testing in the South Pacific. Reuter reports from Lima.

US to send aid to flood-hit DPRK:

The US government has decided to donate 25,000 dollars to help North Korea's flood victims, according to a South Korean news report Saturday. AP reports from Seoul.

Mother Teresa to get Giants Award:

The Nobel laureate Mother Teresa has been named recipient of this year's 'Giants International Award' for her immense contribution to society. PTI reports from Bombay.

KSA executes 2 Saudis:

Two Saudis were executed in Saudi Arabia after being convicted in two separate cases of sodomy and murder, a Saudi newspaper said yesterday. Reuter reports from Dubai.

David Trimble new Ulster leader:

Northern Ireland's largest Protestant party, the Ulster Unionists (UUP), elected David Trimble as its new leader Friday. AFP reports from Belfast.

Murayama's popularity falls:

Support for the government of Prime Minister Tomichi Murayama fell to a new low of 22 per cent as many voters criticised the Japanese premier for lack of leadership, a leading daily said yesterday. AFP reports from Tokyo.

Ex-Cong leader held in Bogota:

Cesar Perez Garcia, former president of the Lower House of Congress, was arrested Friday in connection with a probe of a 1988 killing of 44 peasants, government officials said. AFP reports from Bogota.

23 die in Vietnam ferry blast:

The death toll from an explosion and fire aboard an overcrowded ferry in southern Vietnam has risen to 23, with police finding more bodies washed ashore in a neighbouring province, a local official said Saturday. AP reports from Hanoi.

Floods kill 46 in Philippines:

Searchers on Saturday scoured remote villages in the southern Philippines where flash floods this week killed at least 46 people. More than 50 others remained missing, AP reports from Philippines.

N-test sparks anti-colonial move in French Polynesia

SYDNEY, Australia, Sept 9: France's nuclear weapons test beneath Mururoa Atoll on Tuesday infuriated Tahitians already fed up with 150 years of French colonial rule, reports AP. So when hundreds of protesters set fire to downtown Papeete, the Tahitian capital, and looted its airport, their message to France was twofold: end nuclear tests and give independence to French Polynesia.

Washington, Moscow hail peace accord

Bosnian warring factions won't give ground easily

SARAJEVO, Sept 9: Diplomats claimed a breakthrough towards peace in the former Yugoslavia with agreement on a plan to share Bosnia between its warring parties, but those making war showed they would not give ground easily, reports Reuter. NATO, too, said the peace accord had no bearing on its air strikes designed to drive home United Nations ultimatums for the Serbs to withdraw heavy weapons and end the siege of Sarajevo.

homes near a bridge hit by NATO air strikes in eastern Bosnia and Serb media said UN sources said peacekeepers were taking the hospital claim seriously and were investigating. AFP adds: Moscow has welcomed an accord on Bosnia reached in Geneva, saying the international community's efforts at brokering peace in the Balkans had paid off.



US Ambassador to the United Nations, Madeleine Albright (right) presents a poster of the Fourth Women Conference during her meeting with Myanmar political leader Aung San Suu Kyi at her residence in Yangon on Saturday.

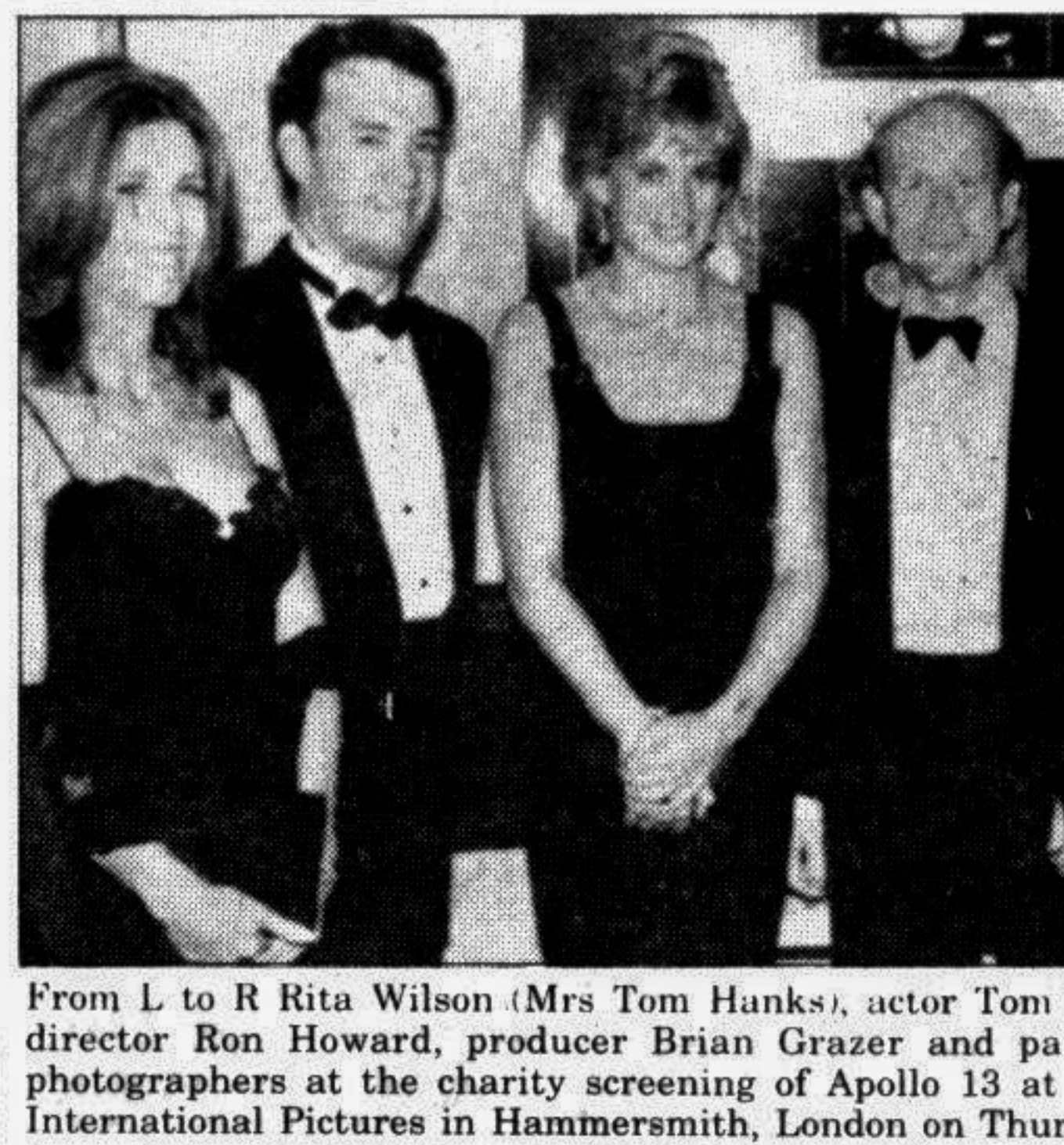
Albright, who met Friday with military intelligence chief Lieutenant General Khin Nyunt and other senior junta officials, is the highest-ranking US government official to visit Myanmar since the military crackdown in 1988. Myanmar official news agency, radio and television reported Albright had talked with Khin Nyunt Foreign Minister Ohn Yaw and others, but there were no details of the substance of the talks.

'China makes sure dissidents keep silence during UN confce'

BEIJING, Sept 9: Chinese democracy activists and their families are being followed, detained and forced to leave town to silence them during the UN women's conference, a human rights group said Saturday, reports AP. Chinese authorities are concerned that Western human rights organisations attending the meeting may contact the dissidents or their families.

Quebec SC rules referendum on independence 'illegal'

QUEBEC CITY, Sept 9: The Superior Court of Quebec ruled Friday that a referendum on Quebec's independence from Canada is 'illegal' but he declined to impose an injunction to stop the process, reports AP. The government's referendum process is clearly illegal and leaves the conclusion that the plaintiff has the right to redress, said Judge Robert Lesage in a 47-page ruling.



From L to R Rita Wilson (Mrs Tom Hanks), actor Tom Hanks, the Princess of Wales, director Ron Howard, producer Brian Grazer and partner Gigi Levangie pose for photographers at the charity screening of Apollo 13 at the head office of the United International Pictures in Hammersmith, London on Thursday.

Strikes in Srinagar to protest blast at BBC office

SRINAGAR, Sept 9: Businesses, banks and restaurants shut down Saturday in Srinagar, capital of Jammu-Kashmir state, after Kashmiri groups called a strike to protest a parcel bomb that injured three journalists, reports AP. No one has so far claimed responsibility for Thursday's blast, but the Hurriyat Conference, representing 32 pro-separatist groups in the northern state of Kashmir, blamed the guerilla outfit, Iqwanul Muslimoon. It said the group was sympathetic to the Indian government.

Off the Record



The leader of Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, Vladimir Zhirnovski (R), gestures to express his admiration for Italian porn star and member of Italian parliament Chichollina (Ilona Staller) while seated at a table in the famous Moscow night club 'Up and Down' Friday.

A test for journalist

ULAN BATOR, Mongolia: Hillary Rodham Clinton on Friday paused to take a question from a local reporter, only to discover the journalist was interested in her plans to run for US President, reports Reuter.

Prey to breast cancer

LONDON: Airline attendants are nearly twice as likely to get breast cancer as other women, according to Finnish researchers, reports AP. But the researchers said they doubted the unexpected finding is related to the increased radiation in the atmosphere at high altitudes.

He wants to live forever

CALIFORNIA: A man who believed that ingesting human ashes would help him attain 'everlasting life' was arrested on suspicion of stealing remains from cemeteries, police said, reports AP.

Tooth of prehistoric man discovered

PARIS, Sept 9: Archaeologists announced Friday they had discovered the tooth of a prehistoric man from some 400,000 years ago in what is now Casablanca, reports AP.

FMs of Iran, Turkey, Syria defend Iraq's integrity

TEHRAN, Sept 9: The foreign ministers of Turkey, Iran and Syria on Friday defended the territorial integrity of neighbouring Iraq and warned about the dangers of its dismemberment, reports Reuter. 'Disintegration of Iraq would have nefarious and dangerous repercussions on regional and international peace, stability and security,' said a statement after their talks in Tehran.

Floods hit Taj Mahal

NEW DELHI, Sept 9: Swollen by incessant rains, the Jamuna River flooded a nursery in the Taj Mahal complex and rose along an outer wall of the monument to love, an official said Saturday, reports AP.

Tigresses coming into forefront of war for Eelam

COLOMBO, Sept 9: When state television splashed pictures of the Tamil Tiger militants killed in the largest military strike against the rebels in Sri Lanka's north-east Weliyoa border a few weeks ago, viewers were surprised to see that most of guerrillas were women, reports IPS. After all, women in the Sri Lankan military are usually confined to what are considered 'safe' jobs.

Chandrika asks cops to be lawful

COLOMBO, Sept 9: Apparently alarmed by reports of police killing civilians, President Chandrika Kumaratunga on Saturday warned her officers to be impartial and lawful, reports AP. The image of the police force has been tarnished because of a few... I will take disciplinary action against those few, Mrs Kumaratunga told a meeting of about 250 senior policemen.