BRIFFIY



Two Iraqi primary school children hold a portrait of President Saddam Hussein Monday, on the first day of school. The country is getting ready for the referendum on Saddam's presidency, due to be held in October.

- AFP/UNB photo Hillary Clinton honoured: Hillary

Rodham Clinton, who plans this fall to publish a book about children, received a distinguished service award Monday from the Save The Children organisation. AP reports from Washington.

Phyllis George, US spokeswoman for the international relief group, praised Mrs Clinton for having "fought for over 25 years in this country and abroad to give the less fortunate - especially women and children - a chance, a voice, a future." Accepting the honour in the White House, Mrs Clinton said Save The Children "builds bridges in communities and countries, with businesses and individuals who share their passion and belief in the rights and opportunities of every child."

Gunmen kills 3 in Maharashtra: Three persons were killed and four others injured when two gunmen in the western state of Maharashtra opened fire at a builder's office, a report said Monday, AFP reports from New Delhi.

Ocmprakash Kukreja, a prominent builder with business around state capital Bombay, was shot dead along with two others, the Press Trust of India (PTI) said.

Nepalese mountain guide dies: Renowned Nepalese mountain guide, Lakpa Nuru Sherpa. was killed in an avalanche while attempting to scale the world's highest peak, Mount Everest for a seventh time, a news report said yesterday, AFP says from Kathmandu.

Lakpa was trying to climb the northeast face of the 8.848-metre (29,028-feet) mountain from the Tibetan side last week with a South Korean expedition, the staterun RSS news agency reported. Lakpa had previously climbed Everest's south pillar and taken the col and northeast ridge routes with British, Italian, Japanese, Spanish and Nepalese teams between 1992 and 1995, RSS said.

Russian regional polls in Dec '96: President Boris Yeltsin has signed a decree scheduling the elections of regional leaders for December 1996, his press service said Monday, AP reports from Moscow.

Under the decree, elections to regional legislatures will be held the following December. The moves are another step on Russia's path to democracy, although Yeltsin currently prefers to have the final say in the filling of top regional posts. As in Soviet times, many regional leaders and the heads of Russian autonomous regions are still appointed by the Kremlin, which in any case decides when and whether elections will be held.

Protest march in Bishkek: Demonstrators opposed to a proposed referendum to

extend the term of Kyrgzstan's president to the year 2,001 continued their protest Tuesday for the second straight day, AP reports from Bishkek.

Police stood in the background as about 20 people, including more than a dozen hunger strikers who spent the night in tents, picketed the main government building in downtown Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan.

1 more Beant murder suspect held: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has arrested Navjot Singh, a resident of Mohali, in connection with the Beant Singh assassination case, PTI reports from New Delhi.

Navjot Singh, the fourth person to be arrested in the case, was picked up last night, a CBI spokesman said yesterday. The accused was described as one of those who helped in the assassination of the Punjab chief minister on August 31 at Chandigarh.

5 tonnes of drugs seized in Iran: Police in western Iran have seized nearly five tonnes of drugs after killing six smugglers in clashes near the Afghan

border, Iranian media said on Monday, Reuter reports from Tehran.

The newspaper Kayhan said police killed six smugglers. arrested three and seized 2.5 tonnes of drugs in a mountainous area near Torbat-e Heydarich, 180 km (110 miles) from the border.

Impeachment move against judges in Nepal rejected

move by Communist lawmakers to impeach Supreme Court judges who restored the dismissed Nepalese Parliament has been rejected by the Speaker, reports AP.

"The, authors of impeachment motion have no right to redefine the constitutional matters already settled by the court," said Ram Chandra Poudel, the Speaker of the lower house, on

Monday. The revival of the House of Representatives led to the

fall of the Communist government through a no-confidence motion by three opposition parties on September A motion of impeachment

signed by 77 lawmakers of the Communist Party of Nepal (Marxist-Leninist) was filed before the Speaker

KATHMANDU, Sept 19: A on Sunday. It demanded the removal of Supreme Court Chief Justice Bishownath Upadhaya and Judge Surendra Prasad.

"They lacked efficiency and honesty in the discharge of their duties", said the motion. Under the Nepalese law, the motion can't be considered without the Speaker's assent.

"The centrist Nepali Congress Party initially supported the minority Communist government which came to power in November last year but withdrew its backing nine months later.

Last month, the Supreme Court overturned the prime minister's decision to dismiss Parliament, describing it as an "illegal and unconstitutional step."

UNrenews peace efforts to halt Off the Record fresh fighting in Afghanistan

KABUL, Sept 19: The United Nation's special envoy to Afghanistan arrived in Kabul on Tuesday to restart peace talks and try to stop short a fresh round of fighting in the already war-ravaged city, reports AP.

Mehmood Mestiri, former Tunisian foreign minister. arrived aboard a charter aircraft at Kabul Airport and was whisked away to meet senior Afghan officials, including President Burhanuddin Rabbani and Defence Minister Ahmed Shah Masood.

"I am going to meet with Mr Rabbani and Mr Masood to be in touch with the leaders," Mestiri told reporters upon his arrival in Kabul.

The Afghan government has been urging Mestiri to investigate foreign interven-

US to ease air

travel ban on

Lebanon

The United States has de-

cided to ease a 10-year-old

air travel ban on Lebanon, the

White House said Monday,

US nationals with written

permission to fly to Lebanon

and US airlines to book

flights for them on foreign

carriers. US airlines remain

unable to make direct flights

in a memorandum dated

September 15 President Bill

Clinton instructed Transpor-

tation Secretary Federio Pena

to make the changes in the

travel ban "as soon as is

lowed to go into Lebanon, but

this allows for ticketing of

non US citizens and US citi-

zen with approval a White

N Korea closes

12 diplomatic

missions

Economically troubled North

Korea has closed 12 foreign

diplomatic missions this year

and is expected to close

more. South Korean officials

instead is directing its diplo-

North's continuing economic

Korea has shut down its em-

bassies in Hungary, Portugal.

Burundi, Tunisia, Cameroon,

Congo, Mozambique, Nica-

ragua, Lebanon, Mali, Guinea

US may sell more

F-16 fighters

to Indonesia

United States is considering

selling more F-16 fighter

jets to Indonesia, the second

in command of the US military said here today, reports

Admiral William Owens,

on a two-day visit here, said a

US air force team will visit

here in October to discuss

the possibilities of selling

more F-16 aircraft to the mil-

itary, which has 11 of them.

General Feisal Tanjung said

the military wanted at least

man of the US joint chief of

staff and head of the US navy, is here to "discuss US

commitment to the region

and military issues of mutual

concern." an embassy

India, Japan to

vie for Asian

seat in UNSC

19: India and Japan are can-

didates for the Asian seat in

the Security Council to be va-

cated by Indonesia on

December 31, 1996 at the

end of its two-year term, re-

the fifteen-member Council

in 1991-92 and Japan in

cessive terms as non-perma-

nent members. They are

elected by the General

Assembly for a two-year term

India was last member of

Diplomats do not expect

UNITED NATIONS, Sept

24 F-16s.

statement said.

ports PTI.

1992-93.

Indonesian military chief

Owens, who is vice chair-

JAKARTA, Sept 19: The

So far this year, North

difficulties, they said.

and Burkina Faso.

The communist country

said Tuesday, reports AP.

Sept 19:

House official said.

SEOUL.

"US carriers will not be al

The changes would allow

reports AFP.

to Lebanon.

practical."

WASHINGTON, Sept 19:

the top of his agenda," Foreign Minister Dr Najibullah Lefrai said. "We hope he will spend more time in Afghanistan."

In Pakistan, Foreign Secretary Naimuddin Sheikh called Afghanistan's accusations "absurd" and threatened to close the Pakistan-based offices of Rabbani's Jamiat-e-Islami faction.

Rabbani's government has been critical of Mestiri's past attempts at brokering a peace agreement. But Mestiri said he is returning to Kabul after more than six months

rival warring faction was preparing to launch a massive offensive against Kabul.

The Rabbani government however, maintains it will abide by a UN plan if it can offer assurances of success,

Meanwhile Kabul's forces have been preparting for a battle which could bring the fight back to Kabul, which

Kabul Defence Ministry spokesman known only as Abdullah told The Associated

Reuter adds from Nicosia: The Taleban Islamic Movement said on Monday it was sending fresh troops to confront Afghan government troops in Kabul, the Iranian News Agency IRNA said.

It quoted Taleban Islamic student militia spokesman Maulavi Gulf Hashem as saying that units from Kandahar and Khost in the south as well as the forces from the western city of Herat were

being dispatched to Kabul. "Only the Taleban leadership knows about the planning and time of assault the Kabul," the agency quoted the spokesman as saying in the Pakistani city of Peshawar.



A handful of three birds' nests are shown to photographers in Hong Kong Saturday. The birds' nests which are most often used to make a soup popular at banquets, are worth half their equivalent weight in gold and sell for about 3600 Hong Kong dollars (450 US dollars) for an average 1.75 ounce (50 gram) nest. Hong Kong is the world's biggest birds' nests importer from Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and Philippines. - AFP/UNB Photo

True pet-lover

SYDNEY: A furious Australian dog-owner defended his blind, fat pet from an attacking mongrel by sinking his teeth in to the assailant, a newspaper reported in Sydney Tuesday, reports AFP.

John Bryant of Sydney took his dog Tina into a park where a black mongrel snapped its jaws into his pet's neck and ear, refusing to release its grip, said the Sydney Morning Herald

"John tried to prise the black dog's jaws open, but got a cut finger instead," the newspaper said.

"As he later put it, 'the adrenalin was rushing,' so he sank his teeth into its neck. It worked, the dog let go of Tina and rushed off."

The report said Tina did not require treatment but Bryant received a tetanus shot.

Di's cars sold, along with her hair

LONDON: The car Prince Charles gave to Lady Diana Spencer before their marriage was sold at auction Monday, complete with the silver frog ornament on the hood, reports AP.

The 1981 silver Ford Escort Ghia, which had been given as a prize in a 1988 newspaper contest, was bought at the Sotheby's auction by a collector of royal memorabilia who paid 4,600 pounds 6,900 dollars - as much as it cost

Diana drove the car from May 1981 - two months be-

fore the wedding - until August 1982. The frog was a copy of a gift from Diana's sister, Lady Sarah Spencer, seemingly to remind her of the fairytale of the beautiful girl who kisses a frog and tuns him into a

handsome prince. Sotheby's also sold a more recent runabout of Diana's an emerald Green 1994 Audi.

The convertible with cream leather interior sold for 23,000 pounds 34,500 dollars, Sotheby's said — about 6,000 pounds (dollars 9000) more than such a car would have cost through a dealer.

An anonymous Singapore investment banker bought the Audi and intends to keep it at his London home. The seller was Ian Dale, 33, who had bought it from a dealership.

No evidence of previous use remains, although a friend of Dale has, after an intensive search, found a blonde hair of the correct length, which he treasures.

The princess now drives a dark blue Audi.

Another ignominious 'firsts' claim

BEIJING: Having already laid claim to "inventing" gold and football. China is now demanding recognition as the first country to introduce that most untraditional of

Archaelogists in the northwestern province of Gindhai recently unearthed a 4,600-year old bone fork. "Giving the lie to the traditional notion that Chinese people are only

most exactly like a modern table fork," Xinhua said.

"Forks and knives were handier for people whose main food was meat and cheese," the agency quoted scholars as

Among the more ignominious "firsts" claimed by China widely recognised as the country that gave the world gunpower and paper - is the world's earliest known case

of syphilis - 2,000 years ago.

Pope for urgent steps to avoid Rwandan-Burundian atrocities

Bosnian-Serb soldiers flash the three-fingered Serbian ultra-nationalist sign from atop

a T-55 tank the Pale forces were moving within the UN-NATO heavy weapons exclusion

NAIROBI, Sept 19: The blood-drenched nations of Rwanda and Burundi still fester with ethnic hatred and must take urgent steps to avoid more atrocities, Pope John Paul II said Tuesday, reports AP.

zone Saturday.

Speaking at an outdoor Mass attended by more than 350,000 people, the Pope made his most direct appeal for an end to civil war in the two central African nations.

ing the hills of a Nairobi park.

dissipate the threat of ethnocentrism that hovers over has so brutally hit Rwanda and Burundi," neighbouring countries with the same ethnic mix of about 15 per cent Tutsi and 85 per cent

The Rwandan genocide claimed an estimated

people back.

Hundreds of people from "This is the only way to the two nations attended the "To hear the pope even

- AFP/UNB photo

Africa — ethnocentrism that speak about our nation gives me a little hope," said Louis Olouboye, a Rwandan who fled to Kenya The Pope was greeted by

native singers and a group of girls doing a synchronized praise dance at the Mass, the largest public gathering of the trip that included Cameroon and South Africa.

Crowds surged toward the area under the altar. A few managed to get past security forces, who used clubs and mounted patrols to drive

A lamb, selected for its spotless white fleece, was blessed by the pontiff and will be returned to the flock.

India offers Al-Faran \$1.2m to win release of hostages the reported gun battle indi-SRINAGAR, India, Sept

19: Indian forces have been ordered to stay away from a mountainous area where Kashmiri separatists are holding four Western hostages, an official said Tuesday, reports AP.

On Monday, the Al-Faran militants claimed that army commandos attacked one of their hideouts in the Himalayas, causing casualties. But they wouldn't say whether hostages were in-

In an interview Tuesday, government spokesman Kulbhushan Jandial denied that any clash had taken

He also said that a gov-

cated that the hostages re-

"To avoid any misunderstanding we have asked our troops to stay away from the area where we believe the

hostages are being held," Jandial said in an interview in Srinagar.

In another development, officials close to the negotiations said Monday that India's government has offered rebels 1.2 million dollars to release the captives. One official said on condition of

anonymity that the two sides are discussing the offer. Al-Faran, one of the many separatist groups fighting in Jammu-Kashmir state, said ensure the safety of the re-

any other candidate to enter 500,000 lives, mostly Tutsi the fray. and some moderate Hutus, The Council has five per-"Today, we think with manent members and ten before Tutsi-led forces took sadness of the terrible ethnic non-permanent members, power. At least 1.8 million conflicts that still fester havrefugees are still in surroundfive of whom retire each year ing taken so many innocent and are not eligible for relives," said the Pope from a ing nations. election, as members are thatched-roof altar overlook-In Burundi, an estimated barred from having two suc-

100,000 people have been The Pope, in the final leg of a three-nation African trip. called for "forgiveness and reconciliation" in Rwanda

slain since 1993 after the first Hutu president was killing in a Tutsi-backed

Chinese dining implements — the fork, reports AFP.

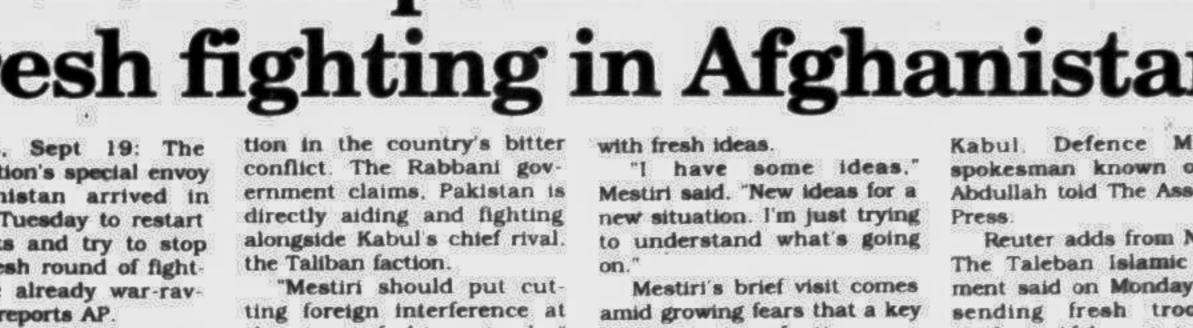
chopstick users." the Xinhua news agency said today. The three-pronged, 25.7 centimetre-long fork "is al-

According to historical records, ancient nomadic tribes in China seldom user chopsticks.

jured.

place.

ernment negotiator who Monday that it can no longer spoke with an Al-Faran rep resentative three hours after maining hostages



Lefrai said

six months.

has been peaceful for about "The front lines have been fortified and the Taliban will

not be able to infiltrate inside

Retired US Army General Colin Powell (L) signs copies of his new book "My American Journey" for customers at a Trover Bookstore in Washington, DC Monday. Powell has not announced whether he will run for the presidency in 1996. - AFP/UNB photo

Bosnian, Croat troops tighten noose around Banja Luka

SARAJEVO, Sept 19: Croatian and Bosnian troops tightened their noose around Banja Luka Tuesday, with Croatian media reporting the fall of three more towns near the rebel Serb stronghold. reports AP.

matic efforts at improving re-Large gains by the allies in lations with the United western Bosnia have left the \said. Serbs with only about half of States and Japan, with which it has no formal ties, the Bosnia, compared to the two-Foreign Ministry officials thirds they help just weeks The move reflects the

But the attacks are not without peril for the victors. The Serb-led Yugoslav army may re-enter the war to protect Bosnian Serbs, and the large gains made by Croats are straining the shaky feder-

ation of Croats and the Mus-

lim-led Bosnian government. Croatia's army, which has played a key role in the fighting in western Bosnia, moved southward across the border overnight, taking the towns of Bosanska Kostajnica and Bosanska Dubica, the Slobodna Dalmacia newspaper

At the same time, Bosnian army troops in the Bihac region moved east to retake Bosanski Novi, the newspaper said. They also now hold all of Sanski Most, 45 kilometres (25 miles) west of

Banja Luka The United Nations which has nobody on the ground in the region, was un-

able to confirm the reported

square miles in the region recently to the enemy pushing from the west and the Croat and government forces claim they have captured 6.200 square kilome-

gains. The advance from

Croatia, if true, would mean

that another front has

opened up against the rebels,

who have lost thousands of

tres (2,400 square miles) or 12 per cent of Bosnia - in the past week. The airstrikes were halted for 72 hours on Thursday to allow the Serbs to comply

with NATO and UN demands

to withdraw their heavy guns

around Sarajevo.