

# BRIEFLY

**Sihanouk to visit China:** Cambodia's King Norodom Sihanouk will fly to Beijing said at the weekend, Reuter reports from Phnom Penh.

Sihanouk, in an address on state television, said on Sunday he would travel to China as part of routine treatment.

**Taiwan receives 20 US made tanks:**

Taiwan's army on Sunday received 20 US-made M60-A3 tanks that had been used in the 1991 Gulf War, a radio station reported, AP reports from Taipei.

Taiwan's Broadcasting Corporation of China, owned by the ruling Nationalist Party, said the tanks, produced by General Dynamics Corp. of St Louis, Missouri, were the first batch of 160 such tanks Taiwan has bought from the United States. The military has said the tanks were priced at 15 million Taiwan dollars (US \$55,550) each.

**7 militants killed in Philippines:**

Seven suspected Muslim extremists who kidnapped 19 people, including four American citizens, last week were killed in a battle in the southern Philippines Sunday, an army general said, AP reports from Cotabato City, Philippines.

Three of the kidnappers were captured and five others were believed to have been wounded, he said. Army troops, aided by helicopter gunships, pinned down the suspects near Klube village in the town of Lake Sebu, said Brig. Gen. Raul Urgello, commanding officer of the 601st Infantry Brigade.

**Myanmar military leader in China:**

The leader of the military council that runs Myanmar arrived in China Sunday night for a six-day visit to strengthen already solid political, military and trade ties, AP reports from Beijing.

Underscoring the importance of his trip, Gen. Than Shwe brought along a 40-member delegation packed with other high-ranking officials, including Lt. Gen. Khin Nyunt, Secretary of the State Law and Order Restoration Council.

**Abkhaz rebels kill 8 Georgians:**

Eight Georgian civilians were killed by Abkhaz separatists in a village on the border between Abkhazia and Georgia, the Georgian presidency was quoted by ITAR-Tass news agency as saying Sunday, AP reports from Moscow.

The three man Abkhaz commando unit burst into Shesheteli in the Gali region on Friday killing six members of one family and two of their neighbours, the presidential press service said.

**Colombian rebels kill 9 soldiers:**

Rebels opened fire on a military post in north Colombia early Sunday, killing nine soldiers, the army said, AP reports from Bogota.

The attack occurred in a mountainous area near San Onofre, about 340 miles (550 kilometres) north of the capital, Bogota. Officials blamed the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, a leftist rebel group with thousands of fighters that has been operating for decades.

**Rain leaves 4 dead in Brazil:**

Heavy rain left four people dead in southeastern Brazil on Sunday the latest casualties of persistent bad weather that has killed at least 20 people in the past few days local television reported, Reuter reports from Rio-de Janeiro.

Jose Benedito Dos Santos his wife and his daughter died when a landslide crushed their shack home in a shanty town in Capinas Sao Paulo state Globa said.

**Christopher postpones Paris tour:**

US Secretary of State Warren Christopher has postponed his Monday departure for a Paris conference due to heavy snowfall in the Washington area, State Department officials said on Sunday, Reuter reports from Washington.

Christopher was to have left on Monday morning for the conference, which will group donor countries contributing to the establishment of Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank and Gaza. The officials said he would now not leave earlier than Monday evening.

**Turkish prisoners free 6 hostages:**

Renegade prisoners released six guards Sunday and negotiated with government officials over the fate of 23 others taken hostage during riots at two prisons, AP reports from Istanbul.

**President of the Palestinian Authority Yasser Arafat flash the V-sign during his speech in front of thousands of Palestinian supporters in Dura, south of the West Bank on Sunday. It is Arafat's first visit in Dura since Israeli troops pulled out last December.**

— AFP/UNB photo

**US marine's car kills 3 Japanese in Okinawa**

**TOKYO, Jan 8:** A car driven by a US Marine ran on to a sidewalk and killed three local residents on their way home from church in Okinawa Sunday, Japanese police said, reports AP.

Sentiment against US military bases has been running high on the southern Japanese island following the rape of a 12-year-old schoolgirl in September. In a trial now underway, one US serviceman has admitted to the rape, and two others have acknowledged assisting in the girl's abduction.

Tadashi Kohagura of the Okinawa Police said a car driven by Lori A Padilla, 20, veered on to a sidewalk in Chatan, about 30 kilometres (18 miles) north of Naha, Okinawa's capital.

In addition to patrolling the skies for Iraqi warplanes, Air Force and Navy jets also

lock onto Iraqi targets in what amount to dry runs for war.

"Our pilots, our air crews fly against targets they would be expected to pursue in our contingency plans," said Air Force Maj. Gen. Carl Franklin, commander of Joint Task Force-Southwest Asia.

We do so with the intent of having our force visible to the Iraqi regime so that there is no doubt in their minds as to our resolve."

Details of the missions provided by senior military officers indicate that what has been billed as a "dry flight" mission in southern Iraq is more closely geared toward attacking ground targets in the event of an Iraqi invasion.

In a day of visits with US military personnel in Saudi Arabia before flying to Jordan, Perry got a classified briefing on this little-known

aspect of the US mission over southern Iraq.

Later in the Jordanian capital, Perry announced a deal to provide the Jordanian military with 16 F-16 fighters, the training to use them, an unspecified number of M-60A3 tanks and night-vision equipment.

Jordan's King Hussein said the US offer had been accepted "with deep gratitude".

Perry said the United States views Jordan as a "linchpin of security in the Middle East." Other Arab nations may follow Jordan's lead in seeking to normalize relations with Israel, he said.

"If we can reach a comprehensive peace settlement in the Mideast it will undoubtedly be because of the example set by Jordan," Perry said.

"You... go fly these parameters and anything that moves, you go take care of it," the of-

ficer said. "They'll go fly that mission and execute against a target."

The officer pointed out that under UN mandates developed after the Gulf War, southern Iraq is a "no-drive" zone as well as a no-fly zone.

In the wake of threatening moves by Iraqi forces in October 1994, pilots are especially alert for signs of advancing armoured columns. If they spotted one in the restricted zone, they could attack the column.

US Air Force F-16s and F-15Es as well as Navy A-6s and British Tornados are the main ground attack aircraft.

"It's enough to blunt any attack and stop it cold in its tracks," the officer said.

The idea, according to Perry, is not provocation but deterrence.

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