

## Over bribes-for-favour scandal. CPI threatens to quit Gowda's coalition govt

NEW DELHI, June 17: A coalition partner in the new government of Prime Minister Deve Gowda threatened to withdraw support if leaders involved in a bribery scandal were inducted into the cabinet, a newspaper said today, reports AFP.

The Communist Party of India (CPI) said it would not allow any leaders of the United Front charged with corruption in a bribes-for-favour scandal which claimed the scalps of many politicians except the Communists a year ago.

If the government falls, let it fall," said Chaturanand Mishra, a CPI leader told the Asian Age newspaper. "We are opposed to it completely."

The Communist Party of India has 12 MPs in the 545-member Lok Sabha. It has extended support to Deve Gowda's 13-party United Front government which took office on June 1.

## 5 killed in Afghan clan fighting

KABUL, June 17: Five people were killed and three wounded in clan fighting between troops under the orders of two military commanders loyal to Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani, officials and witnesses said today, reports AFP.

"On the issue of corruption we will not budge an inch. Why should we compromise? We may be a weak party but we are a principled party," Mishra said. "If the prime minister goes ahead we will take a principled stand."

The Front leaders who allegedly accepted bribes from a New Delhi businessman and returned favours include Sharad Yadav of the Janata Dal (People's Party), N. D. Tiwari of the Congress (G) and Madhavrao Scindia a former Congressman.

"We will not change our stand," said Indrajit Gupta, a senior party leader of the CPI. "People who are involved in the matters of corruption should not be included in the ministry," he said.

Gowda to expand cabinet

NEW DELHI, June 17: Indian Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda today said he would expand his 20-member cabinet to make room for allies from regional parties in the United Front coalition government, reports AFP.

Gowda, who heads a 13-party alliance, said leaders from the Communist Party of India and the regional Asom Gana Parishad Party would find a berth in his government after the expansion of his cabinet on Wednesday.

"The expansion will not be a big one," Gowda told reporters at the headquarters of his centrist Janata Dal (People's Party), which heads the 180-MP United Front Alliance with 46 members in parliament.

## Sudan tries to ease differences with Egypt

Khartoum, June 17: Referring to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak as "my brother," Sudanese leader Omar el-Bashir on Sunday sought to assuage the man who accused Sudan of trying to kill him, reports AP.

El-Bashir said this week's Arab summit would be ideal for resolving the two countries' differences.

"We are attending this conference with an open heart and are ready to review all bilateral differences," El-Bashir said at a press conference.

Relations between Egypt and Sudan soured after El-Bashir staged a 1989 military coup and installed an Islamic government, and deteriorated again after Mubarak accused Sudan of trying to assassinate him in June, 1995.

Egypt has demanded that Sudan turn over three Egyptians wanted in the attack in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa, and the UN Security Council has imposed diplomatic sanctions against Sudan for refusing.

## US, France sign secret accord to share nuclear weapons data

WASHINGTON, June 17: France and the United States have signed a secret accord to share nuclear weapons data, the Washington Post reported in Monday editions, reports Reuters.

The paper, quoting US and diplomatic officials, said the accord would draw US and French nuclear weapons scientists into a much closer alliance, so that each nation can help the other maintain its nuclear arsenal after an expected international treaty bans all test explosions.

Under the agreement, the United States will share computer data drawn from simulated explosions, information considered so sensitive that it has previously been shared with only one US ally, Britain.

## Tragic!

TOKYO, June 17: Two infant boys locked in a car with the windows shut in Tokyo's midday summer heat died of dehydration while their mother played Japan's national pastime of 'pacinko' for several hours, police said today, reports Reuters.

A police spokesman said the mother was being investigated for negligence in the deaths.

The 25-year-old woman played pacinko, Japan's version of pinball, from 10:30 am to about 1 pm, on Saturday.

The spokesman said the checked the state of the one and two-year-old boys several times but just by looking through the shut windows of the car.

## Accords with several parties signed Netanyahu close to forming new coalition govt

INTERNATIONAL

Accords with several parties signed

## Netanyahu close to forming new coalition govt

JERUSALEM, June 17: Prime Minister-elect Benjamin Netanyahu signed coalition agreements with several religious and centrist parties Sunday and appeared close to forming a new Israeli government, reports AP.

The fighting started three days ago in Guldara district, 30 Kilometres (18 miles) north of Kabul, triggered by a "family dispute" between the two commanders, a Defence Ministry spokesman said.

The spokesman, who did not identify the commanders, said the two groups would be "disarmed."

Witnesses said some casualties had been brought to Kabul and clashes were continuing.

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## India wants to include Myanmar, Afghanistan in SAARC bloc

NEW DELHI, June 17: India would like to include Myanmar and Afghanistan in the South Asian regional grouping, Indian Foreign Minister K. Gujral said in an interview published today, reports AFP.

He told the Indian Express that India would suggest bringing Afghanistan and Myanmar (Burma) into the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) block, which also includes Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

The difficulties in incorporating both Myanmar and Afghanistan are internal," Gujral said.

"But once the South Asian Preferential Trading Agreement (SAPTA) takes off I hope these two nations will overcome the difficulties and cooperate."

The South Asian preferential trading agreement aims to dismantle trade and tariff barriers among SAARC members.

"Economic co-operation is vital in the post-Cold War era," Gujral said. "SAARC has travelled some distance but it needs to pursue its objectives

with greater vigour."

The Indian Express newspaper said Gujral's mention of Myanmar was significant "in view of the active efforts by Western nations to ostracise the military regime in Yangon."

"India has thrown its weight behind the dominant Asian view against the ostracism of Myanmar," the newspaper said.

Gujral said India's final stand on the on-going negotiations in Geneva for a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) would represent a national consensus on the issue.

"The ultimate criteria for what we do in Geneva will be national interest," Gujral said.

"The nuclear powers are unwilling to go along with India on nuclear disarmament. So we will have to look out for our own security."

The nuclear tests have not stopped even at this stage of CTBT talks. They add to our concern about India's security interests," Gujral said.

India exploded an atomic device in 1974 but insists that its nuclear programme is strictly for peaceful purposes.

After reports that the prime minister-elect has chosen several apolitical technocrats and personal allies instead of party veterans like Ariel Sharon for key positions.

Sharon's aide Yuli Stern said his party, called Israel with Immigration, was delaying a signature because it wanted freedom to vote against the government on religious issues.

Policy guidelines for the emerging government — which may still change — include several clauses likely to be opposed by many secular Israelis and world Jews — including a monopoly over conversions for the conservative Orthodox stream of Judaism.

With those agreements, Netanyahu has the support of 55 out of 120 Knesset mem-

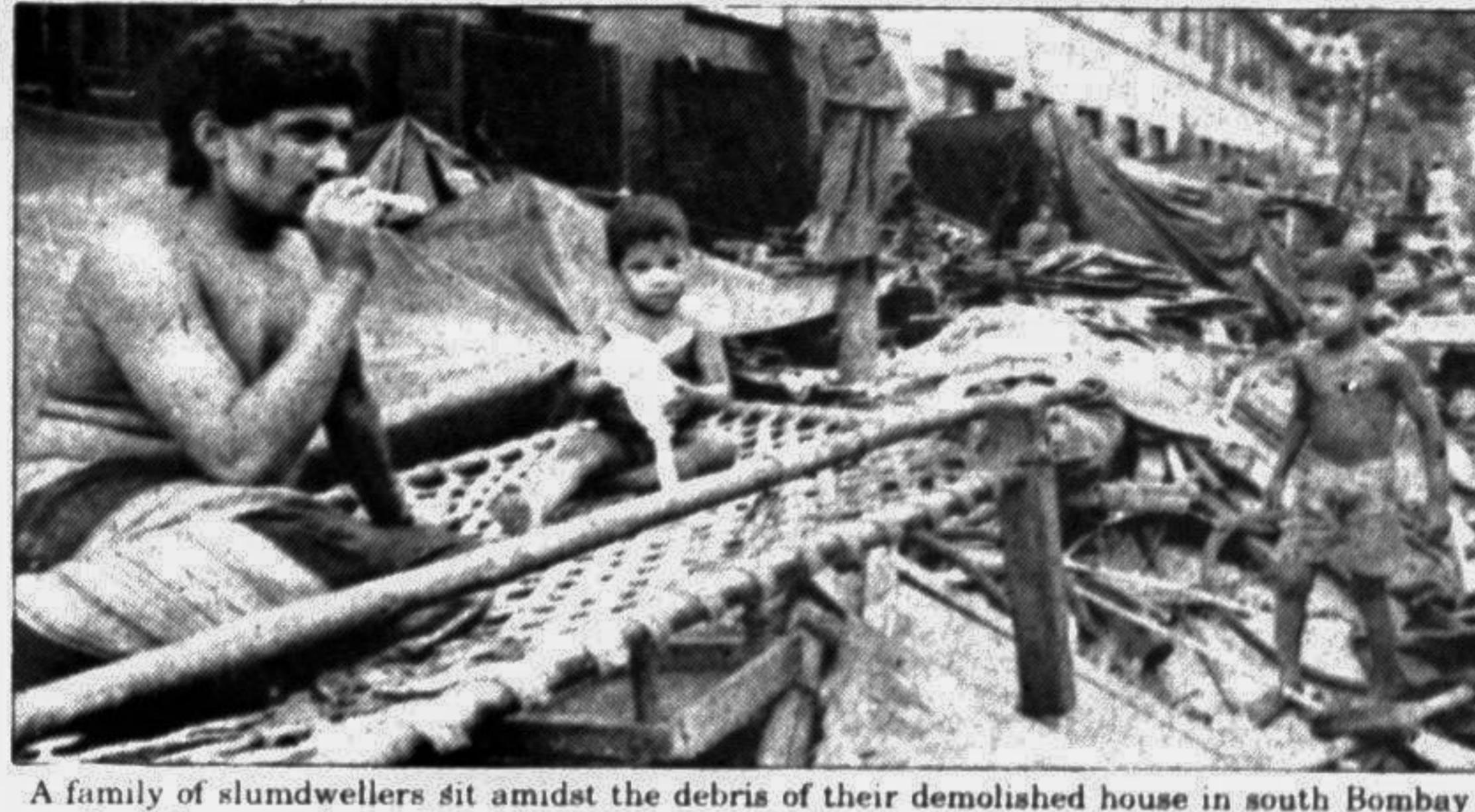
bers. He was still negotiating with the United Torah Judaism Party, which has four seats, and with a party representing Russian-speaking immigrants headed by former Soviet dissident Natan Sharansky, which has seven seats.

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In a surprise move, Netanyahu asked Bank of Israel director Jacob Frenkel, a former top International Monetary Fund official, to be finance minister. Frenkel's office said.

That has apparently angered Ariel Sharon, a combative former defence minister who was instrumental in Netanyahu's campaign.



A family of slumdwellers sit amidst the debris of their demolished house in south Bombay, on Saturday, two days after city authorities pulled down their sidewalk shanty as part of a massive city-wide demolition that left about 100,000 people homeless.

— AFP/UNB photo

Mohan.

"But there are big loopholes in the treaty through which you can drive a truck."

New Delhi has refused to sign the CTBT unless it included a time-table for disarmament by the declared nuclear powers — Britain, France, the United States, China and Russia.

Indian strategic analysts said the pact, which the 38-member nation conference of disarmament hopes to conclude by June 28, was flawed and would cap the South Asian nation's nuclear capability without fully eliminating testing.

These countries and other clapper boys of arms control and non-proliferation will have you believe the CTBT is the greatest invention of mankind since sliced bread," said security affairs analyst C. Raja

## Draft CTBT has met fierce criticism in India

NEW DELHI, June 17: A draft Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) which would outlaw nuclear blasts has met fierce criticism in India even as western powers hail it as cornerstone of arms control, reports Reuter.

Indian strategic analysts said the pact, which the 38-member nation conference of disarmament hopes to conclude by June 28, was flawed and would cap the South Asian nation's nuclear capability without fully eliminating testing.

If the CTBT's aim is the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons, then the nuclear weapons states should commit themselves to at least a national date, even if it is 2005, 2020, whatever.

## Off the Record

### Singing condom!

BUDAPEST, Hungary: The nation that produced Liszt, Bartok and Kodaly is making a new contribution to the world of music: The serenading condom, reports AP.

The prophylactic works like a musical greeting card, beginning the melody as it is unrolled. Users can choose between two tunes: "Arise, Ye Worker," an old Communist ditty, and another entitled "You Sweet Little Dumbbell."

Ferenc Kovacs, who patented the condom and contracted with a rubber factory to produce 100 samples, said he hadn't decided how much to charge customers.

I believe it'll be so popular that thanks to the sales volume, I will be able to set a competitive price," he said.

### Ray of hopes for millions

WASHINGTON: High dose of saquinavir, an anti-retroviral agent, are effective in blocking reproduction of the HIV virus that causes AIDS and has few side effects, according to a new study.

The US Food and Drug Administration, which approves drugs for use, recommends 1,800 milligrams daily but the new study found that considerably higher doses were more effective, according to a study published in the Annals of Internal Medicine on Friday.

This study found that a dose of 7,200 milligrams daily was considerably more effective in raising the rate of CD-4 cells, key to the human immune system, than a dose of 3,800 milligrams, the study found.

The higher dose also reduced the amount of HIV virus in the bloodstream.

Researchers also found that the higher dosages had no more or worse side effects than the smaller amount.

Side effects include abdominal discomfort, vomiting, diarrhoea, headache and dizziness.

Turkish official confirms routine movements

## 'Syrian troop movement were not aimed at Turkey'

ANKARA, June 17: A Turkish army official today confirmed recent movements of Syrian troops along the Turkish border but said they were not aimed at Turkey.

The source also told AFP that there had been Turkish troop movements on the Turkish side of the border, but added: "These are routine movements which have nothing to do with Syria."

It was the first official confirmation of recent press reports on the troop movements along the two countries' common borders.

Sunday's semi-official Anatolia news agency reported that Syria had massed armoured units in areas on the Syrian-Turkish border, but a Syrian official with the Arab League ruled out armed conflict.

According to the London-based Saudi daily Al-Hayat on Saturday, Syria "moved around 40,000 soldiers to border areas with Turkey" after reports that Ankara was behind four border blasts in the country.

Travellers arriving in Damascus from the Turkish-Syrian border spoke of tension there as well as gunfire from the Turkish side which "seems to be on a permanent state of alert," Al-Hayat said.

Anatolia quoted Syrian and Turkish traders who said they had seen Syrian armoured vehicles advancing towards the Turkish border as well as armoured units posted in several Syrian border areas.

The agency did not identify the provinces where the armoured units were but its report was dated from Nasusay, close to Mardin near the border.

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Some loyalist leaders, however, have said they will hold their fire so long as the IRA restricts its campaign to England.

The big fear is that IRA violence will eventually provoke the pro-British "loyalist" gunmen on the Protestant side to retaliate, and plunge the province back into the old cycle of death and destruction.

The loyalists' ability to maintain their own ceasefire for 20 months has been arguably the biggest, most welcome surprise of the peace process.

In March, after three IRA bombings in London, the Combined Loyalist Military Command in Belfast said that the IRA could not go on threatening British cities "without a telling response."

Some loyalist leaders, however, have said they will hold their fire so long as the IRA restricts its campaign to England.

## Manchester blast: Another pressure ploy from Sinn Fein, IRA

BELFAST, Northern Ireland, June 17: Last week the leader of the IRA-allied Sinn Fein party stood outside the locked gates of Northern Ireland that is acceptable to the province's pro-British Protestant majority and its Irish Catholic minority, and end violence that has killed 3,200 people since 1969.

On Saturday, with a truck bomb in the heart of Manchester, England, the Irish Republican Army reminded the world of what happens when Sinn Fein doesn't get its way.

With the Manchester bomb, it might seem that the IRA has undercut Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams and that the Sinn Fein-IRA movement is split between trying peace or war to obtain its goal of a united Ireland.

But the timing suggests the opposite.

The IRA though officially back at war with Britain since a February 9 bombing in London that killed two men, had not set off a bomb for

seven weeks.

That quiet time helped Adams build up support among wavering Catholics for the May 30 election in Northern Ireland that determined which 10 parties could participate in the talks. Sinn Fein — campaigning on the slogan "vote for peace" — scored its