

## International

## BRIEFLY

**Lankan FM in Delhi:** Sri Lankan foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar arrived in the Indian capital yesterday for a two-day official visit, a Sri Lankan official said. Reuter reports from New Delhi.

"This is a courtesy call on the new government. No specific subjects are scheduled to be discussed," a spokesman from the Sri Lankan high commission said. Kadirgamar was scheduled to meet Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda. Foreign Minister P. Chidambaram.

**Pak heat wave kills 37 since Sunday:** At least 37 people have died in a heat wave gripping southern Pakistan's port city of Karachi over the past several days, doctors and volunteers said yesterday. AFP reports from Karachi.

Fourteen more people died Wednesday, they said, following 23 reported dead in the first three days of the hot spell, which began Sunday. People in offices and bus stands fainted as the temperature remained at 40 degrees celsius (104 fahrenheit), witnesses said.

**8 Tajik soldiers killed in Dushanbe:**

Eight Tajik soldiers were killed when opposition fighters attacked a military post outside Dushanbe early Thursday, a news report said. AFP reports from Dushanbe.

One officer and two interior ministry troopers also were wounded in the assault, some 35 kilometres (21 miles) east of the Tajik capital, the Interfax news agency reported. Police investigating the slaying said the attackers were from one of the opposition bands resisting the hard-line government in the central Asian former Soviet republic.

**Blast blows up 2 Tamil children:** Two Tamil children were blown to pieces and three others seriously wounded in northern Sri Lanka when a Tamil Tiger bomb they were playing with went off accidentally, the military said yesterday. AFP reports from Colombo.

The children had discovered the bomb left behind by the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) at Kuppanai in the Jaffna Peninsula and began playing with it on Tuesday, military spokesman Sarath Munasinghe said.

**UN envoy meets Iraqi DPM:** UN envoy Rolf Ekeus held talks on Wednesday with Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz to end a stand-off with Baghdad over allowing inspectors to search suspected weapons sites, officials said. AFP reports from Baghdad.

The meeting also included Iraqi Oil Minister Amer Rashid and the head of Iraq's Military Industry Organisation, Deif Abd al-Majid, the official INA News Agency reported, without providing any other details. A senior Iraqi official told AFP that the talks were centered on allowing UN weapons inspectors access to the sites.

**3000 die in SA violence since '94:**

More than 3,000 people have died in political violence in South Africa since the country's historic all-race elections in April 1994, according to official figures released on Wednesday. AFP reports from Cape Town.

The statistics, issued Safety and Security Minister Sydney Mufamadi in reply to parliamentary question, indicate that most of the violence as concentrated in the troubled KwaZulu-Natal province where 1,834 people were killed. In Gauteng, South Africa's main commercial centre, 817 people died in political conflict since May 1994 while violence in South Africa's other seven provinces accounted for only 369 deaths.

**Car bomb blast in Spain:** A car bomb exploded Wednesday in a garage in San Sebastian, wounding three people in the second suspected Basque separatist attack since the new conservative government took power, officials said. AFP reports from San Sebastian, Spain.

Although there was no immediate claim of responsibility, the Basque Interior Ministry said the bomb was attached to the chassis of the car, a technique often used by the Basque separatist group.

**Christopher hopes to meet Arafat:**

Secretary of State Warren Christopher hopes to meet with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat during a trip next week to the Middle East, the State Department said on Wednesday. AFP reports from Washington.

Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said that he hoped the meeting would take place on Tuesday or Wednesday. Christopher will be in Israel on Tuesday for the first face-to-face meeting between US administration official and new Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

**Floods claim nearly 100 in China:**

Floods unleashed by heavy storm have devastated large tracts of the southern Chinese provinces of Guizhou and Guangdong, leaving nearly 100 dead and tens of thousands homeless local officials said yesterday. AFP reports from Beijing.

Worst affected was Guizhou where 96 people have died in serious flooding since May an official with the provincial Flood Prevention Bureau said over telephone. Of the dead 62 were drowned while the rest were killed in housing collapses or accidents involving damaged high-voltage electricity cables.

**Mild quake rocks Armenia:** A earthquake with a magnitude of 4.1 centered in northern Iran on Wednesday shook the ex-Soviet republic of Armenia, but officials said there were no victims or damage. AP reports from Yerevan.

Armenia's National Seismic Defence Service said the quake struck at 11:08 a.m. (0608 GMT), its epicenter near the border with the Nakhichevan autonomous region, which belongs to neighbouring Azerbaijan but is inside Armenia. The centre said two separate jolts were also reported in Armenia, with epicenters in the regions of Vank and Arafat.

**I killed as jet crashes in US:** A Navy F/A-18 fighter jet doing aerobatic maneuvers while practicing for an air show crashed Wednesday near St. Louis, killing the pilot. No other injuries were reported. AP reports from Bechtel.

The plane sheared off trees and power lines, hit a detached garage and narrowly missed a small brick house. It came to rest in the back yard, burning a black hole in the ground. The house was unoccupied at the time of the crash. The plane, which was being flown by a pilot for St. Louis manufacturer McDonnell Douglas Corp., had spent the afternoon performing aerobatics in the area.

**Explorer found dead in China:** A veteran Chinese explorer was found dead in the desert of northwestern China where he was seeking the ruins of a 2,000-year-old city on the Silk Road. AP reports from Beijing.

Rescuers found the body of Yu Chunshun, 48, on Tuesday in his tent in the Lop Nur desert of the Xinjiang region, the China Daily reported on Thursday. Yu went into the desert alone on June 11 with a two-day supply of food and water to explore the ruins of the ancient city of Loulan. A gale struck with ground temperature reaching 70 Celsius (158 degrees Fahrenheit), according to explorers cited by the newspaper report.

## India won't sign N-test ban treaty

## Rao urges party workers to prepare for mid-term polls

**NEW DELHI:** June 20: Former Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao told his party workers Wednesday to prepare for mid-term election which according to him, could be any time, the Hindustan Times reported today. says Xinhua.

Rao, president of the Indian National Congress, gave the instruction during his first visit to his constituency in Orissa after his election to the Lok Sabha (lower house of parliament) from there last month.

He said though the Congress Party had given unconditional support to the ruling United Front headed by Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda, the support would be withdrawn if the activities and policies went against the interests of the country.

In this background, Rao called up Congress Party members to work hard to popularise party policies among the people and also be ready for a mid-term poll.

Rao's remarks assured great significance because the 13-party United Front, with only

190 seats in the 545-seat Lok Sabha can not sustain a stable government without the outside support of the Congress Party.

AP adds: India will not sign the treaty that bans nuclear testing until nations with nuclear arms decide on a timetable to dismantle such weapons, newspapers said Thursday.

New Delhi's decision not to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty was taken late Tuesday night, a week before the June 28 deadline in Geneva, newspapers reported.

Most of the political parties are believed to be in the nuclear-leaning government not to how to pressures to sign the treaty. The Pioneer newspaper said.

The discussions in Geneva negate the principles of world disarmament, said India's former finance minister Pranab Mukherjee said in a statement.

"It leaves loopholes for the nuclear weapon states to refine their arsenals," said Mukherjee, who was foreign minister

in the government of former Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao.

No formal announcement of India's decision was made in New Delhi, but The Hindu newspaper said the Foreign Ministry planned to convey the country's decision through its delegate at the Geneva conference.

India says it wants the nuclear powers — the United States, Britain, France, Russia and China — to specify when they will dismantle their nuclear weapons.

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India also wants the draft treaty to focus on new technologies that could be used to update and develop nuclear arsenals.

India says it wants to retain the option to go nuclear because it believes its neighbour and arch enemy, Pakistan, has such weapons.

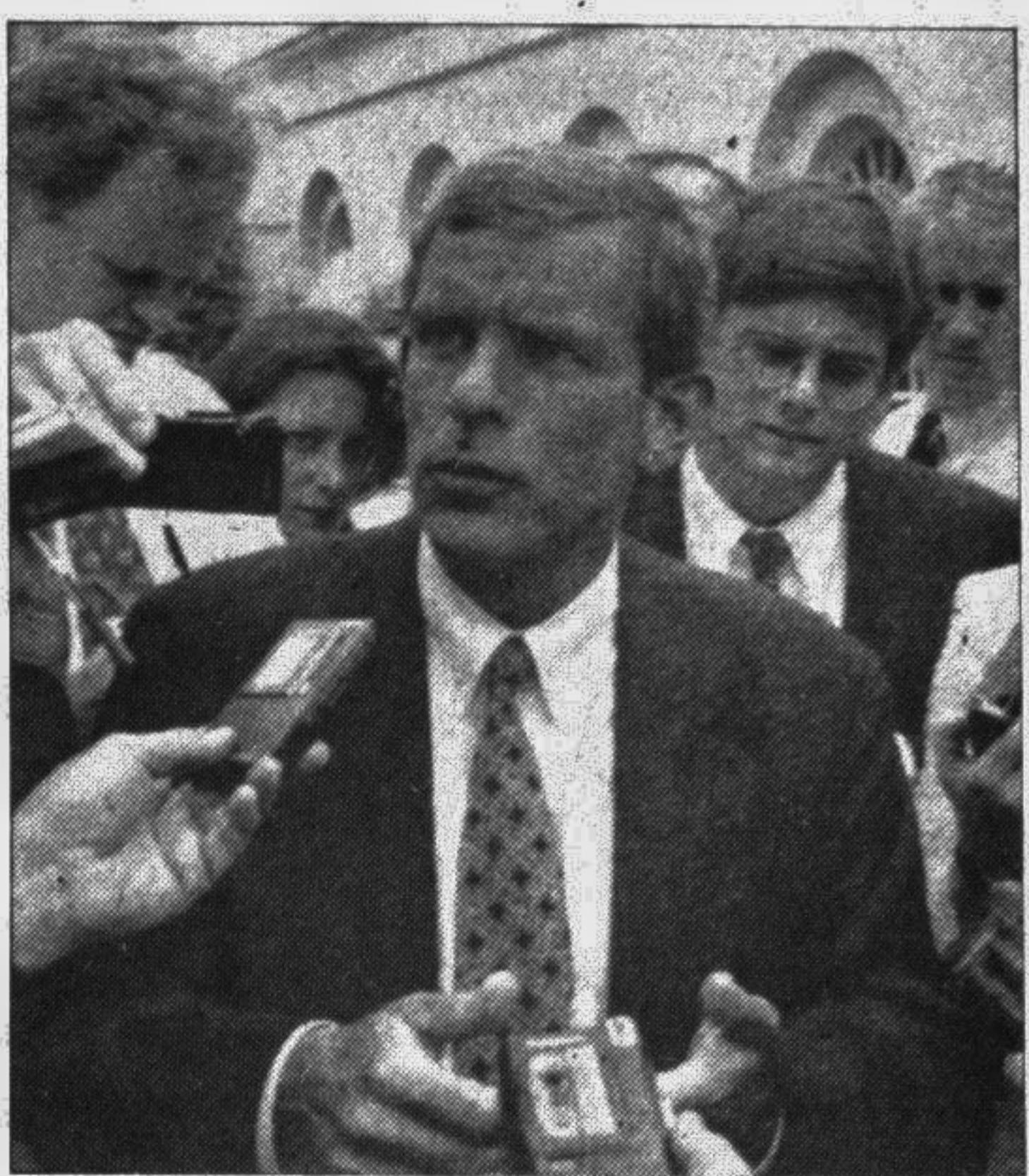
## Jordan blamed for bid to prevent Arab Summit from achieving goal

**DAMASCUS:** June 20: Syria today accused Jordan of trying to prevent this weekend's Arab summit from achieving its main goal of confronting Israel's new hardline leaders by trying to include the issue of terrorism on the agenda, reports Reuter.

The official daily Tishreen strongly rejected Jordan's accusation of Syrian involvement in several abortive attacks in Jordan and challenged Amman to produce one piece of evidence to back its allegations.

"While Arabs prepared to hold a summit in Cairo to revive Arab solidarity and counter the challenges posed by Israel's new anti-peace government we hear more voices from Jordan repeating Israel's accusations of Syrian involvement in terrorism," Tishreen said.

Arab leaders are due to meet in Cairo this weekend to draw up a response to Israel's election of right-winger Benjamin Netanyahu who has abandoned the previous Labour-led government's policy of trading Israeli-occupied Arab land for peace with the Jewish state's neighbours.



Bruce Lindsey, deputy White House counsel and a close friend of US President Bill Clinton, briefs reporters at the White House Wednesday. A lawyer said Lindsey will be named as an "unindicted co-conspirator" in a trial resulting from the probe of the Whitewater affair, CNN reported Wednesday.

— AFP/UNB photo

## US to oppose Ghali's bid for second term

**WASHINGTON:**

June 20:

The United States will oppose UN Secretary General Boutros-Ghali for a second term as administration official said today. Reuter.

"We're not going to support him," the official told the news agency, adding "generally, we're looking for someone who can make the United Nations more reform-minded."

Boutros Ghali, through spokesman at UN headquarters in New York, announced late on Wednesday that he would seek a second five years term. His tenure expires at the end of 1996 and the selection is made by the UN Security Council whose recommendation is then approved by the General Assembly.

The US officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the administration has not yet decided on a candidate to back as Boutros Ghali's replacement. "We've not yet decided on a candidate ... there's no list at this point," he said. The official said some of the countries which he did not name will support Washington in proposing the Egyptian re-appointment. The key countries with veto power on the Security Council are the United States, Britain, France, China and Russia.

Diplomats at the United Nations said that France, Russia and China are thought to be in Boutros Ghali's corner while Britain might go along with the United States. But the US official said he believed that in searching for a candidate the region was not that important. He said the United States which has been pushing the United Nations to implement reforms was eager to find a new secretary general.

## Leghari, army aim to revise talks toward purchase of 32 French Mirage jets

**ISLAMABAD:**

June 20:

President Farooq Leghari and the Pakistan military aim to completely revise current negotiations toward the purchase of 32 French Mirage 2000 jets, The Nation daily reported today.

Reliable sources told AFP that a call for a total "revision" would amount to a renunciation of the potential sale, worth an estimated four billion dollars.

An air force spokesman said he had "no comment" today. A Pakistan's corps commanders — which form the highest decision-making body in the armed forces — reached a "unanimous verdict" in a meeting Sunday in favour of a thorough reconsideration of the Mirage sales, the military sources told The Nation.

The Mirage 2000 sales came into question after Pakistan signed a deal with the French electronics firm Sagem to sell 40 used Mirage III jets to the Pakistan Air Force.

## Off the Record

### Atlas of shame!

**BEIJING:** China is to publish an "Atlas of shame" to chart its humiliation at the hands of foreign powers in the last century, the Xinhua news agency said, reports Reuter.

The atlas will consist of nearly 100 maps, complemented with written explanations, tables, and pictures to portray "graphic details" of the humiliation and invasions of China since the first opium war in 1840, it said in an overnight report.

Targeting young people as its main readers, the atlas will be published by the end of this year to mark China's resumption of sovereignty over the British colony of Hong Kong on July 1, 1997, it said.

### Are politicians getting younger?

**WARSAW:** Are rock stars getting older or are politicians getting younger? reports AP.

Sting, the 44-year-old former lead singer of the Police, gushed Tuesday after meeting Polish President Aleksander Kwasniewski, 41.

"It is the first president I've met who is younger than I am," he said.

Kwasniewski, a former communist who defeated Solidarity hero Lech Walesa in November elections, called Sting "a great musician" and signed 10 albums that a private radio station will auction to raise funds for environmental protection.

### It's her first smile

**LOS ANGELES:** Chelsey Thomas, who won the hearts of people around the world as "the little girl who couldn't smile," has achieved her dream of putting on a big grin for her eighth birthday, her mother said on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

She said it was "kind of a weird feeling" but "a lovely sight" seeing her seven-year-old daughter's first smile.

"It wasn't as though she suddenly smiled. It's been a gradual process over the last few weeks, first the corners of her mouth twitched then she kind of had this smile, and finally smile," she said.

Chelsey was born with moebius syndrome, a rare condition that impairs the use of facial muscles, making the sufferer unable to express happiness by smiling. "But she's always smiled really, only on the inside," Thomas told Reuters from her home in suburban Palmdale.

Now Chelsey's smile is for real, thanks to three operations to correct her condition carried out by a team of doctors at Kaiser permanent medical centre in Woodland Hills.

## Tamils struggling to adapt to peace under central govt

**JAFFNA:** June 20: The widow squatted on a low stool and told her story to the barefoot old man tapping away on a rusty manual typewriter, reports AP.

Since her husband was killed in the civil war two years ago, she had lived in a quiet village of Tamil farmers, ironing clothes for a living. When government troops approached in September, she

She returned home last month to find her two-room house destroyed, her furniture gone. Now she and her two small children live with a friend, depending on government handouts because no one has money to pay for ironing.

So on Tuesday, Siththan Arulam, 40, trudged to Jaffna city to request 835 dollars from the government to help rebuild her life. She found the

old man in front of a bombed-out grocery store, offering to translate and type such requests for 70 cents a page.

"I do not know if I will get compensation, or how long it will take," Mrs Arulam said. "But to restart my life I need a home."

Mrs Arulam's problems are common around Jaffna. The city, the centre of Tamil culture for centuries, served as the rebel stronghold during their 12-year war for a Tamil state in northern and eastern Sri Lanka. More than 42,000 people have died in the fighting.

The military captured Jaffna in a bold offensive in December, and has since gained control of the surrounding Jaffna Peninsula. The rebels' war mainly waged from the jungles.

Meanwhile, the people of Jaffna are struggling to adapt to life under the central government. Many, like Mrs Arulam, are unemployed, hungry and homeless. They say the government is taking too long to rebuild their homes and distribute food and medicine.

With the local economy at a standstill, food and fuel prices have skyrocketed, forcing people to stand in lines for government handouts that they say still aren't enough. The government says it was unprepared for the return of 400,000 Tamils who fled Jaffna city in advance of the military offensive.

Some shops have now opened in the main commercial centre, but few have much to sell. Half the peninsula's schools and its university are open, but less than half the students are attending the

sales tax to the rebels. Taxi drivers no longer have to drive the guerrillas around for free. And Tamil parents don't have to sit helpless while rebel operators recruit their children from high schools.

Because of the fighting we have lived difficult lives for years," said Poonoorad Jegabalan, a teacher at Hindu College in Jaffna. "Now we are looking for some sort of tranquility."

In a way, they are finding some. The thousands of soldiers who now patrol the city are less imposing than many people had feared.

Columns of troops marching through the streets hardly cast a glance at residents conducting their daily chores. School children ride bicycles past them. At one intersection, soldiers stop to let an old man pass in his ox-driven cart.

"Earlier, we were afraid of the army," said Kandian Kunarasan, a retired government worker. "Now we are not because since they arrived they have treated us well. Many of us ask ourselves: Is this the same Sri Lankan army?"

President Chandrika Kumaratunga admitted this month that her government can't afford to rebuild Jaffna the way it wants to. She appealed to foreign governments for 274 million dollars in aid.

In the meantime, people flock to typists like Navaratnam Nadarajah, the 60-year-old man who put together Mrs Arulam's paperwork. He listens to compensation claims in the Tamil language, then types them in English.

Nadarajah said he gets up to 20 letters a day now, each claiming compensation for damage.