

BRIEFLY



Boris Yeltsin fired his security chief Alexander Korzhakov (L) and Federal Security Service chief Mikhail Barsukov (R) it was reported on Thursday. Both men are seen standing on Lenn's Mausoleum in this 9th May 1995 file photo. "It's necessary to make changes so there are fresh people" said Yeltsin. First deputy prime minister Oleg Soskovets was also fired. Korzhakov has worked as Yeltsin's security chief for more than a decade and was considered one of his more influential advisors. — AFP/UNB photo

Netanyahu meets Jordan's envoy : Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met Thursday with Jordan's ambassador to Israel, Omar Rifai, and expressed his desire to continue the Middle East peace process, the official news agency Iltim said, AFP reports from Jerusalem.

Netanyahu plans to soon visit Jordan, although no date has been set, officials at the prime minister's office said.

The meeting came less than two days before the opening of an Arab Summit in Cairo at the weekend aimed at forging a common stand in peace negotiations with Israel's new rightwing government.

IRA bomb factory uncovered, 5 held: Irish police said Thursday they had uncovered a suspected Irish Republican Army bomb factory and arrested five men, AP reports from Dublin.

Police raided a remote farmhouse a mile (1.6 kms) outside the village of Clonaslee in County Laois. A spokesman in Dublin described the find as significant.

Launch of Russian satellite fails: The launch of a Russian military satellite from the Plesetsk cosmodrome failed Thursday night, the Interfax news agency reported, AP says from Moscow.

The Soyuz-U booster rocket carrying a Kosmos satellite was launched at 22:45 p.m. (1845 GMT) but did not reach orbit and fell to earth in Russia, according to the report, which cited unidentified sources in Moscow.

Filipino communist leader freed: The Philippine military yesterday freed communist guerrilla leader Sotero Llamas, to allow him to fly to the Netherlands and join peace talks, military officials said, AFP reports from Manila.

Llamas was arrested on May 17, 1995 on charges of murder and kidnapping, and his detention has been a key hurdle to peace ... peace talks. He was released into the custody of his lawyer Romeo Capulong via a back door of the military's intelligence service headquarters in suburban Manila.

13 killed in clashes in Kenya: At least 13 people were killed and three wounded in fighting between members of the Samburu and Borana ethnic groups in eastern Kenya's Isiolo district, the Daily Nation newspaper reported yesterday, AFP report from Nairobi.

The Boranas had attacked the Samburus and Solen about 200 camels from them two weeks earlier, the paper said.

State gov killed in Colombia : A state governor was assassinated Thursday, apparently by guerrillas, while trying to secure the release of a congressman held by rebels for more than a year, authorities said, AP reports from Bogota.

Jesus Angel Gonzalez, governor of Cauqueta state, was shot to death with his driver near the town of Paujil some 350 kilometers (220 miles) south of Bogota, said Deputy State Secretary Gilberto Castro.

The bullet-riddled bodies were found just outside their car, whose radio was still on, Castro said by telephone from Florencia, the state capital.

Hashimoto begins S Korea visit : Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto travels to South Korea for a meeting with President Kim Young-Sam this weekend to mend strained ties and discuss prospects for a peace overture to North Korea, Reuter reports from Tokyo.

Hashimoto, accompanied by Foreign Minister Yukihiko Iked, will fly to the South Korean resort island of Cheju on Saturday for a two-day visit.

Gas pipe blast kills 20 in China : At least 20 people were killed when a gas pipe explosion rocked a 20-floor office block and a three-storey dormitory building in Shenzhen, southern China, a Hong Kong newspaper said yesterday, Reuter reports from Hong Kong.

The underground blast occurred around midnight on Thursday, the independent Oriental Daily News said. Officials in Shenzhen, which borders the British colony, were not immediately available to confirm the report.

Science historian Kuhn dies : Thomas Kuhn, a renowned science historian, has died in Cambridge, Massachusetts, according to press reports. He was 73, AFP reports from Washington.

Kuhn's 1962 book "The Structure of Scientific Revolutions" is a central work on the effect of history on science. It sold one million copies and was translated into six languages.

Kuhn, who had been a professor at Harvard, Princeton, MIT and University of California, died Monday.

5 of an Afghan family killed : Five Afghan refugees of the same family were killed in their sleep on Thursday in an apparent blood feud, outside the southwestern Pakistani town of Quetta, police said, Reuter reports from Quetta.

Family head Bhalol Khan, his wife, two children and a related woman were all knifed by unknown attackers, said a police official in Quetta, capital of Baluchistan province.

Tokyo urges Delhi to reconsider its decision US regrets India's opposition to global N-test ban treaty

WASHINGTON, June 22: The United States regrets India's current opposition to a global nuclear test ban treaty but still expects the Delhi government to sign the pact by June 28, the State Department said on Thursday, reports Reuter.

The United States regrets India's announced decision that it cannot at this point sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in its present form, State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns told reporters.

But Burns added India was still involved in treaty talks in Geneva and he noted that in the end game of such negotiations, public airing of disagreements was to be expected and was not necessarily a barrier to final accord.

"We're in the end game of negotiations. It's not surprising in the end to see some countries take their dissatisfactions and make them public," he said.

India, which is believed to have nuclear weapons capability, said earlier on Thursday it would not sign a draft of the CTBT, which it said would fail to disarm the five declared nuclear powers, including the United States.

AP adds the United States says it is confident a global ban on nuclear testing can be reached despite objections by India that the treaty now being negotiated clearly favours the five declared nuclear powers.

"We expect to be successful," State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said Thursday as negotiators in Geneva worked to beat a June 28 deadline for final agreement.

The administration regards completion of a test ban treaty as one of its highest foreign policy priorities.

Ambassador Arundhati Ghose, head of the Indian delegation, called the proposed treaty "weak and woefully inadequate and India won't accept it unless the five declared nuclear powers commit to destroying their arsenals."

Responding to India's complaints about existing nuclear powers retaining their weaponry, Burns noted that START II, once ratified, will bring down the level of nuclear warheads in US and Russian arsenals to roughly 6,500 from well over 20,000 just a couple of years ago.

Another report says: Pakistan said on Thursday all nuclear and potential nuclear powers must sign the global test ban treaty being negotiated in Geneva, after its arch-rival India announced it would not sign it in its present form.

The spokesman was commenting on a recent United States call to India and Pakistan to join the treaty, it said.

Meanwhile, Japan urged India today to reconsider its refusal to sign a global treaty banning nuclear weapons tests and all nuclear explosions.

"We want India to reconsider its opposition to the treaty," Foreign Minister Yukihiko Ikeda told reporters.

CBI to question Rao's son for 2nd time on urea scam

NEW DELHI, June 21: Former Indian prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao's son will be questioned by federal detectives for a second time Monday in connection with an alleged role in a 38-million-dollar fertiliser scandal, reports AFP.

Officials in the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) today said Prabhakar Rao would be grilled at the agency's headquarters here about the shady urea deal between the state-run National Fertilisers Ltd. (NFL) and an obscure Turkish firm.

Sanjeeva Rao, a brother-in-law of Rao's elder son PV Rameshwar Rao, arrested by CBI officials in the southern city of Hyderabad on June 18, Prakash Yadav, a son of a minister in Rao's cabinet, was simultaneously arrested in New Delhi.

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Yeltsin out of control, says Zyuganov

MOSCOW, June 21: Communist presidential challenger Gennady Zyuganov painted a stark picture today of Russia sliding into civil war following the latest bout of Kremlin intrigue and personnel changes, reports Reuter.

Zyuganov, leader of the Bloc of National-Patriotic Forces, issued a statement saying that President Boris Yeltsin was out of control and warning that the second round of elections, scheduled for July 3, risked being cancelled.

The National-Patriotic Bloc declares that the motherland is in danger, the internal squabbling around the decrepit Boris Yeltsin, who is increasingly losing control could spill over into bitter civil conflict and lead to tragic consequences, read the statement.

Zyuganov, who trailed Yeltsin by less than three percentage points in Sunday's first round of voting, said Yeltsin's sacking of three top officials on Thursday showed that he was trying to cling desperately to power.

"Every day there are announcements about mythical plots and coups," said the statement.

"In seeking to keep power, the president is changing his team feverishly, there is a dirty settling of accounts taking place and behind-the-scenes

games," it said, adding that it was part of a plan by those seeking to destroy Russia.

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German Chancellor Helmut Kohl (R) welcomes UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros Ghali in the chancellery on Thursday in Bonn. Boutros Ghali, who inaugurated a new UN office in Bonn, opened his campaign for a second term at the head of the world body by requesting Germany's support despite Washington's rejection of him. — AFP/UNB photo

UN monitors destroy Iraqi biological arms plant

UNITED NATIONS, June 21: UN weapons monitors have destroyed a huge Iraqi weapons plant used to manufacture botulism, anthrax and other germ warfare agents, the United Nations announced Thursday, reports AP.

A UN video of the destruction showed workers dynamiting buildings, smashing equipment with trucks and spraying water on chemicals. The destruction began last month and ended Thursday.

Iraq said last week that it would no longer allow UN inspectors into sensitive bases suspected of housing material related to its banned weapons programme.

UN inspectors said Iraq cooperated in the plant's destruction, which was agreed to before the restrictions on the monitors. The video showed inspectors watching as Iraqi workers smashed equipment.

"It is a dangerous site because it is specially designed for the production of biological weapons," Rolf Ekeus, the chief weapons monitor, told United Nations Television.

The United Nations has demanded unrestricted access to sites, and Ekeus is currently in Baghdad to discuss the future of the mission.

UN monitors are ordered to dismantle Iraqi programme for producing long-range missiles and chemical, biological and nuclear weapons.

The United Nations has said it will not lift the crushing economic embargo it imposed against Iraq after Baghdad's 1990 invasion of Kuwait until Iraq fully cooperates with the monitors.

Iraq originally said that Al-Hakam, a sprawling 18-square kilometre (7-square mile) site 60 kilometres (40 miles) southwest of Baghdad, was built to produce animal feed.

"I think it's important that the Iraqis cooperated in its... destruction, but it also illustrates the problems of getting the full story of Iraq's programmes from the Iraqis," said Charles Duelfer, deputy chief of the monitoring programme.

Hamas to cease attack against Israelis

JERUSALEM, June 21: The militant Islamic group Hamas said Thursday it would cease attack against Israelis if the new government of Benjamin Netanyahu stopped pursuing its fighters, reports AP.

Following a string of Hamas bombings that killed 59 victims in Israel in February and March, Israel sealed off the West Bank and Gaza, arrested dozens of Hamas followers and demolished the homes of the bombers and other Hamas fugitives.

In a leaflet distributed Thursday in the Gaza Strip, the Izzedine al Qassam Brigades - the military wing of Hamas - said it was announcing "an important proposal to the new Israeli government."

Hamas, who will arrive in Kabul for the first time since 1979 on Wednesday for the swearing-in, the spokesman, Ghairat Baheer, said. The oath will be administered by President Burhaiddin Rabbani shortly after Hekmatyar's arrival, he added.

Hekmatyar will be sworn in as PM on Wednesday

ISLAMABAD, June 21: Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, chief of the Hezb-i-Islami faction, will be sworn in as Afghan Prime Minister on Wednesday, a party spokesman said here today, reports AP.

Hekmatyar, who will arrive in Kabul for the first time since 1979 on Wednesday for the swearing-in, the spokesman, Ghairat Baheer, said. The oath will be administered by President Burhaiddin Rabbani shortly after Hekmatyar's arrival, he added.

5 killed as jets bomb Lankan village

COLOMBO, June 21: Tamil rebels said Friday that five Tamil civilians, including three children, were killed when air force jets bombed villages in northern Sri Lanka, but the military denied the allegation, reports AP.

Twelve others were wounded in Wednesday's attack on Chundikulam and Poonathudurai fishing villages in the Kilinochchi district, the rebels said in a statement faxed from their London office. The ages of the children were not immediately known.

Gaddafi to propose creation of 'united Arab states' at Cairo summit

CAIRO, June 21: Libyan leader Moammar Gaddafi will propose the creation of a "united Arab states" at the Cairo summit of Arab leaders this weekend, his unity minister said Thursday, reports AFP.

Gaddafi's vision consists of a "League of the Arab union which would group the 22 Arab states under a unified presidential council, with the presidency being held by one of the member states," Gamaa Al-Fazani told reporters here.

All Arab states would be under a single presidency and a council of prime ministers would be formed grouping all the heads of governments, the minister said after talks with Arab League chief Esam Abdel Meguid.

Gaddafi briefed Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Moussa on the proposal on Wednesday, a league official said.

5 Russian soldiers killed in Chechnya mine blast

GROZNY, June 21: Five Russian servicemen were killed when two armoured personnel carriers hit mines near a movie theatre in the Chechen capital on Friday, news reports said, reports AP.

Another five servicemen were wounded in the blasts in Grozny. The mines were apparently planted by separatist Chechen rebels, the Interfax news agency reported.

The incident came amid increased violence across the breakaway republic and preparations for resumed peace talks Friday between Russian and Chechen negotiators on ending the 18-month war.

The talks were scheduled to begin Friday afternoon, but some rebel leaders had warned Thursday that they wouldn't resume talks until the Russians show they are observing a cease-fire reached last week.

Both sides accuse each other of violating the truce.

Off the Record

Slice of cake fetches \$940
SWINDON, England: A slice of the wedding cake from the marriage of Prince Charles and Princess Diana has been bought by an executive of a US supermarket tabloid, reports AP.

John Bell, who runs the Florida-based Globe Weekly, which specialises in racy celebrity gossip, paid 640 pounds sterling (940 dollars) for the slice at an auction in this southern English town.

"I would have gone to 1,000 dollars," Bell, 59, said afterwards. "Americans are very keen on the royals, and I'm very pleased we have got it. I thought it would have gone for more."

Charles and Diana are in the process of divorcing, both having publicly admitted adultery after their marriage ran into trouble. They had tied the knot in July 1981.

Mozart's manuscript on sale
LONDON: A newly-discovered manuscript of an aria by composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart goes on sale at Christie's auction house on June 26, and is expected to fetch between 20,000 and 30,000 pounds (30,000 and 45,000 dollars), reports AP.

The incomplete work, written at the beginning of the 1780s, was sung for the first time on Thursday at Christie's. It was discovered in the attic of a house in the United States.

Written for Soprano Voice, Horn and Strings, it might have been intended to be included in the 1782 opera "die entfuhrung aus dem serial," the auctioneers said.

Who says money can't buy love?
SAN DIEGO, June 21: Who says money can't buy love? A 47,000 dollars renovation of a flamingo lagoon paid off Thursday as the first chick in 14 years was hatched at the San Diego Zoo's romantic hideaway for the pink birds, reports AP.

The bird broke out of its shell about 3:30 pm and is expected to be swimming in the lagoon within five days. Another 10 eggs are expected to hatch over the next few weeks, said zoo spokeswoman Georganne Irvine.

The fuzzy, gray-down hatching was being cared for by its parents, who also took turns sitting on the egg for 27 days. The normal gestation period for flamingos is 28 days.

"The parents are taking turns keeping the chick warm" Irvine said. "Then they also feed it with regurgitated food."

Zoo officials renovated the lagoon, located just inside the main entrance, in an effort to improve their flamingos' fertility. The improvements were completed February 26.

"We have been trying for years and finally the bird got the funding and the ideas together," Irvine said. "We absolutely attribute this to the changes we made."

New features included a nesting island, a white sandy beach, more palm trees, banana groves, 400 ferns and a waterfall. Keepers also added some colorful flowers to complement the flamingos' pink plumage.

Previous fertility failures have been blamed on the busy zoo entrance as well as wild foxes that allegedly stole the birds' eggs while roaming the park after dark.

Karadzic nominated for presidential candidate

BELGRADE, Yugoslavia, June 21: In a bold challenge to the Dayton peace accord, a branch of Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic's party nominated him on Thursday to run in upcoming elections, reports AP.

The move, reported by the Bosnian Serb news agency SRNA, could be serious blow to peace efforts in Bosnia. The Dayton agreement forbids Karadzic and other war crimes suspects from running in the elections that are to be held by September 14 and from holding positions of authority after the elections.

Karadzic and his military chief Gen. Ratko Mladic told the list of 58 people indicted by an international tribunal based in The Hague, Netherlands.

The Serbian Democratic Party branch in Pale, Karadzic's stronghold outside Sarajevo, nominated him as its only candidate for president of Serb-held territory in Bosnia, SRNA said. Karadzic formally holds that title now.

The move by the party, known by its Serbian acronym SDS, could be a trail balloon to see how the international community reacts, or a clear sign that Karadzic intends to remain on the scene.

A spokesman for Carl Bildt, the official in charge of the civilian implementation of the Dayton peace agreement, said Thursday in Sarajevo that his office was still trying to confirm the reported nomination.

Colm Murphy said if the report were true, "we would find it to be an extraordinary provocation," he said. "It would be totally, completely, absolutely unacceptable."

Disputes emerge even before Arab summit begins

CAIRO, Egypt, June 21: Arab leaders began arriving Thursday for a summit aimed at forging a united stand on peace with Israel's new government, but disputes emerged even before meetings started, reports AP.

Jordan demanded that terrorism be addressed - a move opposed by Syria. A Gulf delegate, meanwhile, rejected the idea of breaking still-nascent ties with Israel, which other Arabs have suggested. And tensions between Egypt and Sudan were evident when Sudan's foreign minister was snubbed at the airport.

"There are differences, but there are no conflicts or hysterics," Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Moussa said.

At least 13 heads of state from the 22-member Arab League are expected to attend the summit - the first since August 10, 1990, when the Arab world split over Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Other na-

tions are sending prime ministers or other top officials. Foreign ministers meet Friday to prepare the summit's agenda. The organisers - Egypt, Syria and Saudi Arabia - hoped to use the meeting to respond to the May 29 victory of Benjamin Netanyahu as Israel's prime minister.

Netanyahu's hard-line Likud Party rejects independence for the Palestinians, return of the occupied Golan Heights to Syria and discussion of the future of Jerusalem - all demands made by the Arabs as part of the peace process.

affairs spokesman who is part of the delegation to the summit.

In what threatens to become one of the summit's biggest disputes, Jordan's foreign minister, Abdel-Karim Kabariti, demanded that Arab leaders "discuss the issue of combating terrorism."

That was apparently a reference to Jordan's charges that Syria has sent guerrillas to carry out attacks against Israeli targets in Jordan in a bid to disrupt the Jordan-Israel peace treaty.

Jordan has also said that Arabs should act to stop attacks by Muslim militants in Israel, suggesting that Syria aids them.

Syria, in turn, is concerned about problems with Turkey, a Muslim country that is not a member of the Arab League.

Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq al-Sharaa told reporters his country would bring up "the massing of Turkish troops

response to the Netanyahu victory.

"Arab-Israeli relations could be used to strengthen the Arab position and they should be used positively," Omani Foreign Minister Yusuf bin Alawi said after arriving in Cairo.

At Cairo International Airport, Moussa refused to meet his Sudanese counterpart, Ali Osman Taha. He sent a lower-ranking assistant instead, in a sharp disregard of diplomatic protocol.

Egypt has made clear it was not ready to reconcile with Sudan, who it accuses of supporting Muslim militants and plotting the attempted assassination of President Hosni Mubarak in June 1995.

Apparently unperturbed by the airport incident, Taha said he hoped "the summit and meetings would provide a good atmosphere to overcome bilateral disagreements."

Decision to use US veto to block Ghali irrevocable

UNITED NATIONS, June 21: The US decision to oppose Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's bid for a second term is aimed at encouraging Congress to pay the country's \$1 billion debt, which has plunged the world organisation into crisis, US officials say, reports AP.

The decision to use the US veto, if necessary, in the Security Council to block the 73-year-old Egyptian diplomat is irrevocable, the officials said. They said they hoped new candidates would emerge.

The 15-member council must agree on a candidate and forward the name to the 185-member General Assembly for ratification before Boutros-Ghali's term expires December 31.

As one of the five permanent council members, the United States can block a candidate. Other permanent

members are France, Russia, China and Britain.

The US Congress has withheld funds to the United Nations to press for reform in the bureaucracy and prune expensive programmes, agencies and operations, which the United States believes have outlived their usefulness.

"It's quite clear that Boutros-Ghali lacks confidence within the United States Congress and we must go to the congress to request the funding," White House spokesman Mike McCurry said.

US Rep Lee Hamilton, a Democrat, said sentiment was strong in the Republican-dominated Congress "that the United Nations does need to go through a major reform and change, and to carry that out, you're going to have to bring in fresh blood to lead that effort."