

## BRIEFLY



Iraqis read newspapers commenting Friday the visit of United Nations Special Commission on Disarming Iraq (UNSCOM) chief Rolf Ekeus. UN experts said that they had completely destroyed Iraq's main germ warfare plant. A 20-member team of experts from the UNSCOM, which began its work in mid-May, "has finished dismantling the factory at Al-Hakam and is due to leave Iraq yesterday."

— AFP/UNB photo

**11 die as bldg collapses in Brazil:** Eleven workers were killed after a building they were constructing in northern Brazil collapsed. Globo television reported on Friday. Reuters reports from Brasilia.

A spokesman for the fire brigade in the city of Salvador could not confirm the number of victims. But on Thursday night, shortly after the accident, he told Reuters at least one person died and about 20 were still buried under the rubble after a grain silo under construction caved in.

**Slocumbe to visit China:** US Under Secretary of Defence Walter Slocumbe is going to China next week for what would be the highest-level visit by a Pentagon official since this year's war of nerves in the Taiwan Straits. AFP reports from Washington.

Slocumbe will visit China June 25-28 for talks with military and government officials on global and regional issues as well as bilateral military matters. The Pentagon said the delegation is to include representatives of the Defence Department, State Department and National Security Council.

**Light plane crash kills 2 in China:** A light aircraft with three crew and nine passengers on board has crashed into a hillside in northeastern China, killing the pilot and co-pilot, airport officials said yesterday. Reuters reports from Beijing.

The Chinese-made Y-12 18-seater plane of Harbin Fengling Airlines crashed on Friday afternoon while on a flight from the northeast city of Dalian to the offshore island of Changhai, a Changhai airport official said. The co-pilot was killed and the pilot died later in hospital while eight others were seriously injured and two were slightly hurt. The Xinhua news agency said. None of the injured was in critical condition, it said.

**Gunmen kill 4 doctors in Burundi:** Gunmen killed four doctors on a humanitarian mission in Burundi and took another hostage. The director of their aid agency said Friday. AP reports from Brazzaville.

The attacks occurred Wednesday and June 7, but the Ivory Coast-based Doctors of the Tropics said it had only just learned of the killings. The central African country of Burundi is torn by fighting between the Hutu majority and the Tutsi minority, and aid workers are frequently attacked to discourage them from helping victims of the ethnic violence.

**Guatemalan plane crash kills 2:** Two men died when a small airplane crashed on Friday into the fourth floor of a building in southern Guatemala City, radio reports said. Reuters reports from Guatemala.

The pilot and the co-pilot were killed, the reports said. The accident happened at 11 am (1300 EST) less than a mile (1.6 km) from Guatemala's Aurora International Airport. The cause was not immediately known.

**Myanmar seeks ASEAN membership:** Myanmar is seeking to become a full member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) within the next two years, newspaper reports said today. Reuters reports from Bangkok.

The reports quoted Sukhum Rasmidatta, Director-General of the Thai Foreign Ministry's ASEAN department, as saying on Friday the Myanmar government had reaffirmed it wanted to be an ASEAN observer this year and had strongly indicated that it would seek ASEAN membership in 1996. It is the first time Yangon has offered a time frame for joining the association, which groups Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

**9 Filipinos killed in bus crash:** Nine people, including a town mayor, were killed and 19 injured in a bus crash on Leyte Island in the central Philippines yesterday officials said. Reuters reports from Manila.

Police said Zosimo Bartoloni, mayor of an isolated town on Leyte, 600 km (370 miles) south of Manila, was among those on a bus that plunged into a rice field after hitting a parked truck.

**Sinn Fein under renewed pressure to break with IRA violence**

DUBLIN, June 22: Sinn Fein was under renewed pressure to break with IRA violence on Saturday after Irish police uncovered an IRA arms factory where mortar bombs were being refurbished for the guerrillas' war on Britain, reports Reuters.

Irish Prime Minister John Bruton expressed outrage at the fact that the find was made at a time when the Irish Republican Army's political wing, Sinn Fein, was saying it was committed to peaceful means of ending British rule of Northern Ireland.

Opposition leader Mary Harney urged Bruton's government to break all links with Sinn Fein after the discovery of the bomb factory south of Dublin, and the IRA's bombing of the English city of Manchester last weekend.

**Norway sends envoy to protect Suu Kyi**

OSLO, June 22: Norway sent a diplomat to Myanmar on Friday with the aim of protecting Nobel peace laureate Aung San Suu Kyi from possible arrest by her country's military dictators, reports AP.

Suu Kyi, the 1991 Nobel peace laureate, spent six years under house arrest for leading a pro-democracy campaign. She was released in July, but the military government has cracked down on democracy activists again. She and thousands of her supporters have risked arrest by a defying a ban on all political activity by the rejuvenated democracy movement.

"We are very concerned about the situation. We are afraid that Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi could be arrested again," Deputy Foreign Minister Jan Egeblad said by telephone.

Egeblad said Norway had sent Charge d' Affaires Anna Thalmann from Norway's embassy in Singapore to the Burmese capital of Rangoon on Friday with instructions to remain with Suu Kyi as much as possible.

"We can't physically prevent an arrest. We sent a woman to protect a woman. But we can make an arrest more difficult," he said.

**Manila rejects MNLF proposal to set up regional police force**

MANILA, June 22: The Philippine government today rejected a demand by Muslim rebels to set up a regional police force composed of about 20,000 guerrillas to keep the peace in a proposed autonomy area in the southern Philippines, reports Reuters.

The insurgent Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) raised the demand on the second day of peace talks in southern Davao City aimed at ending a 24-year-old Muslim revolt. The rebels have been fighting for self-rule in the Mindanao region and adjacent areas.

Government negotiator Alexander Aquirre told reporters the MNLF proposal was "legally impossible" because it would violate the constitution which stipulated that the Philippines should have only one police organisation, national in scope and under the control of the Manila government.

**Fighting leaves 11 killed in Lanka**

COLOMBO, June 22: Ten government soldiers and a Tamil rebel were killed in fighting in northern and eastern Sri Lanka, the military said Saturday, reports AP.

Four soldiers died when a jeep ran over a rebel land mine at Sathurukundawan village in eastern Batticaloa district on Saturday, said Col. Weeragama, a military spokesman.

The soldiers were being sent to assist a colleague who had been attacked by the rebels while on patrol, said Weeragama.

Two soldiers were also injured in the attack, about 210 kilometers (131 miles) east of the capital, Colombo.

On Friday, six soldiers were killed when the tractor they were travelling in ran over a rebel land mine at Killay village in the Jaffna Peninsula, said captain K.P.S. Premalal, a military spokesman.

**HK to enjoy freedom of religion after handover: China**

HONG KONG, June 22: China has assured Hong Kong that it will continue to enjoy freedom of religion after the 1997 handover, the South China Morning Post reported on Saturday, reports Reuters.

Ye Xiaowen, the director of State Council's religious Affairs Bureau, said China would not apply its rules on religion to the territory when it is returned on June 30 next year.

"Mainlanders should not try to remould Hong Kong people by our standards," Ye was quoted as saying.

But he warned Hong Kong worshippers not to take their religion to the mainland.

Hong Kong people should not expect to change their Chinese counterparts according to your standard," he said.

The case, now being heard by the Lahore High Court, has become a test case for the rights and freedom of movement of Pakistani women.

"I had decided that I would leave my father's house, but when I accidentally found out that the date for my nikkah (Muslim marriage contract) had been arranged for this weekend, I knew I had to escape because I was already married," she said.

Jumping over the wall of her father's house in Lahore's upper class model town, she took a taxi to Aghs, the legal aid office of prominent supreme court advocate and human rights activist Asma Jahangir, about whom she had read in the papers.

The subsequent confrontation between father and daughter has brought to the fore the long-running albeit silent tussle in Pakistan between the views of the extreme right and liberals. It has exposed the clash of old and new values in a

## 30 Sri Lankan fishermen to be freed India pledges to help rebuild war-ravaged Jaffna

NEW DELHI, June 22: India has promised to release up to 30 imprisoned Sri Lankan fishermen and pledged to aid its island neighbour rebuild war-ravaged Jaffna Town, Sri Lanka Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar said on Friday, reports Reuters.

Indian Foreign Minister I K Gujral, "in a very fine gesture of goodwill, has recommended the release of 25 to 30 Sri Lanka fishermen who were arrested by Indian authorities," Kadirgamar told a news conference.

Kadirgamar, who arrived in the Indian capital on Thursday for a two-day goodwill visit, said he had held talks with Prime Minister H. D. Deve Gowda, Gujral, Industry Minister Muralisoli Maran and

Finance Minister P Chidambaram.

Kadirgamar said New Delhi and Colombo were working towards building a mechanism that would allow constant bilateral dialogue on the fishermen of both nations, who accidentally stray into each other's territorial waters.

"It is a problem that is of great concern to us. We in Sri Lanka have a very acute problem of dealing with Sea Tigers," he said, referring to the sea-borne wing of the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) guerrilla group.

Kadirgamar said about 400,000 people had returned to the Jaffna region since the Sri Lankan army wrested the rebel stronghold from the

LTTE in April.

"I mentioned to Prime Minister Deve Gowda that Sri Lanka now has a rehabilitation plan and it is a very expensive plan. It is costing us 274 million dollars," he said.

"I am very happy to say the prime minister's response was very encouraging and very warm. I have expectations that India would at least be prepared to send us food for the north."

Kadirgamar said Industry Minister Maran, whose Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) Party rules the southern state of Tamil Nadu, had reacted favourably to the suggestion that the state send Tamil language books to the University of Jaffna.



Lebanese President Elias Hrawi (C) shakes hands with Esmat Abdel Meguid, Secretary-General of the Arab League, after he was received by Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak (L) upon his arrival in Cairo Friday.

— AFP/UNB photo

## BJP terms UF govt's economic agenda as 'vague, misleading'

NEW DELHI, June 22: India's main opposition party today launched a blistering attack on the economic agenda of the new coalition government, terming it "vague and misleading," the United News of India reported, says AFP.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian People's Party) said in a resolution at a national conference in the central Indian city of Bhopal that the United Front's programme was "vague, misleading, self-contradictory and full of platitudes."

"There is a yawning gap between pre cent and practice," the resolution said, adding that

the 13-party alliance's hasty U-turn on a proposed austerity drive, following protests from leftist allies, showed its shaky nature.

"It clearly shows how the government will function in the days to come," the BJP said, reiterating a prediction that the government would not last its full five-year term because of internal contradictions.

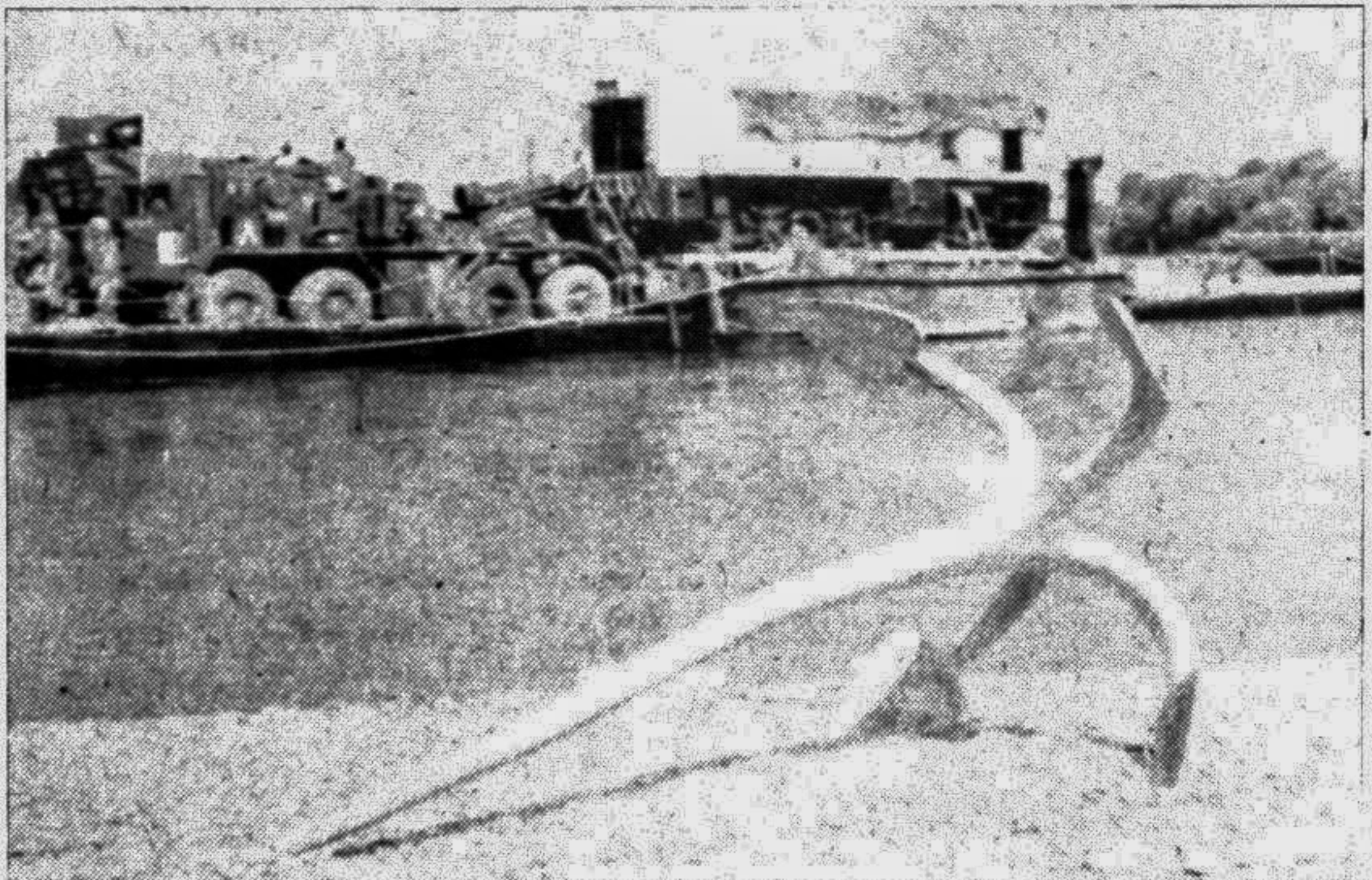
"Austerity must be accepted as a national discipline and be exercised through national consensus and not a keen-jerk reaction," it said.

Finance Minister Palaniappan Chidambaram

quickly diluted an austerity package, which entailed massive layoffs and a freeze on the wages of government servants, after protests from trade unions and communists.

The BJP said the plan paid "lip service to social justice and self-reliance or labour-intensive industrialisation," citing the front's pledge to seek 10 billion dollars annually in overseas capital and step up private investment in infrastructure.

This government seeks to achieve such industrialisation through a massive inflow of capital and modern technology.



A 50-ton locomotive, resting on a German military flatbed truck, is ferried over river Sava from Croatia to Bosnia in the northern Bosnian city of Orasje, Friday. US IFOR troops bought three old Yugoslav locomotives to transport fuel to the IFOR troops in northern Bosnia and relieve the heavy road traffic. The combined load of the locomotive and truck is 80 tons and it had to be driven through Croatia from Ploce into southern Bosnia due to damaged bridges and railway tracks that were mined.

— AFP/UNB photo

## Gaddafi flies directly to Cairo for Arab summit violating UN air ban

CAIRO, June 22: Libyan leader Moammar Gaddafi arrived in Cairo Saturday for the Arab summit aboard a Libyan airliner that flew directly from his own country in violation of UN sanctions, reports AP.

Gaddafi's Libyan Airlines plane flew from the town of Masaed near the Egyptian border, officials at the border said, speaking on condition of anonymity. Egypt's Middle East News Agency and Libyan reporters also said Gaddafi flew directly from Libya.

The last minute arrival was typical of the maverick Gaddafi, who left officials wondering whether he was coming or not. Wearing a satin silver vest, white trousers and a flowing white Libyan cloak, he was given a state welcome by President Hosni Mubarak.

Gaddafi, who also wore sunglasses and a brown turban,

chatted amiably with Mubarak and put his arm around the Egyptian president's back as the two walked away from the white Libyan airliner together.

The Egyptian news agency said Gaddafi decided to come at the last minute, and therefore had no choice but to fly from Libya. But the officials on the border said the Libyan leader told Egypt on Friday night that he would attend.

Gaddafi was the last of the 13 Arab heads of state arriving for the Arab summit. Six other Arab states and the PLO are also represented, but Iraq was not invited to the gathering.

The Security Council put diplomatic sanctions in Libya in 1992 to pressure it to hand over two Libyans. They are wanted in the 1988 bombing of an American jet over Lockerbie, Scotland, which killed 270 people.

## Ghali firm to win second term China may play key role in determining UN secy gen

UNITED NATIONS, June 22: Although the United States will probably succeed in ousting Boutros Boutros-Ghali, China may play a big role in determining who succeeds him as secretary-general, reports AP.

China will ensure that no one unacceptable to developing countries wins approval in the Security Council, which nominates a candidate, or in the 185 member General Assembly, which ratifies the choice.

The White House has announced that it opposes the 73-year-old Egyptian diplomat and will use its Security Council veto if necessary to prevent a second term when his current five-year appointment expires December 31.

As one of the five permanent members, China has a veto too along with Russia, France and Britain. The 15-member council will probably begin the formal selection process in November.

Boutros-Ghali carries

through with his pledge to run. The United States would probably veto him in the first round — and China would probably veto all Western-backed candidates.

Western countries oppose the tradition of geographic favoritism in selecting the secretary-general. But developing countries strongly believe that a secretary general from the Third World is necessary to counterbalance the power of the Security Council, dominated by Americans and Europeans.

Reuters adds: United Nations Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali, determined to win a second term of office despite the opposition of the United States, said in a newspaper interview that he wanted to complete the task of UN reform.

The US says it will use its veto to prevent the election of the 73-year-old Egyptian for another five years, accusing him of failing to cut the United Nations' vast bureaucracy.

## Off the Record

**He marries for cheating**

COLOMBO: A 36-year-old Sri Lankan man who married 54 women within five years and stole their cash and jewellery has been arrested on charges of bigamy, a state-run daily reported Tuesday, reports AFP.

The man was arrested by police at the southern town of Rakwana and remanded pending further investigation, the daily news said, adding that preliminary inquiries showed the man had used 32 different names during his marriage binge.

**Int'l gay festival kicked off**

COPENHAGEN: Europride, a 10-day international festival for homosexuals, opened in Copenhagen on Friday, reports AP.

Organisers hope the festival will attract up to 35,000 participants. Events include concerts, art exhibits, and hearings in the Danish parliament.

Festival spokesman Michael Nord said he hopes Europride will become a Woodstock-like gathering of gays and lesbians.

"We do it to make gays and lesbians visible and to show that there are many of us and that we are different. We want to combat prejudice, which for example holds that gays have loose wrists and lesbians are big and macho," Nord said.

Europride is to culminate June 29 with a large parade including drag queens and floats.

The festival is timed to coincide with the June 27 anniversary of the Stonewall uprising in New York City in 1969. The clash between police and homosexuals after a raid on a gay bar is seen as a galvanizing event in the gay-rights movement.

Previous Europride festivals were held in London, Berlin and Amsterdam.

**Di not interested**

LONDON: Disney World was reported Sunday to have offered Princess Diana 5.3 million pounds (dls 8.2 million) to star in its 25th birthday celebrations, but Diana's spokeswoman said she doesn't accept paid invitations, reports AP.

"The Princess of Wales has no intention of attending, and the correspondence with Disney will make clear those intentions, spokeswoman Jane Atkinson said Saturday.

"She receives many invitations, but she doesn't accept invitations where she is offered money to attend," Atkinson said.

The People, a Sunday tabloid, reported the offer its early edition Saturday night. Disney World spokesmen in Miami were not immediately available to comment.

Atkinson did not confirm the contents of Diana's mail from Disney World or the sum involved.

Diana took her sons Prince William and Prince Harry to Disney World in 1993.

Another member of the royal family was reported Sunday to have accepted a fee from a public relations firm that wanted him to host luncheons.

**Panama president admits endorsing drug money for campaign**

PANAMA CITY, June 22: Panama's President, Ernesto Perez Balladars, admitted today an accused Cali cartel drug baron contributed dollar 51,000 to his 1994 presidential campaign, reports Reuters.

Speaking on the national television Telemetro Channel 13, Perez Balladars said he endorsed two checks for 51,000 dollar from a company allegedly owned by Jose Castellon Henao, who is currently being held in Panama City on drug charges.

"This is the first time, perhaps in my life, that I have to swallow my words," said the president who was speaking via a telephone connection from the western province of Chiriqui.

"I am a proud person. For me this hurts that there was this type of money in my campaign."

## Women's right in Pakistan: A tussle between extremists & liberals

LAHORE, June 22: Saima Waheed is from a well-to-do family in Lahore, Pakistan's richest city. A 22-year-old student of business administration, she got married without her parent's consent. Instead of eloping with Arshid Ahmed, she returned home, and told her family. "I knew that they would be angry, but thought they would come around sooner or later," she said.

But she had underestimated the extent of her father's anger. Abdulwaheed Ropri, a leader of the very conservative Muslim sect Ahle Hadees, beat and locked up his daughter, starved her and forced her to put her signature on some documents, reports IPS.

Her story hit the front pages of newspapers in April when she escaped from home on hearing that her family had arranged her marriage to a wealthy doctor, having forced her husband to sign at gunpoint a statement freeing her from the marriage contract.

The case, now being heard by the Lahore High Court, has become a test case for the rights and freedom of movement of Pakistani women.

"I had decided that I would leave my father's house, but when I accidentally found out that the date for my nikkah (Muslim marriage contract) had been arranged for this weekend, I knew I had to escape because I was already married," she said.

Jumping over the wall of her father's house in Lahore's upper class model town, she took a taxi to Aghs, the legal aid office of prominent supreme court advocate and human rights activist Asma Jahangir, about whom she had read in the papers.

The subsequent confrontation between father and daughter has brought to the fore the long-running albeit silent tussle in Pakistan between the views of the extreme right and liberals. It has exposed the clash of old and new values in a

traditional society which is slowly changing particularly in the urban areas.

The case is particularly significant because it brings up the issue of the liberty and freedom of movement of Pakistani women in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan," declares Jahangir, one of Pakistan's best known lawyers.

Under Pakistan's constitution an adult female (above 18 years) of sound mind can make her own decisions, a right guaranteed even by Islamic law which says a person who reaches puberty is to be considered an adult.

But Saima's father has challenged her marriage on the grounds that the Ahle Hadees, the sect of Islam he adheres to, does not allow a girl to marry unless her wali (guardian) is present and consenting — nor can a woman, even if she is legally an adult, leave her father's 'custody' until she has been married off by the father — to a Muslim

man "even if she is 60 years old."

The Ahle Hadees sect believes the father "is duty bound to maintain and protect a daughter until he has contracted and participated in her nikkah. If he fails in this duty, he will be committing a grave sin, for which he will be punished in the hereafter."

In the ensuing debate in court, the issue of Saima's marriage has become secondary to the larger concern of the right of adult Pakistani women to decide how they choose to live their lives.

Saima's lawyers armed with various Islamic and constitutional case laws according to which a woman can legally be her own wali, are pleading that the validity of her marriage should be decided first, because if it is deemed legal there can be no further dispute on the right of Pakistani women to choose.

The case is being followed with tremendous interest

across Pakistan. Ropri moved the Lahore High Court in mid-April to secure the release of his daughter from Jahangir's 'custody' Saima was then staying at an Aghs-run shelter for women.

The prosecution won an order from Justice Ihsanul Haq Chowdhury transferring Saima to the Darulaman, another shelter for women in Lahore which works like a sub-jail, where her parents would be free to meet her whenever they pleased.

A bailiff and a police team went with Ropri and other members of his family, some of them armed, to the Aghs office (where Saima had come to meet an uncle) on the afternoon of April 18 to implement the order.

What followed was pure drama. When Saima refused to go with them, Ropri and his relatives tried to physically drag her away, despite the protests of the police and the bailiff.