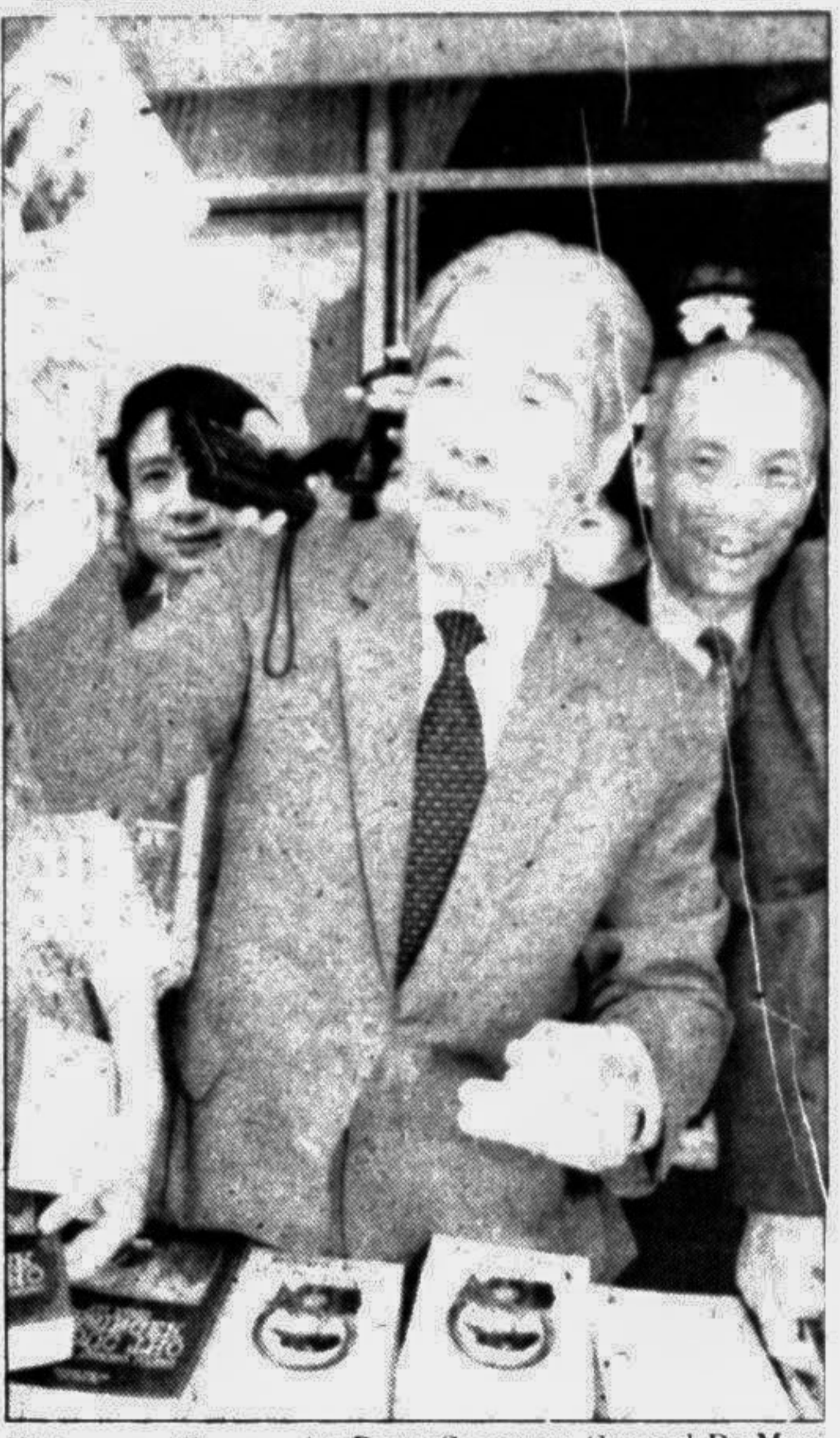


BRIEFLY



Vietnamese Communist Party Secretary General Do Muoi shows off a copy of a historical book on French hero Napoleon Bonaparte while answering to a foreign journalist that "we (Vietnam) need to know how they invaded (other countries) in order to defend ourselves," during break of the 8th national congress of VCP yesterday in Hanoi. The four-day congress which closed yesterday has re-elected Do Muoi as Secretary General for an other five-year mandate. —AFP UNB photo

4 Iraqis killed in Greek border: Four Iraqis were killed Sunday when they tried to cross a minefield marking the border between Greece and Turkey, Greek military sources in this northeast town said. AFP reports from Koozotini.

A fifth Iraqi was injured and taken to a Greek hospital by soldier who were patrolling the area, while four others managed to extricate themselves from the minefield in the Cornoflea region. Greek border guards opened fire on another group of Iraqis trying to cross the border on Saturday, wounding one in the knee. The entire group of 11 was arrested.

Iran begins war game in Gulf: Iranian naval forces began exercises in the Gulf on Sunday, involving the launch of missiles, the official news agency IRNA reported. AFP reports from Tehran.

The four-day exercises, the exact location of which was not disclosed, are aimed at "enhancing the force's combat capability," it said. Iran's regular army and the elite revolutionary guards regularly stage war games in the Gulf waters and Oman Sea.

Hurricane "Boris" kills 4 in Mexico: Hurricane Boris fizzled out over Central Mexico on Sunday after pummeling the southwestern coast, killing at least four people, injuring 70 and leaving more than 10,000 homeless, officials said. Reuter reports from Acapulco.

Brazilian ship sinks off S. Korea: A Brazilian freighter sank in dense fog Monday after colliding with a South Korean oil tanker off the west coast, maritime police said. One sailor died, AP reports from Seoul.

All 21 crewmen of the 1,031-ton Brazilian ship, Golden United, were rescued after the collision but one sailor died later at a hospital, they said. The Brazilian freighter with a cargo of plastic and steel products was en route to Japan from Inchon when it collided with the South Korean oil tanker, Hanchang No. 8, off Kunsan at about 5:30 am (2030 GMT Saturday), police said.

Attack poses challenge to govt Female suicide bomber kills 9 Turkish troops

ANKARA, July 1: A female suicide bomber killed nine Turkish soldiers in an audacious Kurdish guerrilla attack that posed a direct challenge to Turkey's new Islamist-led government, reports Reuter.

The bombing the first of its kind in 12 years of a Kurdish war for independence in southeast Turkey, came only two days after Necmettin Erbakan was appointed Turkey's first Islamist Prime Minister after forming a coalition with conservatives.

It followed a threat made in March by the leader of the rebel Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), Abdullah Ocalan, to order suicide attack in western Turkish cities.

The bomber blew herself up in the attack at a military parade in the centre of the eastern town of Turkey on Sunday afternoon, nine soldiers were killed and more than 30 people, mostly soldiers were wounded.

A girl dressed as a pregnant woman ran right into the middle of the soldiers and the bomb went off immediately, said witness Mehmet Uyusul. "The square was like a battlefield."

The attack cast doubt on Erbakan's earlier proposals for neutralising Kurdish nationalist sentiment by invoking the spirit of "Muslim brotherhood."

Previous governments refused to negotiate on the Kurds' demands for autonomy or independence in southeast Turkey.

Pak newspaper workers go on strike today
ISLAMABAD, July 1: Pakistan's newspaper workers were to go on strike Tuesday to protest against new taxes on the newspaper industry, press reports said today, says AFP.

No newspaper will appear on Wednesday because of the strike decided by the All Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS) and Pakistan Newspapers and Periodicals Organisation.

Publishers are demanding the withdrawal of a sales tax on newspapers and customs levy on imported newsprint, which they say would cripple the industry.

Gowda faces fresh revolt within expanded cabinet

NEW DELHI, July 1: Indian Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda faced a fresh revolt today within the ranks of his newly expanded cabinet after spending much of the week-end mollifying a sulking junior minister, party officials said, reports Reuter.

New Junior Minister Raghubans Prasad Singh, resentful over a junior rank in the United Front council of ministers, does not plan to travel to New Delhi from his home state of Bihar in the near future to assume office, a senior party official said.

Singh refused to attend Friday's swearing-in ceremony in an apparent fit of pique, the officials said.

The Press Trust of India quoted Singh as saying he felt he had been humiliated by

trouble from the sole lawmaker from the troubled Himalayan state of Jammu and Kashmir in his United Front alliance, the Indian Express newspaper reported.

Member of Parliament Mohammed Maqbool Dar was grumbling over being excluded from the cabinet and threatened to resign and float a rival regional party unless he was given a place in the cabinet, the daily said.

Deve Gowda was scheduled to meet him today to defuse the crisis, it added.

The prime minister was also grappling with conflicts within his Janata Dal party.

Within days of Deve Gowda taking office, the party expelled arch-rival Ramakrishna Hegde. He had criticised Deve Gowda's decision to seek sup-

port in parliament from the Congress Party.

Another 28 Hegde supporters were expelled on Friday, the day of the cabinet expansion.

Janata Dal leaders in the eastern state of Orissa met over the weekend to express their reservations over Hegde's expulsion and Deve Gowda's decision to accept the support of the Congress Party in parliament.

Congress, which has ruled India for all but four years since independence in 1947, finished a humiliating second in the recent general elections. However, Deve Gowda's, minority centre-left government depends heavily in its support to survive in parliament.

22 pilgrims killed in Sindh road mishap

KARACHI, July 1: A bus filled with pilgrims careened off a bridge into a ditch late Sunday in Pakistan's Sindh province, killing at least 22 and injuring 40 others, hospital and official sources said, reports AFP.

The bus was carrying more than 80 pilgrims back to Karachi from a mass gathering at a shrine to St Shah Murad, when it lost control on a highway near Gharo town, 45 kilometers (28 miles) northeast of here, officials quoted passengers as saying.

This was the second worst road accident in southern Sindh province in recent months. In early May, around 50 people were killed when a bus fell into a river in southern Sindh province.

Some of the injured termed the accident a "sign of anger from the saint," while others saw it as a test of the pilgrims, the rescue workers said.

PPP wins 24 out of 40 seats in Kashmir polls

ISLAMABAD, July 1: Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's party won a clear victory in state elections in Pakistan-controlled Kashmir, but her defeated rivals may not accept the results, reports AFP.

Sunday's polls, marked by violence that reportedly left five dead and allegations of widespread rigging, gave the Pakistani People's Party (PPP) 24 of the 40 seats, provisional results showed.

PPP allies secured four seats, according to election officials, who said the final results would be announced in the next two days.

The Muslim Conference (MC), led by the state's conservative premier Sardar Abdul Qayyum, won only four seats. Qayyum was beaten in one constituency but retained his seat from another area.

The fundamentalist Jamaat-e-Islami got one seat and independents took two.

A new vote has been ordered in one constituency, while unofficial results in four other constituencies were still to be given.

Queen Elizabeth to guarantee £20m bank loan

LONDON, July 1: Queen Elizabeth II is to guarantee a bank loan of 20 million pounds. Her eldest son Prince Charles is taking out to pay off his estranged wife Princess Diana. The Sun reported today, says AFP.

The mass circulation tabloid said the Prince would borrow the cash from London's exclusive Coutts Bank, where he has his account, but his estate, the duchy of Cornwall, cannot legally be mortgaged to cover the loan.

The Sunday Times reported that the prince is to offer Princess Diana a lump sum of 20 million pounds (30 million dollars) to secure their divorce.

If she refuses to divorce on these terms, Charles is prepared to wait until the end of next year to obtain the dissolution of the marriage.

32 Lankan soldiers, 40 Tigers killed in fresh fighting

COLOMBO, July 1: Fierce fighting erupted between government troops and separatist rebels Monday in northeastern Sri Lanka killing at least 72 people, 32 of them soldiers, military officials said, reports AP.

The fighting began when Tamil rebels attacked a military patrol with rocket-propelled grenades, mortars and machine guns in Trincomalee district, 240 kilometres (150 miles) northeast of Colombo, said Major Tilak Dunuwille, a military spokesman.

The troops were hunting for rebel mines and booby traps on the roads when they were attacked, said Dunuwille.

The fighting lasted for two hours, during which military reinforcements were rushed in from neighbouring camps. Dunuwille confirmed that

32 soldiers had died in the fighting, but not the rebel casualties. A military official in the area where the fighting occurred, reached by telephone, said 40 guerillas were killed. He spoke on condition of anonymity.

Fighting has increasingly shifted to the mainland's northeast after the army last month gained control of the entire northern Jaffna Peninsula that was once the stronghold of the rebels.

On Sunday, three rebels were killed when soldiers ambushed a group of rebel fighters at Welioya in north-central Sri Lanka, said Dunuwille, the spokesman.

Sri Lanka's army chief said government troops in recent offensives have smashed several rebel camps in the northeast, killing at least 25 gueril-

las, a local newspaper reported on Monday.

Lt. Gen. Rohan Dahanuwatte, after a visit to the region on Saturday, told the island newspaper that rebels had abandoned three camps, a field hospital and a food store to flee from advancing troops.

The commander said that security operations have stepped up in the northeastern district of Trincomalee to preempt rebel attacks on Sinhalese civilians in the region.

The rebels are fighting for a homeland in the north and east for minority Tamils to dress what they see as discrimination by the majority Sinhalese, who control the government and the military. More than 42,000 people have been killed in the fighting.



The successor of late Greek Prime Minister and PASOK chairman Andreas Papandreu, Prime Minister Costas Simitis (C), acknowledges applause after being elected the new president of Greece's governing PASOK party at the party's 4th congress in Athens, on Sunday. Simitis had threatened to resign as Prime Minister in case that Interior Minister Akis Tsochatzopoulos (L) — applauding next to Simitis — would have been elected, but in the end he won the ballot by 2,732 votes to 2,324. — AFP UNB photo

Russian army, Chechens accuse each other of violating truce

GROZNY, July 1: Russian troops and Chechen separatists accused each other Monday of violating a ceasefire that has not brought peace to the breakaway republic, news reports said, says AP.

Fighting raged in the centre of the Chechen capital, Grozny, throughout the night after rebel fighters attacked Russian checkpoints, the Interfax news agency said.

Two rebels were killed in the fighting and two Russian soldiers were wounded, the agency said, quoting Partegen Andriyevsky, a military official in the Russian-backed Chechen government.

The Russians also claimed that the Chechens attacked their positions 11 times in other fighting, while the separatists said federal forces at-

tacked them 29 times, killing one person and injuring nine others, all civilians, Interfax said.

Tension remains high in Chechnya despite the ceasefire agreement and the start of the withdrawal of Russian troops Friday.

Under pressure to show progress in peace efforts ahead of Russia's presidential runoff Wednesday, President Boris Yeltsin promised on Sunday to pull out 5,000 troops from Chechnya within two weeks.

"The war in Chechnya has lost its momentum," Yeltsin told Interfax. "Peace processes are growing... Peace will come inevitably."

The president said 1,000 Russian troops have recently left Chechnya, and another 4,000 will be pulled out by July 12.

Yeltsin's recent decree on the withdrawal, which followed a truce, was conditional, however, on progress in peace efforts — and prospects looked grim Sunday.

The top Russian negotiator, Nationalities Minister Vyacheslav Mikhailov, accused the rebels of stalling for time and making unacceptable demands to prolong negotiations.

On Saturday, rebel leader Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev accused Russia of "grave violations" of the truce and demanded the dismissal of the Moscow-backed government and new federal negotiators.

More than 30,000 people have been killed since Yeltsin sent Russian troops into Chechnya on December 11, 1994, to oust its separatist government and restore the region to Kremlin control.

Off the Record



Contestants in the "Big and beautiful" competition leave the catwalk in Moscow on Sunday during a pro-Yeltsin rally organised by the Moskowsky Komsomolets newspaper at Luzhnik stadium. The rally was not attended by the Russian president who is said to be resting and preparing for the final stages of the election. — AFP UNB photo

Fat girls - cheer up!

LONDON: Vogue magazine, attacked for using anorexic-looking models, has plans to feature fat models for the first time in its 80-year-old history as a leading arbiter of fashion, reports Reuter.

"We want round and lovely roly-poly women" the magazine's Communications Director Kumberley Fortier told the Sunday Telegraph.

The magazine was plunged into controversy when Swiss watchmaker Omega announced that it was dropping its advertisements from Vogue because the models it used were "sketleal."

That sparked a media debate about the danger of impressionable teenagers succumbing to the slimming disease anorexia as they tried to ape the waif-like models seen in the fashion pages of leading magazines.

Fortier said Vogue was looking for "women who have lovely curves, creamy skin, big buttocks and double chins. We want to show that women can be beautiful in all different shapes."

"One or two of our photographers are getting tired of thin girls. So stand up fat girls of the world — it's time to make your mark," she said.

Biggest boat in a bottle

CONCARNEAU, France: A small fishing boat that once carried late French President Francois Mitterrand was bottled up Sunday, creating what local officials claim is the world's biggest boat in a bottle, reports AFP.

The 5.2-metre (16 feet) Kenavo was encased in a specially-built plastic bottle in the northwestern port of Concarneau, where it will go on display under the town's ramparts until September 1.

It was formerly owned by French writers Benoit Groult and Paul Guimard, who spent part of their time in the area — and the list of those who sailed in it includes Mitterrand, who was president from 1981 to 1995.

Tamil Nadu launches probe into smuggling of supplies to Tigers

MADRAS, India, July 1: The southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu has launched an investigation into the smuggling of supplies to Sri Lankan Tamil Tiger guerillas, officials said today, reports AFP.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Muthuvel Karunanidhi ordered action after meeting Indian security officials and the detection of dozens of cans of petrol and diesel along the coastline that were meant for the rebels.

"A comprehensive investigation is on", a senior official said in this capital of Tamil Nadu, a sprawling state of 55 million people divided from Sri Lanka by a narrow strip of sea.

Karunanidhi has asked Inspector General of Police P Kalimuthu to visit the coastal district of Rameshwaram after newspapers alleged that smuggling to Sri Lankan guerillas on the rise.

Karunanidhi held discussions Saturday with officers of the Indian Navy, coast guard, intelligence agencies and the state police to prevent infiltration into Tamil Nadu by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

The chief minister also ordered increased vigil along the state's winding coastline.

Tamil Nadu served as a sanctuary for the LTTE until the authorities ordered a crackdown.

Kabul residents want peace amidst fear of fresh fighting

KABUL, July 1: Abdul Haidi stoops to pull weeds from his garden, a gentle breeze rustling neatly planted rows of peas. The sweet smells of his bright red and yellow roses fill the air, reports AP.

The garden offers escape, however brief, from the horrors of Afghanistan's civil war. The small patch of beauty in a landscape of devastation gives him hope.

"Right now I just want peace," Haidi says. President Burhanuddin Rabbani says he has started the country in that direction by reaching a political accommodation with his old foe, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar.

The people of Haidi's neighbourhood and other parts of ravaged Kabul hope so, but they are leery. Soot blackens the outside of Haidi's apartment building and giant holes gape in the walls — damage from relentless attacks on Kabul by the Hezb-e-Islami fighters led by Hekmatyar.

Indo-Pak troops trade gunfire on Kashmir border

NEW DELHI, July 1: Indian and Pakistani border guards traded heavy gunfire on their Kashmir border today, the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported, reports AFP.

Pakistani rangers opened fire at eight posts of the Indian Border Security Force (BSF) in Jammu district late Sunday, forcing the Indians to fire back, a BSF spokesman was quoted as saying.

No casualties were reported.

"The exchange of fire continued intermittently till Monday morning," the spokesman said in Jammu city, winter capital of Kashmir, whose ownership is disputed by India and Pakistan.

Indian and Pakistani border guards frequently fire at each other along the winding Kashmir frontier.

Pak newspaper workers go on strike today

ISLAMABAD, July 1: Pakistan's newspaper workers were to go on strike Tuesday to protest against new taxes on the newspaper industry, press reports said today, says AFP.

No newspaper will appear on Wednesday because of the strike decided by the All Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS) and Pakistan Newspapers and Periodicals Organisation.

Publishers are demanding the withdrawal of a sales tax on newspapers and customs levy on imported newsprint, which they say would cripple the industry.

They have threatened an indefinite strike if Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto does not act.

An APNS statement accused the authorities of being "indifferent" to the "threat"

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Forces loyal to Rabbani and Hekmatyar began fighting over Kabul-soon after loosely allied Islamic movements ousted a Marxist government in April 1992 and then turned on each other in a struggle for power. But today, Hekmatyar is no longer the enemy. He and Rabbani reached an agreement in mid-May to make Hekmatyar prime minister and keep the presidency for Rabbani's faction, the Jamiat-e-Islami. Hekmatyar was sworn in June 26.

The government says it hopes the accord will be an example to other factions to find a solution through negotiations rather than fighting.

The main threat to Kabul now is the Taliban, a movement started by Islamic religious students whose troops are arrayed in the hills south of the city. Taliban fighters greeted Hekmatyar's swearing-in day by raining rockets on Kabul, killing more than 30 people and wounding dozens in the bloodiest shelling of the year.

And despite the peace accord, many people in Kabul are troubled by the sight of newly arrived Hezb-e-Islami soldiers wandering the streets. The government says about 1,200 Hezb-e-Islami men are in the capital.

At restaurants, people step aside when they walk in, always heavily armed. On the roads they rule in their four-wheel-drive vehicles. The weapons are a problem that we would like to deal with," said Amrullah, a government spokesman who like many Afghans uses only one name.

The new Hezb-e-Islami headquarters is right in the middle of the city. Dozens of soldiers with grenade launchers and machine guns sit on the sidewalk outside the 3-meters (10-foot) steel gate. It's not clear whether they are guards or simply waiting until they are called upon to fight at the front.

On street corners, often in areas heavily damaged by Hezb-e-Islami shelling, Hekmatyar's men now sit alongside government soldiers sipping green tea and laughing.

Sitting cross-legged on a straw mat, Abdul Mohammed, a Hezb-e-Islami soldier, gestures toward the devastated buildings in Kabul's old money market, known as Jeday Maiwan.

"Hezb-e-Islami did all this," he concedes, and then adds: "It is the leaders who are responsible. Now they are talking and that is good."

Healing the wounds will not be easy. In Macroyan, where Haidi's tiny garden is in full bloom, many people are fearful about the presence of Hezb-e-Islami fighters. They have terrible memories of the fighting between Hekmatyar and Rabbani, when their homes were on the front line.

From the hills behind Macroyan, Hezb-e-Islami rockets rained down on the dozens of apartment buildings that make up the suburb. Twisted metal balconies still hang down the sides of the buildings. Inside the ravaged structures, three and four families live in one room. Apartments are missing walls.

During 1994 and 1995 — the peak of the battle between Hekmatyar and the government — 25,000 people died in Kabul, most of them civilians and many of those children, humanitarian workers estimate. In Macroyan alone, hundreds of people were killed.

At least 750,000 people have fled the city and most who have stayed behind are either government personnel or do not have the money to leave.

Angela, a pretty 11-year-old in a silky purple shirt and pants, limps toward Haidi's garden, her left foot dragging behind.

Shyly she lifts her pant leg to reveal an ankle barely 5 centimeters (two inches) a two inches around and a foot that is a swollen, scarred stump.

"A rocket landed on my house," she says. "My brother died and my foot was hurt." For Angela, like many people in Macroyan, the fear of renewed fighting is always near. "I don't know why, but I am very afraid of more fighting," she says.