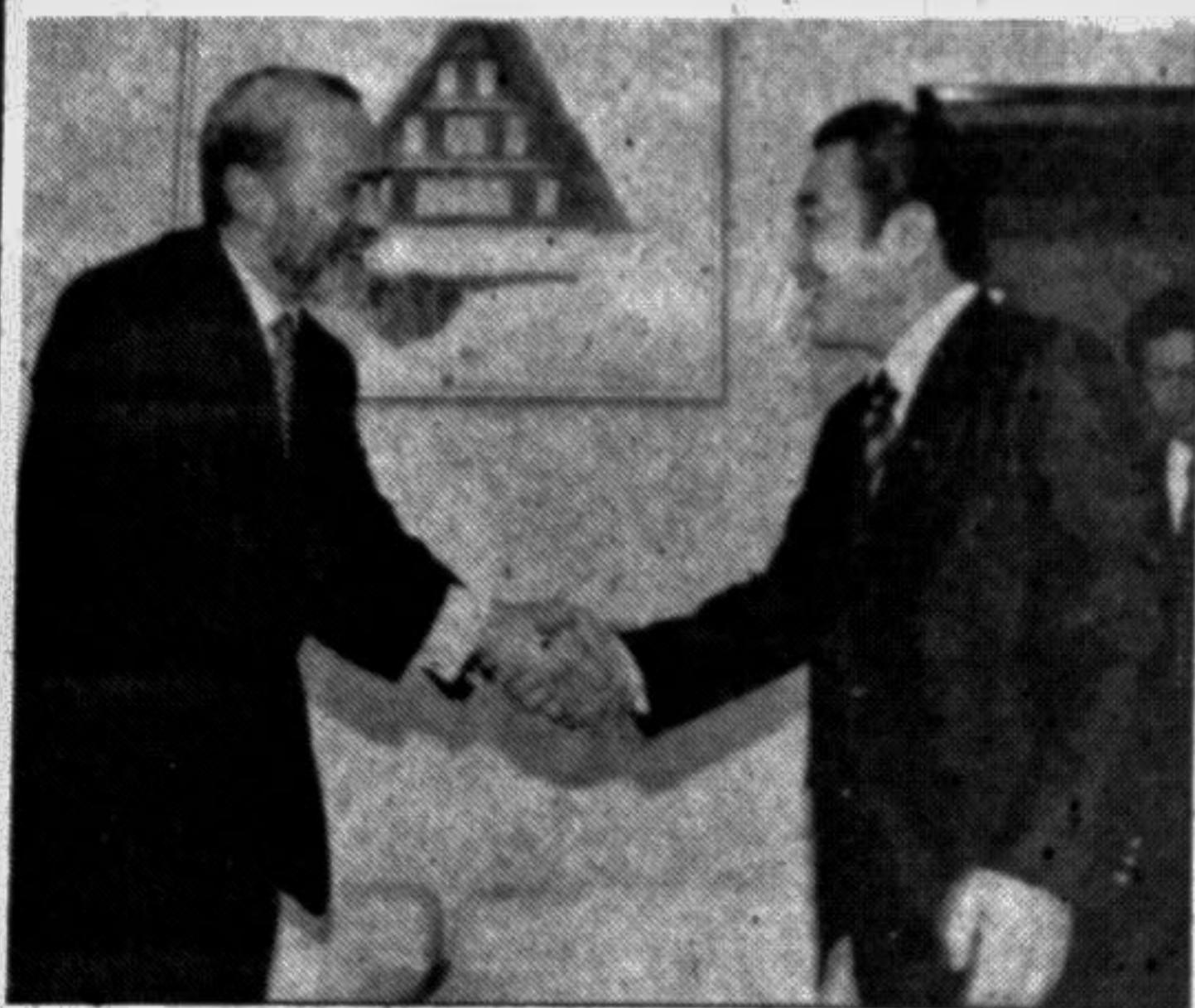


## International

## BRIEFLY



Mexican Foreign Minister Jose Angel Gurria (L) shakes hands with Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto at the latter's official residence on Monday. Gurria arrived in Tokyo on Sunday for a four-day official visit to discuss issues of mutual concern.

— AFP/UNB photo

**Hashimoto congratulates Yeltsin:** The Prime Minister of Japan congratulated Boris Yeltsin on Monday upon his victory in presidential runoff last week. AP reports from Moscow.

During a telephone conversation, Ryutaro Hashimoto told Yeltsin's re-election "is the evidence of consolidation of democracy and continuation of the reform in Russia," Yeltsin's press service reported.

**Blast kills one in Islamabad:** A powerful bomb hidden under a bench tore through a railway station in central Punjab province Monday killing one person and injuring 24 others, the state run news agency reported. AP reports from Islamabad.

No one immediately took responsibility for the bombing in Faisalabad, about 350 kilometers (210 miles) southeast of the capital Islamabad. Previous bombings in Punjab province have been blamed on Pakistan's longtime enemy India.

**Chandrika to visit ROK:** President Chandrika Kumaratunga will visit South Korea next month on a goodwill visit, a government official said Tuesday. AP reports from Colombo.

Kumaratunga will meet with South Korean President Kim Young Sam to discuss bilateral trade and investment in Sri Lanka, the official said.

The exact dates of her visit were not revealed for security reasons. She will be accompanied by Foreign Minister Lashman Kadirgamar and Trade Ministry officials.

**Kuwait's crown prince off to KSA:** Kuwait's Crown Prince left for Saudi Arabia Tuesday to discuss security in the Gulf region following a terror bombing in the desert kingdom that killed 19 American military personnel and wounded hundreds last month. AP reports from Kuwait.

After Saudi Arabia, Sheikh Saad al-Abdullah al-Sabah will visit Bahrain, which has been plagued by unrest for 19 months.

Sheikh Saad, who also is prime minister, was accompanied on the three-day trip by a high ranking delegation that included Interior Minister Sheikh Ali al-Sabah and other Cabinet members.

**Anthony Lake meets Qichen:** US National Security Advisor Anthony Lake met Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen at the start of a day of four key appointments with Chinese leaders yesterday. Xinhua said, reports AFP from Beijing.

Later, Lake is to meet Defense Minister Chi Haotian, President Jiang Zemin and Premier Li Peng. Lake, who arrived Saturday, spent Monday with Liu Huagui, Director of Foreign Affairs under the State Council in "extensive and intensive discussions on bilateral and state issues."

**Mandela arrives in Britain:** President Nelson Mandela arrived Monday night for a four-day state visit to Britain that will include a tour with Prince Charles of south London's mainly black Brixton district, AP reports from London.

Accompanied by his daughter Zenani Mandela-Dlamini, the South African leader told reporters on arrival at London's Heathrow airport aboard a South African Air Force jet: "I hope this visit will help all round relations — political, economic and others."

**400 human skulls seized in India:** Indian police have seized more than 400 human skulls from a river in the eastern state of Bihar, newspapers reported yesterday. AFP reports from New Delhi.

## Russia begins heavy shelling Night-time curfew across Chechnya from today

MOSCOW, July 9: Russian forces will impose a night-time curfew across the war-torn republic of Chechnya starting Wednesday, Interfax quoted a military spokesman as saying. reports AFP.

Russian military spokesman Roman Sokolovsky said that all necessary measures would be taken to enforce the curfew.

At present, only the heavily occupied capital Grozny is subject to an effective curfew, while other towns and villages are under far slacker control by Russian soldiers.

The curfew order came as a 24-hour deadline set by Russian commander general Vyacheslav Tikhonov for the Chechens to free all prisoners of war or face "adequate measures" was to expire at 6.00 pm (1400 gmt).

The Itar-Tass News Agency

— AFP/UNB photo

— AFP/UN