

Accord to curb global arms exports likely

VIENNA, July 13: Negotiators from over thirty countries struck a landmark deal on Friday to curb global arms exports after two days of closed-door talks succeeded in overcoming Russian objections, reports Reuter.

"Today we have established and agreed to implement the Wassenaar arrangement... Russia agreed to the original text as it existed in April," the US government official said as he left the meeting.

"The organisation is now up and running. It is an important addition to the various supplier regimes," a West European diplomat told Reuters.

Twenty-eight nations sketched the outlines of the first post-Cold War export control forum for conventional weapons and military technology in the Dutch town of Wassenaar in December 1995.

But Russian resistance to key clauses threatened to scupper the deal in April and what should have been the

founding session of the organisation — successor to the secretive Cocom body — ended in disarray.

"We are very pleased the Russians have come round to join the consensus. It is very important to have them as equal partners," the US official said.

Russian diplomats also expressed satisfaction with the outcome. "We are happy with the agreement," a Russian delegate said.

Moscow's opposition to the pact had centred on a provision requiring each nation to notify other members after granting an export licence for sensitive technology with potential military applications — such as supercomputers or night-vision goggles.

"The Russians originally disagreed on notifying undercuts — authorising an export other states had denied. But they finally accepted this kind of transparency is essential for the organisation," a western diplomat said.

Troops barricade parts of Srinagar Kashmiri leaders confined to homes to prevent rallies

SRINAGAR, India, July 13: Indian troops barricaded parts of Srinagar and confined Kashmiri leaders to their homes today in a bid to prevent street rallies by Muslim militants and local politicians, witnesses said, reports AFP.

Paramilitary Border Security Force (BSF) soldiers were out in strength to enforce an "unofficial curfew" in parts of this state summer capital to prevent public gatherings.

Baton-wielding policemen and fully-armed federal troops ringed the city's main Jama Masjid mosque as part of the security operation, residents said by telephone.

State police chief A K Suri said the soldiers have been deployed as a precaution against possible violence.

Muslim militants could start trouble in the guise of holding Martyr's Day rallies in the city, the official added.

Kashmiris organise marches on July 13 every year in the memory of 13 Muslim leaders who were killed during a rally to protest the rule of a Hindu king in Kashmir in 1931 when it was an unpartitioned princely state.

The Himalayan territory was divided between India and Pakistan after the independence of the subcontinent in 1947.

BSF troops today placed leaders of the National Conference Party under virtual house arrest and ordered residents not to venture out in downtown Srinagar, urban hub of an anti-Indian rebellion in Kashmir.

Security troops also slapped similar restrictions on the powerful All-Party Hurriyat Conference preventing its Muslims separatist and political leaders from organising street marches, the witnesses added.

"House arrest of the entire, Hurriyat leadership speaks volumes of the hollowness of the Indian government's claims that the situation in Kashmir has improved," an academic told AFP from his barricaded Srinagar home.

The police, however, allowed National Conference leader Farooq Abdullah to visit a revered martyr's grave in the city centre.

More than 12,000 people have died in Kashmir, the only Muslim-majority state in overwhelmingly-Hindu India, since 1989 when Muslim separatist groups stepped up an anti-India campaign in the Himalayan territory, bordering Pakistan.

Indian accuses Pakistan of fomenting trouble in Kashmir. Islamabad denies the charge but extends moral and diplomatic support to what it calls the Kashmiris legitimate struggle for self-determination.

7 protesters killed in Balochistan

QUETTA, Pakistan, July 13: At least seven people, including a woman, were killed and 20 wounded when Pakistani rural police opened fire on marchers protesting against the relocation of a district hospital, officials said, reports Reuter.

The incident occurred in Awaran town in Balochistan province, some 350 km south-east of Quetta, officials sources said today.

The official said police retaliated after some protesters, angry about the shifting of a district hospital venue, opened fire on them during a procession on Friday.

"Seven people died on the spot and 20 were wounded when levies (the rural police) returned the fire," the official said.

He said the protesters had blocked the main road of the town since Thursday and refused to end their protest.

Witnesses claimed at least nine people were killed in the shooting, but no official confirmation was available.

US to adapt defence tech to help Kazakhstan

WASHINGTON, July 13: Under an agreement signed on Friday, the United States will adapt defence technology to help Kazakhstan evaluate and clean up nuclear and biological weapons sites, the US Energy Department said.

Airborne remote sensing systems developed to support arms control will be used to clean up weapons sites left by the former Soviet Union, as well as to map ecological zones and explore for minerals, the department said in a statement.

The technology is to be used late this summer in the former Soviet Republic for the first time outside the United States, the department said.

Sophisticated instruments in two large pods carried beneath the wings of US navy P-3 aircraft will produce high-resolution images and topographic maps of stunning accuracy and details, the department said.

The technology will help Kazakhstan evaluate and clean up weapons sites so they can be converted to non-weapons uses and search for mineral deposits particularly at former nuclear weapons test centres.

7 killed in fighting in Sri Lanka

COLOMBO, July 13: At least five rebels were killed as hundreds of government forces continued their four-day-old advance into Tamil guerrilla territory in northeastern Sri Lanka, officials said Saturday, reports AP.

The military fired artillery and mortar shells on rebels trying to block its progress in eastern Batticaloa district on Friday, said Maj. Tilak Dunuwille, the army spokesman.

Two soldiers were killed in northern Jaffna Peninsula when rebels infiltrated military defence lines and ambushed their jeep the same day, said Dunuwille.

One soldier was wounded in the fighting in Kirmachchhal and Sampakkulam villages, about 210 kilometres (130 miles) east of Colombo.

The military said at least 22 rebels have been killed in the offensive launched on Wednesday. The soldiers have overrun five rebel bases in northeastern Sri Lanka.

Anti-Jackson campaign launched in ROK

SEOUL, July 13: A civic group launched a campaign Saturday to ban Michael Jackson from performing here because of his past embroilment in child molestation charges, reports AP.

The group, which claims 150,000 members nationwide, wants the Sports and Culture Ministry to ban the American pop star from coming and publicly apologise for even considering the possibility of the visit.

Because all foreigners must have government permission in order to perform here, past attempts to bring Jackson refused when the ministry refused.

Off the Record



The Princes of Wales leaves Dukes Hotel in London on Friday, after the announcement that she had agreed terms for her divorce from the Prince of Wales, which will be concluded on August 28 this year. — AFP/UNB photo

Hairy-chested men are brainier than bare-chested

LONDON: Hairy-chested men are brainier than their smoother rivals, a US scientist claimed Friday as he laid bare 22 years of research at a conference of European psychiatrists, reports AFP.

Alkarakudy Alias, who practises in Illinois, said his studies showed 10 per cent of American males were very hairy, but that the percentage rose to 45 per cent for those studying medicine or engineering.

Hairy chests were often associated with masculinity because people who went bare-chested were often farmers and building workers rather than academics.

Alias, whose shirt remained firmly buttoned during his speech, pointed to Charles Darwin, chess player Gary Kasparov and actors Robin Williams and Peter Sellers to back up his theory.

Scientists urge govts to focus on global warming

GENEVA, July 13: Scientists on Friday urged governments to turn their attention from short-term political gain to focus on the world's long-term future as it faces the perils of global warming, reports AFP.

"As far as we can tell, it's during our life time that for the first time ever, the scale of human economic activity has reached the point where this natural system upon which we depend is starting to falter," Professor Anthony McMichael, of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, said.

He was presenting a 300-page report to coincide with a two-week UN conference on climatic change which opened here on Monday and is attended by delegates from some 150 countries.

"Many scientists feel the conventional tools of economists are simply inadequate to this type of task. The magnitude, scale, temporal duration of this type of problems confront us with challenges that we had not have to do with before," McMichael said.

Protestant march sparks violence in N Ireland

BELFAST, July 13: Britain was facing attack from its Irish partner in the Northern Ireland peace process on Saturday for its handling of Protestant parades which sparked the worst unrest in the province for years, reports Reuter.

Irish Prime Minister John Bruton accused Britain of giving in the Protestant anger by allowing Orange Order marches through Catholic areas and causing a wave of riots in which three policemen were injured in the first shooting for two years.

Scattered violence continued throughout the province early on Saturday as Catholics erected barricades and burned cars in protest at province-wide marches by the Orange Order on the twelfth of July, the most cherished date in their calendar.

Clinton widens lead over Dole

WASHINGTON, July 13: President Bill Clinton widened his lead over presumptive Republican presidential nominee Bob Dole this month in a CNN Time public opinion poll released on Friday, reports Reuter.

It showed Clinton ahead by 15 percentage points with 53 per cent, compared with Dole's 38 per cent CNN said.

Clinton's lead was greater than it was in June when he led by only six percentage points at 49 per cent compared with Dole's 43 per cent, CNN said.

When Texas billionaire Ross Perot was added to the mix, Clinton widened his edge further over Dole to a 16 percentage point lead.

BRRIEFLY

Iraq, Turkey sign accord:

Iraq and Turkey signed a cooperation accord in Baghdad Friday centered in trade, agriculture and petroleum, the officials INA news agency reported, AFP says from Baghdad.

UNSC extends operation in Angola:

The Security Council on Thursday extended the UN peacekeeping operation in Angola for three months but said progress in implementing the two-year-old peace accords was still behind schedule, Reuter reports from United Nations.

Kuchma signs new constitution:

Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma on Friday signed a new constitution for his country and called for reconciliation between political forces that clashed during parliamentary debate over the charter, Interfax news agency reported, AFP says from Moscow.

Egyptian beheaded in KSA:

An Egyptian national convicted of murder was decapitated by sword on Friday in Riyadh, official Saudi television said, AFP reports from Riyadh.

Ex-police chief executed in China:

A former police chief in eastern China was executed Friday in what news reports called a major corruption case, and his city's Communist Party chief and two officials received suspended death sentences, AP reports from Beijing.

Suharto arrives in Jakarta:

Indonesia's President Suharto arrived at Jakarta's Halim Perdanakusuma airport yesterday after a medical check up trip to Germany an airport official said, AFP reports from Jakarta.

NBC anchorman Chancellor dies:

Veteran NBC anchorman John Chancellor died at his home on Friday, the television network said. He was 68, Reuter reports from Princeton.

26 Vietnamese held in HK:

Police arrested a group of 26 Vietnamese illegal immigrants and seized a cache of firearms from them yesterday, a police spokesman said, AFP reports from Hong Kong.

Drugs worth \$ 6.5m seized in Britain:

British customs officers on Friday seized two separate hauls of heroin and ecstasy totalling 6.5 million dollars, officials said in London, AFP reports from London.

NAM chairman barred from entering US

BOGOTA, Colombia, June 13: The non-aligned movement NAM voiced its support for Colombia on Friday after President Ernesto Samper, its chairman, was barred from entering the United States, reports Reuter.

The US State Department revoked Samper's US travel visa on Thursday, citing his alleged ties to drug traffickers as the reason he was no longer welcome in the United States.

The unusual move drew angry charges of US intervention in Colombia's internal affairs from government officials in Bogota, charges echoed in a communique from the non-aligned movement NAM issued at UN headquarters.

LONDON, July 13: Prince Charles is about to clear the divorce hurdle, but some big questions lie waiting to trip him up, reports AP.

He and Princess Diana have agreed to a settlement reportedly in the multi-millions and to terms that keep her officially within the royal family. But what people now want to know is, will Charles and Camilla Parker Bowles go public? Will they marry? Can she be queen? Will he be king, and can he remain head of the Church of England? What if he has more children?



Czech President Vaclav Havel (L) meets British actress Julia Ormond (C) and Czech writer Arnost Lustig, members of the international jury at the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival late on Friday. Havel arrived to Karlovy Vary for a private visit to see some of the festival films. — AFP/UNB photo

More evidence of civilian massacre found in Srebrenica

CERSKA, Bosnia-Herzegovina, July 13: All wore civilian clothes. Some had their hands bound with wire. Spent cartridges lying nearby indicated they were shot at close range, reports AP.

As experts dug deeper into a mass grave Friday, the evidence pointed to a civilian massacre — just the fate many people believe befell thousands of Muslims as they fled Bosnian Serbs after the fall of the Srebrenica enclave a year ago.

Five days of digging here at Cerska, 17 miles (27 kilometres) northwest of Srebrenica, has uncovered the remains of some 60 people. Investigators from the international war crimes tribunal for Bosnia are looking for buried evidence to use in prosecuting war crimes suspects.

Serb leaders claim that any Muslims who died after the fall of Srebrenica died fighting. William D Haglund, the team's chief scientist, said Friday that was obviously not the case.

Showing reporters one of the bodies, Haglund pointed to bones on the excavated surface of the grave site.

"Look at those hands. Do you see how they're crossed? And there is wire wrapped around them," he said. This silver wire could be seen wrapped around the brown wrist bones of a pair of skeletonized hands.

All of the bodies uncovered have been in civilian clothing. Cartridges found on the scene indicated they were shot at close range, and the shell casings were marked as recently as 1994, proving that the find couldn't be from the beginning of the war.

The position of the bodies suggested that the victims were lined up on an embankment and shot from across a narrow road, Haglund said. Soil was probably dumped on top of the bodies.

Clothing indicated that all of the uncovered bodies were male.

About 7,000 men disappeared after the Serbs captured Srebrenica last July. Most are thought to have been killed by the Serbs — either ambushed as they fled through woods, or captured and mowed down by firing squads.

The war crimes tribunal has charged Bosnian Serb Gen. Ratko Mladic with organising the massacres around Srebrenica. On Thursday, it issued international arrest warrants for him and the Bosnian Serb political leader, Radovan Karadzic.

On Friday, thousands of people who fled Srebrenica gathered in the northern town of Tuzla and vowed to return. "We will come back," said Naser Oric, the former military commander of Srebrenica who was pulled out weeks before the enclave fell. "We ask for the punishment of all war criminals. We want the truth about the missing, and a dignified burial for the dead of Srebrenica."



Former prime minister PV Narasimha Rao (C) emerges briefly from his residence to greet supporters from his Congress (I) political party during a rally on Friday in New Delhi. Rao, whose political future is on the line, stepped out only a few moments from his highly secured residence to greet the crowd of several hundred supporters. — AFP/UNB photo

Prince Charles' troubles far from finished

approval of his future subjects. The marriage breakup has damaged the monarchy and Charles. In April, an opinion poll found 47 per cent thought he would make a good king, compared with 82 per cent in 1991.

There are no legal obstacles to Charles becoming King when Queen Elizabeth II dies, even with a divorced woman as his queen, constitutional experts say.

But the monarch is Britain's head of state, and the monarchy survives only because the voters want it.

Under the Royal Marriages Act of 1772, Charles needs the monarch's approval to marry. The queen gives that "on the advice" of her ministers — a polite way of saying the gov-

ernment will tell her what to do. The wife of the king becomes the queen, so "in the choice of queen the voice of the people should be heard through its elected leaders," constitutional expert Vernon Bogdanor, an Oxford University professor of government, wrote in December.

He pointed to the abdication of King Edward VIII in 1936. The government said twice-divorced American Wallis Simpson was unsuitable to be queen. He wouldn't give her up, and rejected the throne instead.

Camilla Parker Bowles, 48, may never win the hearts of the British public. She may not even want to be queen — she has never uttered a public

word about her on-and-off love affair with 47-year-old Charles.

But she was divorced last year and, having sold the family home, bought another nearby — only 17 miles (27 kms) from the prince's high-grove estate in southwest England.

Royal watchers wonder if she may be starting to look for public acceptability. They detect some updating of the Parker Bowles wardrobe and smartening of her appearance.

The newspapers rarely miss a chance to point out the disparity between Diana's slender chic and the rather stolid horse-country style of her rival. Charles would not be the first divorced king. Henry VIII got a divorce while on the throne, and George I was di-

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