BRIFFIY

80 pc support attack on Iraq in US: An opinion poll taken after the United States launched cruise missile strikes against Iraq found eight in 10 Americans approved and nearly 75 per cent approved of President Clinton's handling of the situation. AP reports from Washington.

The poll, taken by ABC News before a second strike launched Wednesday, Iraq time, surveyed 515 adults by telephone. It had a margin of error of plus or minus 5 percentage points.

Farrakhan arrives in Cuba: Louis Farrakhan, leader of the militant Nation of Islam group, arrived in Cuba on Tuesday saying he wanted to learn about the effects of a longstanding US economic embargo on the island, Cuban news agencies said, Reuter reports from Havana.

Prensa Latina News Agency said Farrakhan, accompanied by members of his family and other leading Nation Of Islam militants, would be in Cuba on a brief 48-hour visit. Farrakhan, a controversial figure in the African-American community in the United States, told Cuban reporters he was interested in a close view of the impact of recently tightened US economic sanctions against the communist-ruled nation.

Clinton 21 pts ahead in CNN polls: A new national poll puts President Clinton 21 points ahead of Bob Dole as the fall campaign season begins. AP reports from New

Results of the CNN-USA Today-Gallup survey, taken Friday through Sunday were similar to those in polls conducted late last week ABC News and Newsweek. All three find Clinton getting big help in public opinion from the Democratic National Convention, with no apparent damage from the resignation Thursday of his top political adviser. Dick Morris, because of a sex scandal.

Strong quake rocks Algeria: A strong earthquake shook Algiers yesterday causing minor damage according to first reports. AFP reports from Algiers. Residents in the centre of the town said some walls were

cracked and glasses were broken. The temblor came 15 minutes after midnight (0415 GMT) and lasted more than 10 seconds. Clash claims 1 in Belfast: One man was

killed and another who was with him was badly hurt in a gun attack at Lurgan 20 miles (30 kilometres) southwest of Belfast Tuesday night, AP reports from Belfast. No group immediately claimed responsibility. But the British national news agency Press Association quoted unidentified security sources as saying it is believed to be the latest episode in an internal feud in the Irish National Liberation Army. The INLA is a breakaway faction of the Irish Republican Army, which has been fighting to drive the British

Palestinian plane hijacker held: A Palestinian who hijacked a Bulgarian charter plane to Norway on Tuesday was arrested at Oslo Airport less than an hour after

out of Northern Ireland for decades. The feud is between the

INLA and a small group that broke away from it.

landing, police said, Reuter reports from Oslo. "The man surrendered at 8.47 pm (1847 GMT)," a police spokesman said. "He asked for a lawyer. He asked for political asylum. He said there is no weapon on board but we will check for ourselves." "He has not given any political motive," police superintendent Asbjoern Gran told reporters. "The only demands he put forth were to obtain a lawyer, which is easy to fulfil, and to gain political asylum. Maybe all he wanted was to get here. He is between 20 and 30 years old."

Russian composer Veniamin dies: Veniamin Basner, who composed classical music, musicals and movie scores, has died at age 72, the ITAR-Tass news agency

reported, AP reports from St. Petersburg. The report said he died Monday in St. Petersburg but did not give the cause of death. Basner graduated from the conservatory in Leningrad, as St. Petersburg formerly was known, as a performing violinist, but soon shifted to composing. He wrote the music for nearly 50 films, the report said.

2 girls found dead in Belgium: Belgian police have found the remains of two missing teenage girls, victims in a paedophile abduction, sexual abuse and murder case that has sent shivers of alarm across Europe, Reuter reports from Brussels.

The decomposed bodies of an Marchal and Eefje Lambrecks were found on Tuesday buried in a metal container 2.5 metres (yards) under a shed in the garden of a house in Charleroi owned by convicted rapist March Dutroux. Dutroux has admitted kidnapping the two on August 22 last year with accomplice Michel Lelievre who is also under arrest.

30 die from encephalitis in Nepal: At least 30 people have died from encephalitis in Nepal in the past three weeks while 48 others have been afflicted, a public health service official said yesterday. AFP reports from

The deaths take the toll from the disease, which causes swelling of the brain, to 50 in Nepal this year, said the official. The dead were all from tropical southwestern and southeastern districts of the country, where the mosquito-borne disease

Telephone scam in India

More money, jewellery seized

Protest against political wrangling in Gujarat

India's parliament breaks up in disarray

NEW DELHI, Sept 4: India's parliament broke up in disarray for the second-straight session today after opposition Hindu nationalists protested against political wrangling in the western state of Gujarat, reports Reuter.

Officials said both the upper and lower houses adjourned after sitting for less than one hour. They will not reopen until Friday because Thursday is a Hindu holiday.

Wednesday's adjournment, and a similar curtailment on Tuesday, delayed a reply by Finance Minister P. Chidambaram to a debate on the federal budget for 1996/97 (April-March)

key understandings.

TEL AVIV. Sept 4:

Palestinian leaders were wait-

ing early Wednesday for Israel's

response to proposals that

could pave the way toward a

long-awaited first meeting be-

tween Yasser Arafat and Israel's

new prime minister, reports AP

cials, speaking on condition of

anonymity, said the meeting

could come Wednesday if minor

disagreements on several issues

- primarily Israel's request to

rework the terms of its with-

drawal from the West Bank city

it should be settled tonight, be-

cause I consider the differences

very small." David Bar Illan, a

spokesman for Prime Minister

"Everything else being equal

of Hebron — were resolved.

Israeli and Palestinian offi-

Today, members of the oppo-

sition Hindu Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) approached the Speaker's chair in the lower house and shouted protests at what they said was a conspiracy by other leading parties to oust the BJP led government in Gu-

"It is a murder of democracy," they shouted, while facing angry retorts from members of ex-prime minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's Congress Party, who joined them near the Speaker's chair.

Congress leaders had said the BJP government in Gujarat had lost its majority after a split in the ranks of the BJP.

The row erupted when the Deputy Speaker of the Gujarat State Assembly, a Congress

President of Palestinian Authority Yasser Arafat and his wife Souha talk together during

a ceremony of Independence Qatarian Day held in Gaze City Tuesday. Marathon efforts to

arrange a first meeting between Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Arafar

bogged down amid Palestinian charges that the Israelis were reneging at last minute on

Palestinian leaders waiting

for Israel's reply

Benjamin Netanyahu, said late

meeting would constitute the

first recognition of the

Palestinian leader by an Israeli

premier from the Likud party.

which long opposed Israel-PLO

Netanyahu is under pressure

from Israel's allies, his security

establishment and Cabinet

moderates to meet Arafat to

rekindle the peace process. But

ing key Likud constituencies

progress, Arafat might also feel

constrained by widespread

Palestinian discomfort with

Tuesday's US missile strike

bitterly oppose the meeting.

right-wing officials represent-

Despite the reported

An Arafat-Netanyahu

Tuesday.

peacemaking.

member, adjourned the assem-bly indefinitely on Tuesday when the BJP-led government was expecting to prove its majority after the party split. The BJP split in Gujarat last

International

month after it expelled a power caste chieftain Shankarsinh Vaghela, following a dash with other senior

The state assembly's Deputy Speaker was filling in for the Speaker, a BJP member who was ill. He recognised 46 break away BJP members as a sepa rate political group in the assembly before adjourning the

BJP leaders say the Deputy Speaker violated democratic norms by not allowing Chief

- AFP/UNB photo

against military targets in Iraq

continued Tuesday.

Israeli official said.

Still, unspecified contacts

An AFP report from

Jerusalem: Officials were edg-

ing closer to arranging meeting

on Wednesday between Israeli

Prime Minister Benjamin

Netanyahu and Palestinian

President Yasser Arafat, an

should materialise on

Wednesday or Thursday.

Netanyahu's media adviser

David Bar-Illan told Reuters.

"The gap is extremely narrow

between the sides. There is

agreement on practically all

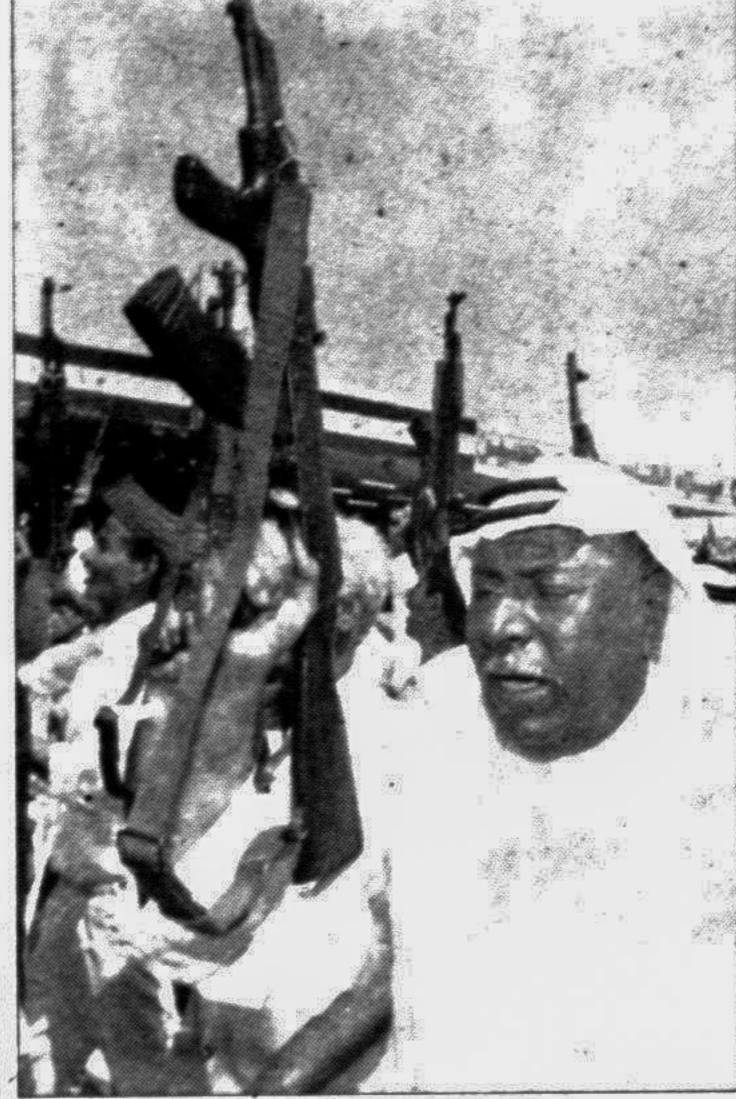
"All being equal a meeting

Minister Sureshbhai Mehta to prove his majority on the floor of the house. They say the BJP has 94 state lawmakers in the 182-member assembly after the

BJP leaders in the federal parliament and in Guiarat said Prime Minister H.D Deve Gowda's United Front coalition, ruling India with support from the Congress, was party to the moves to ousted Gujarat state government

"It is a conspiracy of the Congress and the United Front. senior state BJP leader Kashiram Rana told Reuters in parliament in New Delhi today. The BJP won most seats in

the federal parliament in general elections in April and May



Iraqis carrying weapons demonstrate in Baghdad Tuesday after the US fired Cruise missiles on southern Iraq. The attack came in retaliation for Saddam Hussein's drive in the Kurdish safe haven in the north. - AFP/UNB photo

Kuwaiti forces on full alert

KUWAIT CITY. Sept 4. Kuwait armed forces are on full alert and the situation in Iraq is being monitored closely. The defence minister said in interviews published today. Teports

We have a plan in place to meet the situation and we are now executing it in general." Defence Minster Sheikh Ahmad Al-Hamoud Al-Sabah said in As Sivassaad Al-Anbaa news-

He said Kuwait was monitor ing the situation in Iraq closely, but added that what was happening in the north was an Iraqi affair

He said Kuwaiti forces were on full alert, although he said the borders with Iraq were extremely quiet with no unusual movements reported

India to patrol southern coast to prevent Tamil's entry

NEW DELHI, Sept 4: The Indian coast guard will soon begin patrolling the country's southern coast around-the-clock to prevent entry by Sri Lankan Tamil guerillas, a senior official said today, reports AFP.

Coast Guard Director General P.G. Jacob said in Madras that his men would not allow separatists to sneak through with Tamil civilians fleeing war-torn Sri Lanka.

"Though the refugees cannot be prevented, the Coast guard will not permit Tamil militants (to enter India)," Jacob said.

More than 1,000 Sri Lankan Tamils have taken refuge in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu during the past two months to escalating fighting between troops and Tamil Tiger guerillas on the island.

Tamil Nadu has been home to some 100,000 Sri Lankan refugees since 1983. The state, home to about 55 million Indian Tamils, is separated from Sri Lanka by a narrow strait.

University teachers in Nigeria defy govt order to

return to class

LAGOS, Sept 4: Thousands of university professors defied a government order to end a 5month-old strike Tuesday, despite warnings they would lose their jobs, reports AP.

"We have resolved that we will not be stampeded into re-turning to work," said Sola Fajana, an economics professor at the University of Ibadan, one of the 39 campuses nationwide affected by the strike.

At least five professors have been arrested and the unions representing strikers have been banned since the strike began April 9. There are more than 12,000

university professors in Nigeria, and most have supported the protest.

Their main demand is more money, but they also are using the strike to publicise their opposition to government spending policies that they say ignore educational needs.

On Monday, Gen. Sani Abacha's government warned that if they did not return to work Tuesday, the universities would be closed and the strikers fired. There were no immediate reports of government action at any universities Tuesday.

Israel's foreign ministry ex-

pressed its support for the US

action, noting that "Israel is the

only state in the region which is

Russia and the Arabs are key

dissenters. Like the French.

though, Moscow was told the at-

tack would proceed whatever

Russia's reservations. The

United States asked for under-

standing, and for diplomatic

pressure on Iraq to relent in its

drive in the Kurdish region.

directly threatened by Iraq."

should be observed.

Off the Record

Because it passed its expiry date

LONDON: The Princess of Wales, who last week collected a 17 million pound (25 million dollars) cash divorce settlement, was refused credit for 24 pounds

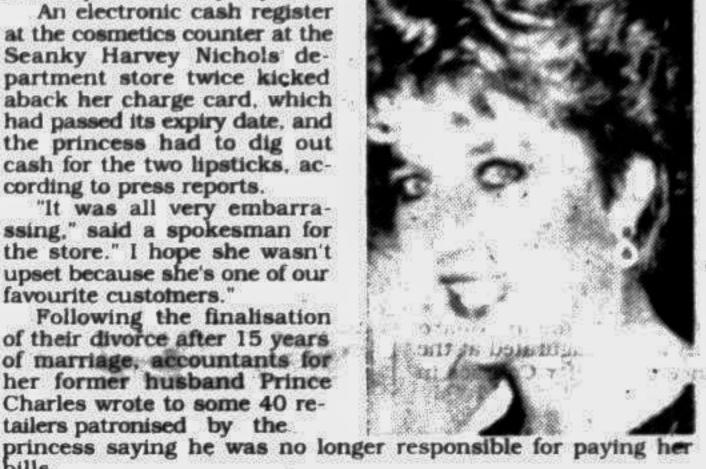
(36 dollars) worth of lipstick, it was reported Tuesday, says AFP An electronic cash register at the cosmetics counter at the Seanky Harvey Nichols department store twice kicked aback her charge card, which had passed its expiry date, and the princess had to dig out

cording to press reports. "It was all very embarrassing," said a spokesman for the store." I hope she wasn't upset because she's one of our favourite customers."

cash for the two lipsticks, ac-

Following the finalisation of their divorce after 15 years of marriage, accountants for her former husband Prince

Charles wrote to some 40 retailers patronised by the



One-tenth of European males impotent!

PARIS: Some 26 million European men over 18, or about a tenth of the continent's male population, have an impotence problem, mainly because of psychological causes, French specialist Alain Jardin said Tuesday, reports AFP.

Various risk factors were also to blame, including diabetes, arterio-scalerosis and smoking. Professor Jardin told a urology congress.

China won't use its power against neighbours: Li Peng

BEIJING, Sept 4: Chinese Premier Li Peng said today China would not use its growing clout to threaten other states, . reports Reuter.

Beijing's military muscle was for defensive needs and would not be used against its regional neighbours, Li told an international gathering on World Economic and Political

Trends in the 21st century. "As China develops it will not threaten other states," Li said. "China does not engage in military expansionism. China's military strength is entirely of a defensive nature."

The premier said Beijing was pursuing a policy of fostering long-term economic growth and this required an international climate of stability. China has enjoyed double digit economic growth since 1991.

Li did not refer to disputes with Tokyo over the Diaoyu Islands, known in Japanese as the Senkakus, or mention frictions with Southeast Asian nations over the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea.

There was also no mention of China's military exercises and missile tests off Taiwan's coast earlier this year, when Beijing was widely seen as attempting to interfere in the islands first direct presidential election.

The peaceful reunification of Taiwan was a Beijing objective, the premier said.

Taiwan is an inalienable part of Chinese territory," he

He said Taiwan should be recovered peacefully under the "one country, two systems" formula, which Beijing says it will apply toward the British colony of Hong Kong after it reverts to Chinese rule on July 1.

Beijing says the formula allows Hong Kong to maintain its capitalist system as part of China's communist state.

The premier called the return of Hong Kong an important milestone in Chinese history.

Just after a 10 PM curfew, heavy machine guns could be heard on the western edge of Bujumbura and grenade blasts along with tracer fire could be seen from the city centre. It was the heaviest fighting since a military-led coup July 25.

Three mortar shells hit western Bujumbura on Tuesday afternoon, one striking the University of Bujumbura cam-

There were no injuries in the brief afternoon attack, the first on the tiny African nation's capital since December 1995.

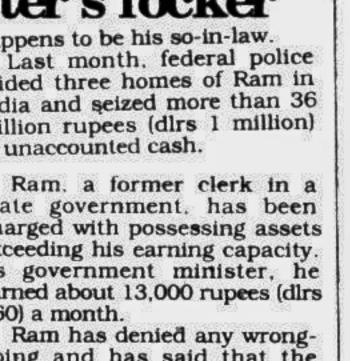
from ex-minister's locker happens to be his so-in-law. Last month, federal police raided three homes of Ram in India and seized more than 36 million rupees (dlrs 1 million) in unaccounted cash.

> state government, has been charged with possessing assets exceeding his earning capacity. As government minister, he earned about 13,000 rupees (dlrs 360) a month.

> Ram has denied any wrongdoing and has said that the money does not belong to him. He has promised to reveal the details to police when he returns to India.

Police have accused Ram of favoring an electronics company in southern India to buy equipment at inflated prices, which caused the government

Newspapers have speculated that Ram could implicate several politicians of the Congress Party, which was in power until



Firemen walk next to the devastated Hotel d'Angleterre Tuesday after a massive bomb attack killed at least one person and injured 10 others, in central Algiers. - AFP/UNB photo

Clinton wanted allies' support, but prepared to go alone

around the world over the weekend, President Clinton had already made up his mind. lraq must be punished - severely. reports AP.

And while the president and his top advisers would have preferred a stronger show of support from allies than the missile attack on Iraq mustered, there was no cajoling. In fact, the United States would have gone it alone — if need be.

And it would again, judging by the harsh statements Tuesday by Secretary of State Warren Christopher and other American officials.

"Our response must be and will be forceful and immediate,' Christopher said, denouncing Iraqi president Saddam Hussein as an unyielding threat to his people, his neighbours and to stability in the Middle East. As it turned out, Britain, Germany, Canada, Japan and a few others registered public

WASHINGTON, Sept 4: When support following the cruise Minister John Major, who de-the calls and cables went out missile assault. Many others, fended the United States as Christopher, o led by Russia and France, registered reservations - and disapproval.

> "The government of Russia considers the American military operation an unacceptable reaction to the latest events in northern Iraq," an official government statement said in Moscow.

French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette said dialogue between Iraq and the Kurds is "the only way to contribute, by a political solution, to the return to calm and stability in Iraqi Kurdistan.

Egypt and Syria, which sent 55,000 troops to fight Iraq in 1991, predicted the US attack would only worsen the plight of Iraqis, who are suffering under UN sanctions imposed when Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990.

Balanced against such displeasure were strong public statements from British Prime

completely justified in firing 27 missiles at military targets, and several other government leaders who concur in the American government's contempt for Saddam Hussein.

In what the Pentagon described as a "mop-up" operation, the United States said Tuesday night it had fired 17 more missiles at Iraqi air defense sites because critical targets weren't destroyed in the first raid.

Britain shares with the United States responsibility formaintaining a no-fly zone over northern fraq to protect the Kurds, long a target of Baghdad's wrath and, according to State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns, the target of an extermination campaign by Saddam five years ago.

dam did not violate the no-fly France also shares that responsibility, so its exception to zone when he sent tanks, troops and helicopters into northern Clinton's decision rattles the

ously arranged, will try to repair the damage Thursday in Paris over lunch with Foreign Minister Herve de Charette and in a call on President Jacques Chirac at the Elysee Palace.

Burns confidently offered assurances that "the international coalition is intact," and diplomàtic sources said France had neither opposed nor supported the decision when Christopher spoke with de Charette by telephone over the weekend and Clinton called Chirac before ordering the at-

Clinton did not seek Chirac's advice, said the sources, who declined to be identified. He had also made the decision to strike at Iraq, but he also said he would welcome French support, US sources said. France contends that Sad-

public support for the US assault. Privately, however, Saudi Arabia did not object, the US official told the Associated Press. The Saudis - who met over the weekend with Gen. John Shalikashvili, chairman of the

In the Arab world, only Kuwait, liberated from Saddam's occupation by a US-led coalition in 1991, expressed

from what one hears in public. said Burns, an Arabic speaker with diplomatic experience in the Middle East Joint Chiefs of Staff - also sup-

Iraq on Saturday and that ported the US proposal to ex-Christopher, on a trip previ- Iraq's territorial integrity pand the no-fly zone in southern Iraq. However, for fear of embarrassment, they asked the United States not to fly its planes from Saudi territory. "They pointed out the obvi-

ous, what we already know. which is that we had alternatives, and they would prefer we use the alternatives," said Pentagon spokesman Kenneth Ba-

However, they made it clear that the United States could fly from Saudi territory in the future to maintain the no-fly

The Saudis' cautious public demeanor is well known to US administrations that look to the oil-rich kingdom as a moderating force in the Arab world. "What one hears in private is often dramatically different

Nur in Christian stronghold to promote accord ZAMBOANGA, Philippines,

Sept 4: Muslim leader Nur Misuari went into a Christian stronghold in the southern Philippines today to promote a peace accord in the face of Christian hostility, reports

Misuari, who arrived from the Muslim-dominated city of Cotabato, was met at Zamboanga airport by almost 1,000 supporters, including guerillas of his moro national liberation front (MNLF). Zamboanga's mainly

Christian residents ignored his arrival and there was no repeat of the angry protests after Misuari signed a peace agreement with the government in Manila on Monday Misuari was taken to a

Muslim district on the outskirts of the city where he was to stage a ceremonial signing of the peace agreement.

Hutu rebels shell Burundi's capital BUJUMBURA, Burundi, Sept

NEW DELHI, Sept 4: Police

seized more money and jewelry

from bank lockers of a former

telecommunications minister

accused of favoring some com-

panies with lucrative govern-

ment contracts, newspapers re-

ens to delay India's efforts to

add 10 million telephones in

five years and could affect sev-

eral politicians, especially

former Prime Minister P V

reau of Investigation seized 3.6

million rupees (dlrs 100,000)

from four bank lockers oper-

ated by the wife of former

Telecommunications Minister

Sukh Ram, newspapers re-

CBI, is in London and has told

police through his lawyers that

he has a heart condition and

cannot return to India until cer-

tified fit by his doctor, who also

Ram, who is wanted by the

On Tuesday, the Central Bu-

Narasimha Rao.

ported.

The burgeoning scam threat-

ported Wednesday, reports AP.

4: Hutu rebels shelled Burundi's capital Tuesday and fought by the hundreds with troops in the north, intensifying their war against Burundi's coup-installed military government, reports AP.

"The military pursued the rebels above the campus, but the rebels were very far from where the bombs fell.