

### China warns Taiwan against its diplomatic campaign

BEIJING, Sept 10: China warned Taiwan Monday that its campaign to improve diplomatic ties with other countries threatened the island's survival, reports AP.

The warning, issued by China's state-run Xinhua News Agency, accused Taiwanese leaders of using the campaign to "split Taiwan from Chinese territory," instead of promoting reunification with the mainland.

Xinhua commentaries are approved at the highest levels of the Chinese leadership and reflect its opinions. The denunciation comes after a flurry of what Taiwan calls "pragmatic diplomacy."

China has vowed to retake the island by force. Xinhua neither mentioned that threat nor the nine months of war games and missile launches China conducted near Taiwan to influence its March presidential election, but it did warn that the island's survival was at risk.

"If the Taiwan authorities continue to promote so-called 'pragmatic diplomacy,' it will only do great harm to relations between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait and do no good for the survival and development of Taiwan," Xinhua said.

In keeping with a shift in tactics to stress the economic benefits of good relations, Xinhua noted that Taiwan's economic growth rate has been slowing.

### Typhoon 'Sally' kills 139 in China

BEIJING, Sept 10: At least 139 people were killed and another 130 were reported missing after typhoon Sally lashed southern China, officials said today, reports AFP.

Worst affected by the storm on Monday was the city of Zhanjiang, in the southwest of Guangdong province, where 79 were found dead and more than 100 were still missing, an official for the city government said by telephone.

In Maoming City, local authorities gave a provisional toll of 33 dead while in neighbouring Dianbian, 27 people were known to have died 29 were missing with 1,582 injured, a local official said.

The typhoon ravaged the region for nine hours from 6:00 am to 3:00 pm on Monday, devastating plantations, damaging fishing boats and leaving more than 30,000 people homeless, press reports in Hong Kong said. The storm passed the British colony early Monday, but without inflicting major damage.



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (L) meets with US President Bill Clinton (R) Monday in the Oval Office at the White House in Washington. Netanyahu told Clinton that he was pursuing a peace process with the Palestinians and the Syrians. — AFP/UNB photo

### Pakistan refuses to sign CTBT

UNITED NATIONS, Sept 10: India's rival, Pakistan, said it will not sign a proposed treaty banning nuclear test blasts, citing New Delhi's refusal to support the agreement, reports AP.

A vote in the 185-member General Assembly endorsing the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty could come as early as Tuesday. The draft is co-sponsored by 126 states.

The treaty would ban nuclear test blasts, making it more difficult for countries to upgrade their arsenals.

India said it will vote against the ban because it does not call for nuclear disarmament. India, which conducted its only nuclear test in 1974, also said it would refuse to sign the treaty, which would block it from becoming law.

"Countries around us continue their weapons programmes either openly or in a clandestine manner," Indian Ambassador Prakash Shah told the assembly. "In such an environment, we cannot permit our option to be constrained or

eroded in any manner as long as nuclear weapon states remain unwilling to accept the obligation to eliminate their arsenals."

India borders China, a nuclear power, and Pakistan, which has an advanced nuclear programme. India has fought three wars against Pakistan and one against China since independence in 1947.

Pakistan said it would vote for the draft in the General Assembly but would not sign the treaty.

Supporters of the treaty have said that overwhelming support for the agreement could pressure states into honouring the ban. The major nuclear powers — The United States, Russia, France, Britain and China — support the draft treaty. Sponsors are pressing for a vote Tuesday and hope that the agreement is available for signing when world leaders gather at the General Assembly later this month.

## BRIEFLY

**Dole trails Clinton by 15 pts:** Republican Bob Dole trails President Clinton by 15 points among likely voters for the November election and Ross Perot has dropped further behind the two, according to the latest ABC News Nightline poll. AP reports from Washington. Clinton led Dole 53 per cent to 38 per cent with Perot's rating down to 5 per cent, according to the survey, conducted Wednesday through Sunday by the news organisation.

**Czech PM arrives in Singapore:** Czech Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus arrived Tuesday for a one-day visit to Singapore with a 30-member business delegation, AP report from Singapore. Klaus had lunch with his Singaporean counterpart, Goh Chok Tong, and met with President Ong Teng Cheong.

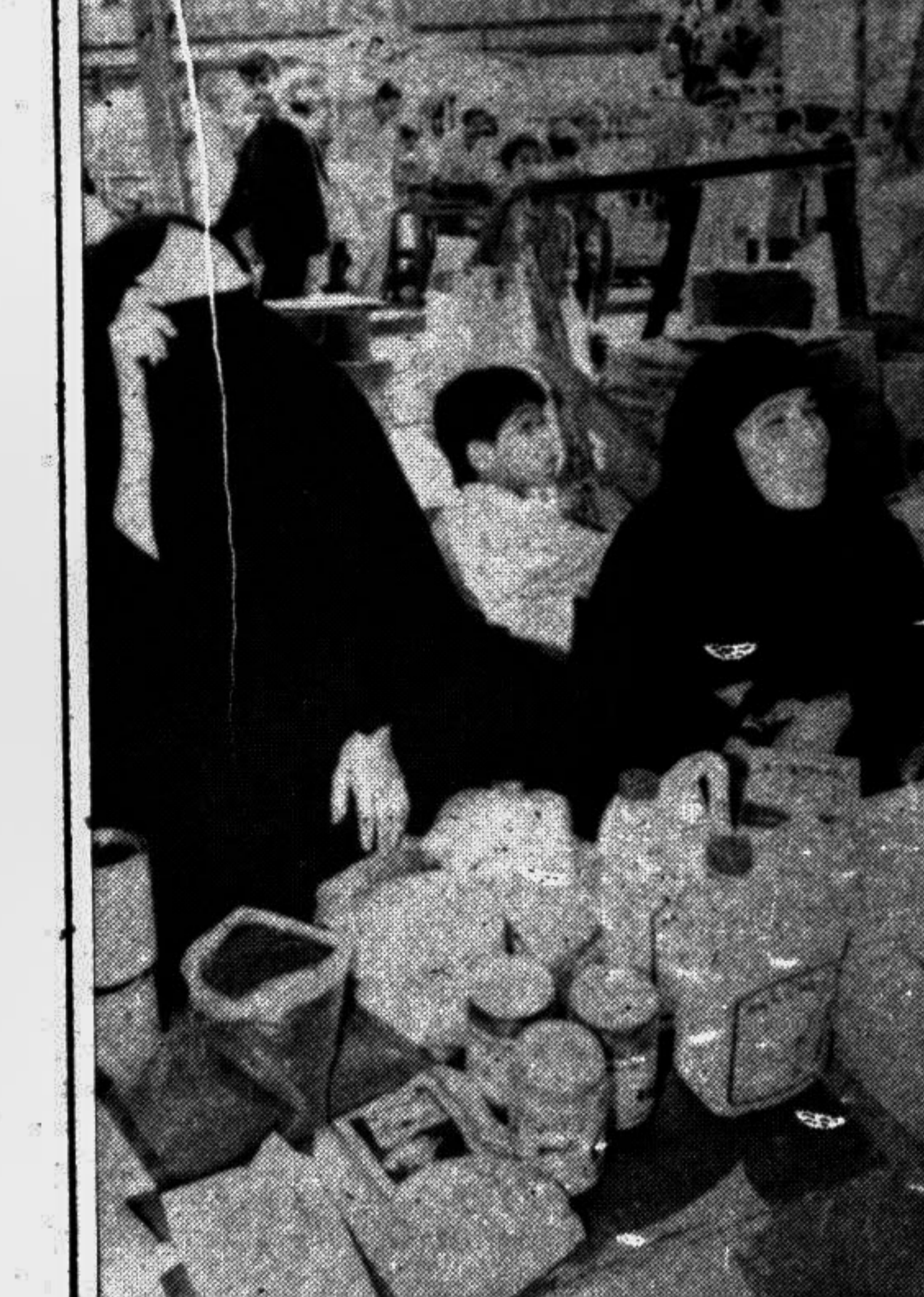
**Arafat in Tokyo:** Palestinian President Yasser Arafat arrived Tuesday for an official visit aimed at winning more Japanese economic help for his struggling self-rule authority, AFP reports from Tokyo.

Arafat was to meet Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto, Emperor Akihito and Foreign Minister Yukihiko Ikeda as well as businessmen. "We are in need of Japan's help to protect the peace process," Arafat said in a comment carried on national television.

**Guatemala gov't, rebels reach accord:** The Guatemalan government and leftist guerrillas reached a landmark agreement Monday that was to pave the way to final peace negotiations, President Alvaro Arzu said, AFP reports from Guatemala City.

The agreement on strengthening civil society and the role of the military in a democratic society was reached in Mexico City during UN-sponsored negotiations. Mexican President Ernesto Zedillo, who was on a brief official visit to Guatemala City, applauded the "the last of the substantive agreements of the peace process," begun in 1993 to end Central America's longest-running civil war.

**Clinton's ex-associate jailed:** A former business associate of President Bill Clinton was jailed Monday for contempt of court after refusing to answer questions in the Whitewater investigation, AFP reports from Little Rock, Arkansas.



Iraqi women sell foodstuff at a Baghdad market on Monday. Iraq is under crippling United Nations sanctions since its 1990 invasion of Kuwait. UN officials preparing the implementation of the oil-for-food deal with Iraq were due to meet Monday at the UN to review outstanding issues. — AFP/UNB photo

### Cambodians dejected over forgiving leng Sary

PHNOM PENH, Sept 10: Nearly everyone in Ung Voidey's family died during the Khmer Rouge reign of terror — including an uncle lured back from France by leng Sary's call for intellectuals to return and help rebuild the country, reports AP.

In a jungle news conference broadcast on Cambodian television, Sary urged his countrymen to let bygones be bygones and support a peace deal with the breakaway Khmer Rouge faction he leads in a step toward ending festering civil war.

Ung Voidey isn't ready to forgive. But like many ordinary Cambodians, she doesn't think her opinion will make much difference to the government which is edging toward pardoning the former revolutionary as a price to pay for peace.

"I will not forgive leng Sary for what he did," said Ung Voidey, "who was just 7 when the Khmer Rouge seized power in 1975." "I am one of the Cambodians who don't want him back. He may say he has changed."

### Bribery scandal against Rao: SC ultimatum to CBI

NEW DELHI, Sept 10: India's Supreme Court Monday gave an ultimatum to detectives probing a bribery scandal involving former prime minister PV Narasimha Rao, reports AP.

The court told the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to wrap up within 10 days its investigation into allegations that Rao allegedly paid bribes to four MPs to help prop up his minority government three years ago.

"The investigation has not been conducted with the promptitude with which it should have been conducted," Judge YK Sabarwal said.

The CBI arrested four politicians, including two MPs, last week on charges of taking bribes from Rao in 1993 to block his Congress (I) Party government in New Delhi following an opposition bid to unseat him.

### Okinawa governor likely to demand US troops cut

TOKYO, Sept 10: Armed with a resounding mandate from his constituents, Okinawa's governor was expected to demand on Tuesday that Japan reduce the US military presence on the islands, reports AP.

Masahide Ota, the outspoken governor who has staked his political future on the issue, was to meet with Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto and meet with reporters afterward.

The meeting came two days after Okinawans voted by a 10-1 margin in a non-binding referendum calling for a reduction in the nearly 30,000 US troops based in their southern prefecture.

Ota was expected to demand a formal resolution from either Parliament or the Cabinet on reducing Okinawa's military burden, the Asahi newspaper reported Monday morning. "Five years ago, when we agreed to compulsory renewal of leases for the bases, the government said it would make a sincere effort (to reduce the US military presence), but it didn't," Ota told the newspaper.

### Tehran opens border to refugees: UN 75,000 Kurds flee fighting in N Iraq towards Iran

ISTANBUL, Sept 10: Up to 75,000 Kurds were fleeing factional fighting in northern Iraq towards Iran today, and Iran has reportedly opened its borders to the refugees, United Nations officials said, reports Reuters.

The number is between 70,000 and 75,000 we believe," said a UN official in Arbil, the capital of Kurdish northern Iraq.

"We are going towards Sulaimaniya to assess the situation now. They are all headed for the Penjwin border with Iran."

Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) guerrillas took Sulaimaniya, Iraq's biggest Kurdish city, on Monday, sealing their grip on the whole of Kurdish northern Iraq nine days after they took Arbil with the help of Iraqi troops.

Their successful military drive against the rival patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) has raised the spectre of a repeat of a 1991 refugee crisis, when more than two million Kurds poured through the mountains to Iran and Turkey for safety after Baghdad crushed their post-Gulf War uprising.

Many PUK guerrillas and officials were believed to have already crossed into Iran, the UN official said.

"We heard this morning that Iran has opened the border on condition that they are unarmed," he said.

Washington urged Tehran and Baghdad on Monday to stop fuelling inter-Kurdish violence in northern Iraq. The United States fired 44 Cruise missiles at Iraq last week in response to Baghdad's military incursion

### Peaceful vote raises new hope in Kashmir Indo-Pak troops exchange 5,000 artillery shells

NEW DELHI, Sept 10: Indian and Pakistani border troops have fired over 5,000 artillery shells at each other during the past three days, leaving five people injured as elections are held in the disputed state of Kashmir, a report said today, according to AFP.

"Pakistan has been resorting to heavy fire owing to the ongoing assembly elections in Kashmir," a senior defence official was quoted as saying by The Times of India.

"As such, there is nothing to be alarmed about but we expect this to continue until the election process is completed."

Soldiers along the line of control border in the Muslim-majority state had exchanged 5,347 rounds of artillery and air defence shells, the newspaper said. Among the five injured were two Indian army officers.

The newspaper added that

elections has raised hopes that Kashmir is approaching a turning point after seven violent years of anti-Indian rebellion.

Among the most hopeful is Farooq Abdullah, once the most powerful man in the state. Abdullah retreated to self-imposed exile, fearing threats against his life by Muslim rebels who branded him a traitor.

Now he's seeking his old job as the chief minister in the first local election since 1987 in Jammu-Kashmir state.

His return underlines the waning strength of Muslim rebels, and appears to signal a fundamental change of mood in his tortured homeland where nearly 15,000 people have been killed.

"In seven years, we tried the militants as well as the security forces."

### Indian lawmakers urge govt to check slide in defence budget

NEW DELHI, Sept 10: Indian lawmakers urged the government on Monday to check the continued slide in the defence budget, but officials and analysts said there was a greater need to fund paramilitary forces fighting separatist insurgents, reports Reuters.

Analysts said the allocation of a smaller part of the budget to the military was accompanied by substantial funding increases for its 10 paramilitary bodies, mainly to fight separatist militants in Kashmir and several northeastern states near the Chinese border.

"The political perception is that there is no chance of a conventional war in the foreseeable future," said Sridhar of the state-funded Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses.

"Instead, the focus has shifted sharply to combat low intensity war like the one in Kashmir and subnational insurgents as in the northeast," Sridhar told Reuters.

India recently said it would raise its 1996/97 (April-March) defence outlay to 277.98 billion rupees (dollars 7.9 billion) from 268.79 billion rupees (dollars 7.6 billion) last year.

But defence spending this year accounts for 2.2 per cent of India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), down from 2.4 per cent of GDP last year and 3.05 per cent a decade ago.

Calls to review the defence budget were triggered by remarks in The Times of India newspaper on Monday by Naval Chief Vijay Singh Shekhawat, who criticised what he said was

the government's indifference to the navy's needs.

Deputies of the rightist Hindu Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) demanded more funds for the armed forces, saying Shekhawat's remarks addressed a genuine need for higher defence spending.

"For the last eight or nine years, the government hasn't given anything to the armed forces in its budgets," a BJP deputy told the lower house of parliament. "Admiral Shekhawat's remarks reflect a growing demoralisation in the armed forces."

Some analysts say India's decision to prune the budget that supports one of the world's largest armies may signal it is lowering its guard in a tense region bristling with weapons.

## Off the Record

### Good news for lollipop suckers

NEW YORK: Sucking a lollipop before an operation can calm a patient's nerves, according to a study done by doctors at the Baylor University Medical Centre in Texas, reports AP.

The study, published in the New Choices Journal, looked at 90 adults undergoing surgery divided into three groups: one received a lollipop with a mild sedative, one a normal sucker and a third group received nothing.

Seventy-one per cent of those receiving a mild sedative and 46 per cent receiving a normal sucker reported feeling less anxiety than those who received nothing, the study found.

"I leave the explanation to the psychologists," said Dr. Michael Ramsey, chief of Baylor's Department of Anesthesiology and Pain Management. "But if I had to guess, I would say it relates to early memories of being comforted by sucking — a primal response to stress that all of us have experienced in our past."

### Camilla gives up her intentions to marry Charles

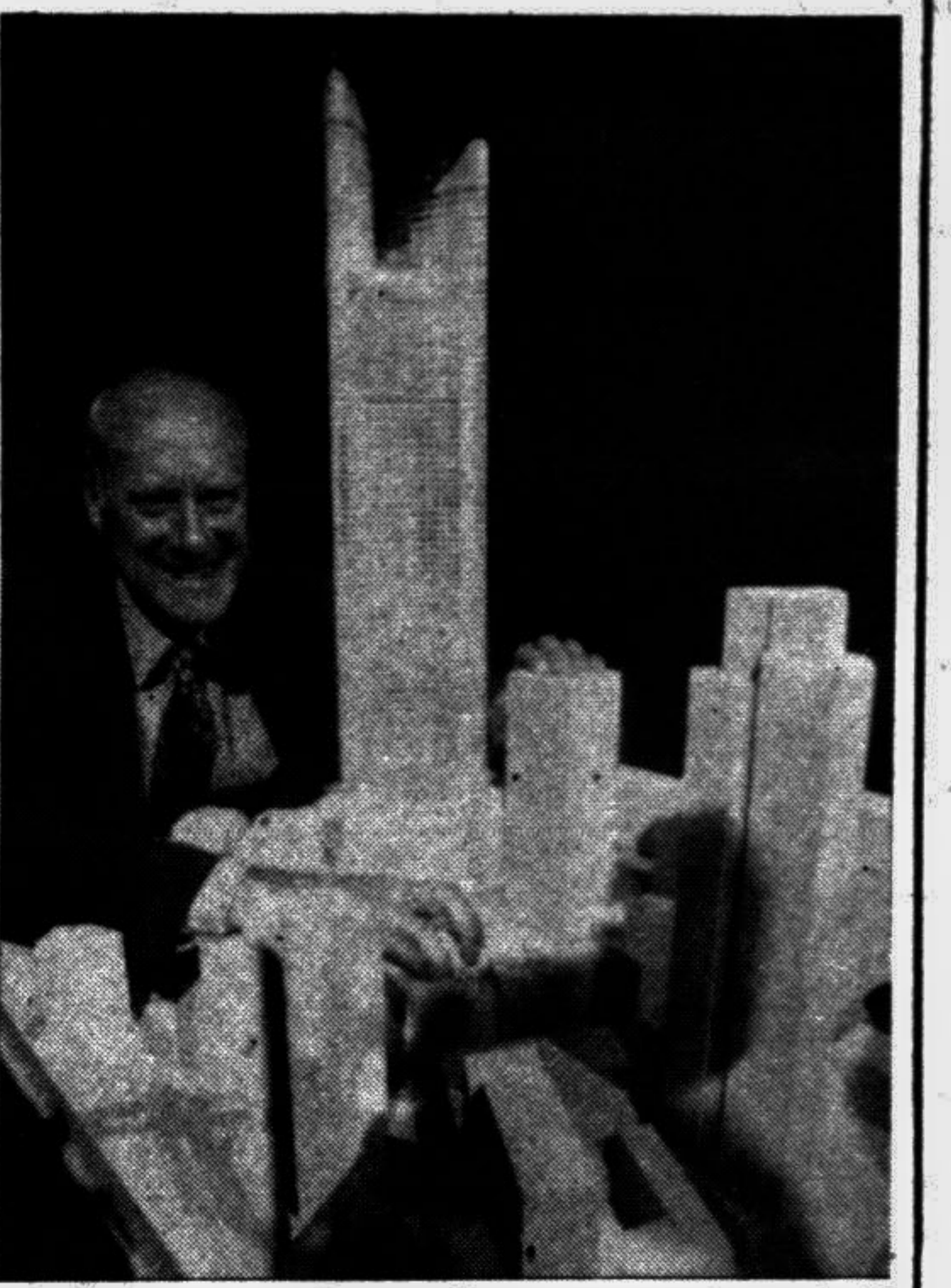
LONDON: Camilla Parker Bowles has given up her intentions to marry Prince Charles, the mass circulation tabloid The Sun reported Tuesday, says AP.

The newspaper said that Charles' 49-year-old heartthrob, with whom he has been having an intermittent affair over a 20-year period took the decision after a string of meetings between the two.

They decided that Charles' recent divorce from Diana, Princess of Wales, had cast open a pit of speculation surrounding the marital aspirations of the heir to the British throne which must be brought to an end.

The tabloid quoted a friend of the mother-of-two divorces as saying: "Marriage to the Prince of Wales is not in her head and she does not want people to think that it is."

The Church of England, politicians and the public all have strong views on a marriage and Camilla recognises that. The friend added that Parker Bowles was keen to "subdue" speculation surrounding her future relationship with Charles, which she said was "unhelpful to all concerned."



British architect Sir Norman Foster poses next to a model of his planned London Millennium Tower at a news conference in London Monday. The Tower would stand 1,427ft (435m) high (inclusive mast), with a public viewing platform at 1,000ft. It's 92 storeys would house over 1.5 million square feet of office and retail space. It would be built in the heart of the city on the site of the present bomb-damaged Baltic Exchange building. — AFP/UNB photo

## Women's group cites progress after Beijing confce

UNITED NATIONS, Sept 10: India's new government has promised to give women a third of all legislative seats. South Africa has approved abortion on demand. And a new law in Colombia fights sexual violence within a family, reports AP.

These advances in the past year on women's issues were cited Monday in a report one year after the UN Women's Conference in Beijing.

Little new money is being spent on women's issues, the Women's Environment and Development Organisation said in its report, and many measures cited were merely legislative proposals yet to be passed.

But many countries have taken steps to adopt the non-binding platform of last year's conference and the group hopes its report will encourage or shame other governments into action, said WEDO president and former US Rep. Bella Abzug.

The platform called for sexual and reproductive freedom for women, equality in opportunities in jobs and government, and equality in access to food, health and education.

"Beijing raised expectations among women, and now the United Nations and its member states must deliver," Florence Butegwa, a Ugandan lawyer and human rights activist, told a UN anniversary conference. Government officials who say there is not enough money to promote women's issues are disingenuous.

"This no-money thing is standing a out to be the greatest lie of the century," Butegwa said. "Women of the world are watching. Our defense budgets are skyrocketing... while mechanisms for women's advancements go underfunded."

US Health Secretary Donna Shalala said she did not fear the conference had raised expectations too high. "The issue laid down in Beijing was the minimum, not the maximum."

Only 53 countries had responded to the WEDO survey, but that didn't necessarily mean strides weren't made by others. Having governments feel accountable to a non-governmental organisation is a new thing, Abzug said. "This is a springing action, it's not an overall competent report," Abzug said. "But in the 20

years I've been working with women's groups, I have never seen this kind outburst of passion and mobilisation from the women, as well as from the governments who feel they have to respond."

Also upbeat was Freda Chale, from the women's group Home Economics Association in Tanzania. She said her government has committed to boosting to 30 per cent the number of women in decision-making positions and has cracked down on rape.

"If you see the way a rapist used to commit rape, and then go freely — now they are getting 30 years in prison. And this has just been happening after this year," Chale said. Elsewhere in Africa, the national women's lobby in Zambia has assembled 300 women candidates to political office. In

Cameroon, the number of women mayors has doubled to 800 over the last year, the report says.

Butegwa said it was a shame the UN tribunal investigating war crimes in Rwanda had declined to investigate rape, as the tribunal on the former Yugoslavia is doing.

"Yet another opportunity of the United Nations to meet its obligations to (women) slip through the fingers," Butegwa said. "In India, the new government of Prime Minister HD Dave Gowda has prepared legislation to give women a third of the seats in state assemblies and in parliament. The bill, when introduced, is unlikely to be opposed because most political parties have promised to support it."

In addition to the new abortion law in South Africa, the government is working on the boosting women in the administration. But its best results have been limited to the arts and culture agency, in which women hold half of the positions, the report said.

Colombia's new law on family violence includes definitions of physical, sexual and psychological violence, the report said.

But despite the July 16 law, recent news reports show that efforts to prosecute rape in Colombia remain sorely unsuccessful.

## US defends Bosnian polls

WASHINGTON, Sept 10: Responding to persistent criticism that the Bosnian elections may result in disaster the State Department says Saturday's balloting is a crucial first step to consolidate peace and national reconciliation, reports AP.

Department spokesman Nicholas Burns acknowledged Monday that after years of warfare and social dislocations, the voting will be flawed, but he said the peace process "cannot go forward without these first elections."

"It's a fundamental truism that there needs to be a first election before there can be a second election," Burns said in a sometimes biting response to critics such as former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and opposition presidential nominee Bob Dole. Dole last week denounced the elections as "a fraud with an American stamp of approval,"

and pressed President Clinton for a postponement. Dole said there was intimidation of opposition parties and their candidates were on the ballot.

But Burns said that without the elections, the Bosnian people will not be allowed to move forward in creating the institutions envisioned in the Dayton peace agreement, including a presidency and a legislature.

Kissinger, in a weekend opinion piece, warned that, given Bosnia's divisions, the creation of a multiethnic state can be "achieved only if imposed by massive force, not at the ballot box." The former secretary said the projected Bosnian elections "are turning into a travesty." Each group, Kissinger wrote, "suppresses dissent and seeks to use the elections to solidify its ethnic base for the ultimate showdown with rivals."