

BRIEFLY

Troops kill 5 Tigers

Government forces shot and killed five Tamil rebels during a search operation in northern Sri Lanka, the military said Tuesday. AP reports from Colombo.

Two soldiers were injured in the clash on Monday at Kantrodai village in the Jaffna Peninsula, said Maj. Tilak Dunville, a military spokesman. Three automatic weapons and six hand grenades were found from the rebels Dunville said in a statement.

Ex-ROK diplomat jailed for forging govt document

A former South Korean diplomat in New Zealand was sentenced Tuesday to two years in prison on charges of forging a South Korean government document in connection with last year's local elections. AP reports from Seoul.

The prosecution had sought a five-year sentence for Choi Seung-jin, 51, a former communications officer at the South Korean Embassy in Wellington.

Charles visits Ukraine

Britain's Prince Charles hailed Ukraine on Monday as a "magnificent country" on the start of his nine-day tour of the republic and former Soviet Central Asia. AP reports from Kiev.

Flattered, flustered Ukrainians cheered the Prince of Wales' visit his first trip to their country of 52 million. It is the start of a five-nation tour of former Soviet states, unprecedented for a senior member of the British royal family.

Zairean president in France

Zairian President Mobutu Sese Seko flew to southern France on Monday after leaving Switzerland, where he was being treated for cancer while his country wallowed in crisis. AP reports from Nice.

The 66-year-old ruler, who had been in Switzerland for the last three months, landed in a private DC-8 jet at Nice Airport and was taken to his nearby villa in Cap Martin by a police-escorted motorcade. Mobutu, whose army struggled to control Rwandan-backed rebels in eastern Zaire, was expected to meet with a UN envoy Wednesday about the mounting refugee crisis in Zaire.

Gold worth \$5m stolen in Brazil

Thieves in Brazil stole gold and jewels worth an estimated \$5 million dollar after kidnapping a string of bank officials and their relatives and breaking into a huge store of pawned goods, a bank official said on Monday. Reuter reports from Brasilia.

The raid began on Friday evening when the manager of the Caixa Economica Federal Mortgage Bank in the Amazonian city of Belem was handcuffed while shopping and forced into a car by six men posing as police officers, bank superintendent Guilherme Bacellar said.

Brazilian plane crash death toll reaches 98

The crash of a Brazilian airline into a densely populated area of Sao Paulo killed all 96 people aboard and two people on the ground, officials said Monday. AFP reports from Sao Paulo.

Security Secretary Jose Alonso Da Silva said that with the recovery of four bodies before midday on Monday the toll was now 98.

Greek destroyer sinks in Aegean Sea

A Greek ferry slammed into a navy destroyer late Monday causing it to sink in the Aegean Sea with 38 sailors on board, the Greek navy said in a statement. AFP reports from Athens.

Thirty-four of the crew from the "Kostakos" were fished out of the waters, but four were reported missing and a search was continuing. The ferry "Samaina" makes daily crossings between the Greek mainland port of Piraeus, close to Athens, and the eastern Aegean islands of Samos and Icaria.

Profile

Miraj Khalid: Return of a rtd politician

ISLAMABAD, Nov 5: The man chosen to replace Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto today is a respected veteran of her Pakistan People's Party who retired from politics after clashing with her authoritarian style, reports AP.

President Farooq Leghari dismissed Benazir's government two years before the end of its term, named Miraj Khalid interim prime minister and scheduled new elections of February 3. Leghari has been under increasing pressure to use his constitutional powers to oust Benazir who was accused of corruption and incompetence.

Khalid has been a member of the Pakistan People's Party since it was founded by Benazir's father, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, in 1970. He was a close ally of Zulfikar Bhutto, serving in his cabinet after he was elected president in 1971.

Democracy was restored with Benazir Bhutto's 1988 election. Khalid entered Parliament on the People's Party ticket and was elected speaker of the National Assembly by his fellow legislators.

But he soon clashed with Benazir, who found him too independent. Khalid, a loyal party member, retired quietly from the national scene rather than publicly challenge Benazir.

She made a triumphant return to power in 1993 elections, but Khalid was not on the party list that year.

Khalid, in his late 1960s, has been rector of Islamabad's Islamic University for the past several years.

Benazir's exit: A champion of democracy accused of ruling like demagogue

ISLAMABAD, Nov 5: Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's second term in office ended much the same as her first — abruptly, and in disgrace, reports AP.

An old ally, President Farooq Leghari used his constitutional power to dismiss Benazir, accusing her of violating the constitution and attacking the country's judiciary. Opponents had called strikes and marches in recent months to protest what they called runaway corruption and economic mismanagement under Benazir. The prime minister had vowed to complete her term, due to end in 1998.

Leghari was at Benazir's side in 1990 when her first term in office came to a sudden end after barely 20 months in power. Then, he joined Benazir in soundly condemning the move against her government.

Today, in a statement carried by the state-run news agency, Leghari said he had no choice but to invoke the constitutional clause he once criticised to dismiss Benazir and set fresh elections for February 3.

Benazir may best reflect the paradoxes of a nation struggling to overcome an authoritarian history almost 50 years after gaining independence from Britain. She came to power as a champion of democracy, only to be accused of ruling like a demagogue.

She shot to prominence as Pakistan's unquestioned political star after inheriting the leadership of her late father's populist Pakistan People's Party.

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was executed in 1979, two years after

being deposed by military strongman Gen. Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq in a bloodless coup on charges of murdering his political foes.

The Bhutto family quickly became a target for Zia, who feared a resurgence of the left-leaning Pakistan People's Party. Benazir spent more than five years in jail and under house arrest before leaving for self-imposed exile in Britain.

But she returned triumphantly to Pakistan in April 1986, four months after Zia announced an end to eight years of military rule, and drew huge crowds as she toured the nation demanding democracy.

Benazir, who said her early training in politics came from her father, studied comparative government at Harvard University in Cambridge, Mass. and politics and economics at Britain's Oxford University.

Her first taste of political success also came at Oxford, where she was elected president of the Oxford Union Society in 1976.

Benazir, the eldest child of the family, returned to Pakistan early in 1977 to take up a job with her father's government in the Foreign Office. But the job was short-lived as Zia toppled her father within a few months.

In September 1977, Benazir was placed under house arrest and she later spent several months in prison. Not until a serious ear infection required treatment did Zia allow her release and exit to England.

The Bhutto family life, like



In this file photo dated November 14, 1993 former prime minister of Pakistan Benazir Bhutto (L) sits beside the President Farooq Leghari (R) during the President's oath taking ceremony. President Farooq Leghari has dismissed Prime Minister Benazir and dissolved the National Assembly of Pakistan early Tuesday. — AFP/UNB photo

its political life has been marred by tragedy.

Her youngest brother, Shanhuwaz, died in 1985 in France, apparently after being poisoned.

Last month her only surviving

brother, Murtaza died in a hail of police bullets outside his home in the southern port city of Karachi.

Murtaza had become one of her fiercest political opponents, accusing her of betraying the

father's legacy. His death is under investigation.

Benazir's husband, Asif Ali Zardari, has been accused by Murtaza's widow of orchestrating the shooting. Zardari has denied the charge.

Kashmir govt pledges to free 450 militants

SRINAGAR, India, Nov 5: India's Jammu and Kashmir state has pledged to release 450 people detained on suspicion of having links with separatist guerrillas, a government spokesman said on Monday, reports Reuter.

"In keeping with the assurance held out by Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah, the government, have decided to release 450 detainees (detainees) shortly," the spokesman said.

The federal government, which imposed direct rule in the state in 1990 after a bloody rebellion erupted, has used its sweeping anti-terrorist laws to detain people suspected of having links to separatist rebels, often holding them without trial.

"All the 450 were directly or indirectly connected with militancy," the state government spokesman said, referring to the armed rebellion in mainly Hindu India's only Muslim majority state.

Abdullah, who took office last month after the first local

elections in Jammu and Kashmir since the separatist revolt began, had promised he would release all detainees found innocent.

Officials said the release would be based on the recommendations of a government screening committee.

2 DPRK infiltrators, 2 ROK officials killed in shootout

SEOUL, Nov 5: Two suspected North Korean agents and two South Korean officers were killed in a shootout near the demilitarized zone (DMZ) today, a television report said, reports AFP.

The Defence Ministry confirmed the deaths of the two suspected agents in a firefight, but did not confirm the Yonhap Television News (YTN) report of the deaths of the two South Koreans, one of them a colonel.

No high-level reaction yet Army-backed move, Indian officials say

NEW DELHI, Nov 5: India reserved immediate comment today on the sacking of the Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in neighbouring Pakistan but officials said the move appeared to have the Pakistani Army's support.

"Basically, the situation will not affect us in any important way," an Interior Ministry official told Reuters.

"If the government has been dismissed to check instability, and if fresh elections are held soon, we have no worries," the official said.

There was no immediate high-level official reaction to Benazir's sacking by Presidential Order.

An India Foreign Ministry official said they would wait to hear from Foreign Minister Inder Kumar Gujral, now in Zhabalwa.

"Our perception is that the current army leadership in

Pakistan does not favour military adventurism against India," a Defence official in New Delhi said.

"If our assessment is correct, the Pakistani government would not have been dismissed without the army's blessing," the official said.

Meanwhile, India's main opposition party warned today that Pakistan may step up its confrontation over Kashmir following the sacking of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto.

"Whenever there is any internal conflict (in Pakistan), Kashmir is used as a bogey," BJP spokesman Krishna Lal Sharma told AFP.

Another report says, Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga today indefinitely put off a scheduled visit to Pakistan because of the sudden political changes in Islamabad, official sources in Colombo said.

Benazir's best, worst moments

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan, Nov 5: The ups and downs of ousted prime minister Benazir Bhutto's political career:

April 1986: She returns triumphantly to Pakistan after four years of self-imposed exile. One million people throng the streets of the Punjab provincial capital to meet her.

October, 1988: She is elected prime minister in Pakistan's first free elections after 11 years of military rule.

June 2, 1989: In her first major international appearance since being elected, she tells a joint session of the US Congress that Pakistan did not have a nuclear weapons. One year later Washington suspended all US military and humanitarian aid to Pakistan because of suspicions that it possessed a nuclear weapon.

August 1990: President Ghulam Ishaq Khan abruptly dismisses her government after only 20 months in power, charging unchecked corruption and political incompetence.

November 1990: Her left-leaning Pakistan People's Party loses general elections that

sweep her opponent, Nawaz Sharif to power, with a massive two-thirds majority. She charges rigging and refuses to accept the outcome of the polls.

March 1993: She launches a street campaign to oust prime minister Nawaz Sharif. Her campaign leads to a five-month standoff that eventually results in Sharif's resignation halfway through his term.

November 1993: She is returned to power with only a narrow margin in general elections that followed Sharif's dismissal.

February 1994: She and Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller visit Sarajevo to show support for Bosnia's Muslims.

March 1996: A Supreme Court decision warns her against interfering in the appointment of judges.

October 1996: Leghari dismisses her government after only 20 months in power, charging unchecked corruption and political incompetence.

November 1990: Her left-leaning Pakistan People's Party loses general elections that

Joint mediation to end Afghan war US's 'no' to Iran's proposal

WASHINGTON, Nov 5: The United States is rejecting a proposal by Iran that the two countries join to try to mediate an end to a four-year civil war in Afghanistan, reports AP.

The offer was made publicly by Kamal Kharrazi, the Iranian ambassador to the United Nations, in an article in The Washington Post on Monday and immediately rejected by the State Department spokesman, Nicholas Burns.

Noting that Iran had recently celebrated the 17th anniversary of its takeover of the US Embassy in Tehran, Burns said Iran was not a "normal country."

"This is a unique country, a uniquely perverse place, at least in terms of the government leadership, and we feel no obligation to consult with them on a day-to-day basis about what we're doing," Burns said.

Afghanistan has been beset by factional fighting since 1992, when rebel forces splintered after ousting the Soviet-backed government. The Taliban army, with its roots among Afghan refugees who had studied at Islamic seminars in neighbouring Pakistan, emerged two years ago and now controls roughly two-thirds of the country.

Kharrazi wrote in The Post

that the situation has taken a turn for the worse. "The peculiar relationship of the United States and Iran, among other considerations, has had an unsettling impact on Afghanistan," the ambassador said.

Iran seeks stability in Afghanistan, its neighbour, he wrote, and "the horror of Afghans killing Afghans is a source of pain for Iran, which is bound to Afghanistan by common religion, culture, language and history."

US probes into 2 missiles fired over S Iraq

WASHINGTON, Nov 5: The Pentagon is investigating the launching of two US anti-radar missiles by F-16 fighter jets over southern Iraq, Defence Secretary William Perry says, reports AP.

Perry told reporters at a Pentagon Monday that the pilots were justified in their actions because their cockpit warning systems indicated they were being targeted by Iraqi missiles.

Iraq denied any missile firings occurred, characterising the reports as a campaign play

US envoy to visit Rwanda, Zaire Zairian Tutsi rebels declare unilateral ceasefire

KIGALI, Nov 5: With the international community threatening to intervene, Zairian Tutsi rebels declared a ceasefire Monday in eastern Zaire and agreed to allow aid agencies to try to get Hutu refugees home to Burundi and Rwanda, report AP.

Fighting between Tutsi-led rebels and Zairian troops has forced hundreds of thousands of refugees to flee their UN camps, venturing deeper into Zaire and farther from the reach of aid workers. Diplomats and aid groups met Monday in two African capitals to discuss what to do next.

The recent cross-border warfare began three weeks ago, choking off road and air routes for emergency food into the region and pushing aid workers last week to evacuate.

In a statement read on British Broadcasting Corp. radio, Tutsi spokesman Laurent Kabila said the ceasefire took effect Monday morning. "We declare a unilateral ceasefire starting immediately for three weeks," Kabila said.

In Rwanda, news came that the capital of eastern Zaire,

Goma, was quiet after four days of gun and mortar fire.

The 1.2 million refugees have destabilised the lakes region along Zaire's border with Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda, spreading political and ethnic fighting. Whether the refugees will voluntarily return home — if safe passage is guaranteed — is unknown.

The Hutu refugees followed their defeated army into exile in July 1994 after Rwanda's former Hutu extremist government slaughtered at least 500,000 people, mostly Tutsis.

The Hutus have refused to return, fearing reprisals for the genocide. In the past few weeks, rebels have overrun the camps where the Hutus live north and south of Lake Kivu.

French Foreign Minister Hervé de Charette urged European nations, the United States, Canada and the Organisation of African Unity to meet immediately and "organise the possible means to temporarily secure" eastern Zaire to feed the refugees. De Charette did not specify what measures he was suggesting.

Raymond Chretien, the UN

special envoy to the region, said outside powers may be able to set up humanitarian corridors quickly to permit the flow of relief supplies.

AFP from Washington says, a US envoy will travel to Rwanda and Zaire to hold talks with both governments on the ethnic turmoil in eastern Zaire, the State Department said Monday.

Richard Bogosian, the special coordinator for Rwanda and Burundi, will leave Washington later for the urgent talks, spokesman Burns said.

Separately, US envoy Holger Wolpe will travel to the Nairobi for a regional summit to be held Tuesday on the humanitarian crisis and a team of US officials is holding talks in Geneva on providing relief to refugees in the region.

The State Department also said it had received word that Zaire will send a representative to the Nairobi meeting on Tuesday despite reports out of Kinshasa that it planned to boycott the talks.

"We believe that there is a humanitarian crisis in eastern Zaire," Burns said.



Diana denies affair with Pak heart surgeon

LONDON, Nov 5: Princess Diana has denied a London tabloid report that she is in love with a Pakistani heart surgeon who works at a hospital in the British capital, according to news reports Monday, reports AP.

The London newspaper Daily Mail quoted unidentified friends of the princess as saying she is laughing off the report in public but privately is deeply upset by it.

The report about her appeared Sunday in the weekly tabloid Sunday Mirror. It quoted an unidentified friend of the princess as saying she is in love with heart surgeon Hasnat Khan.

US iterates opposition to new move Israel plans to double settlers in WB

JERUSALEM, Nov 5: Already hobbled by violence and rancor, Israeli-Palestinian peace efforts suffered another blow Monday as Israeli officials detailed plans to nearly double the number of Jewish settlers in the West Bank, reports AP.

Settlement czar Ariel Sharon unveiled the plan during a weekend tour of the territory, and his spokesman, Raanan Gissin, elaborated on Monday. The plan calls for building two new cities in the West Bank that will accommodate 100,000 more Jewish settlers.

The proposal — the most ambitious to date by Sharon, who led a large settlement construction drive in the early 1990s — has not been approved by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who in principle backs settlement expansion.

The construction could mollify Netanyahu's settler constituency, who are livid over

Israeli plans to pull troops from the last major Israeli-occupied West Bank city, Hebron. The plan that he has done little to help them.

But the prime minister may be reluctant to support a plan that could badly undermine his efforts to salvage peacemaking with the Palestinians.

Palestinians view settlement expansion as a violation of 1993 autonomy accords with Israel, which were intended to pave the way for some 2 million Palestinians. The United States and many other foreign countries also oppose additional settlement construction.

Since 1994, Israel has withdrawn from most of the Gaza Strip and about one-quarter of the West Bank, and has promised to pull troops from most of the rest of the West Bank within a year.

"The statements by (Israeli) officials concerning settlements are a call to war," Palestinian legislator Haider

Abdel Shafi warned Monday. Gissin said Monday that the new plan calls for creating two cities and eventually merging them; one would be near the Kiryat Sefer settlement just inside the West Bank, and the second would incorporate five small settlements deeper inside the area. Some 10,000-11,000 homes could be built around Kiryat Sefer, and another 12,000 around the five smaller settlements, he said.

The current Jewish settler population in the West Bank is 145,000.

Palestinian land expert Khader Shkirat said that if built, the settlements could weaken prospects for Palestinian state because "there will be no territorial continuity between the Palestinian cities in the West Bank."

AFP adds from Washington: The US State Department Monday reiterated its opposition to new Israeli settlements in the West Bank after reports

that a top Israeli official vowed to build one for ultra-Orthodox Jews.

"Our traditional position is that settlements are unhelpful" to the Mideast peace process, spokesman Nicholas Burns told.

Israeli press reports had indicated that national Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon had vowed to build 2,000 apartments in a new community to be located near the existing ultra-Orthodox settlement of Kiryat Sefer.

Emphasising that the project requires the approval of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Israel's defence minister, Burns underlined that "they have not made a final decision."

Sharon had been quoted as saying "there is enough land here to build 10,000 or 11,000 apartments," during a visit Sunday to the Kiryat Sefer region, located near the green line separating Israel and the territories it occupied in 1967.

Key events in Pak history

ISLAMABAD, Nov 5: Following is a chronology of key events in Pakistan's history, compiled by AP.

"Aug. 14, 1947: Pakistan is founded when British rule over the region ends and the Asian subcontinent is partitioned into Islamic Pakistan, divided into East and West, and predominantly Hindu India.

"Oct. 7, 1958: Pakistan's army Commander-in-Chief Mohammed Ayub Khan seizes power.

"March 25, 1969: After months of opposition rioting in East Pakistan, Khan hands over power to Major General Agha Mohammed Yahya Khan.

"Dec. 7, 1970: East Pakistan-based Awami League wins general elections. In response, Yahya Khan suspends the government, triggering widespread rioting in East Pakistan. Civil war breaks out.

"Dec. 16, 1971: Pakistan troops surrender in East Pakistan after Indian armed intervention in the civil war. East Pakistan becomes independent Bangladesh.

"Dec. 20, 1971: Yahya Khan resigns. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto wins presidential elections. A parliamentary system of government is adopted later, and Bhutto becomes prime minister.

"July 5, 1977: Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff Gen. Mohammed Zia ul-Haq seizes power.

"April 4, 1979: Zia executes Bhutto on charges of conspiracy to murder.

"Aug. 17, 1988: Zia dies in a mysterious plane crash.

"Nov. 18, 1988: Bhutto's daughter Benazir becomes Pakistan's first woman prime minister.

"Aug. 6, 1990: Benazir's government dismissed amid charges of corruption and mismanagement.

"Oct. 19, 1993: Benazir voted back into power after using mass demonstrations to orchestrate the early dismissal of her successor, Nawaz Sharif.

"Nov. 5, 1996: Benazir again dismissed amid renewed charges of corruption and incompetence.

Off the Record

Life emerged on earth 3.85b yrs ago

LOS ANGELES: A rock formation discovered in Greenland shows life was existed on earth for at least 3.85 billion years, or 400 million years earlier than previously thought, reports AP.

In the November 7 issue of Nature, scientists said rocks formations found on Akilia Island in southern west Greenland analysed at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) support the finding according to the latest issue of Nature magazine.

Participating in the research were scientists from the University of California's San Diego's Scripps Institution of Oceanography, UCLA Department of Earth and Space Sciences, the Australian National University and England's Oxford Brookes University.

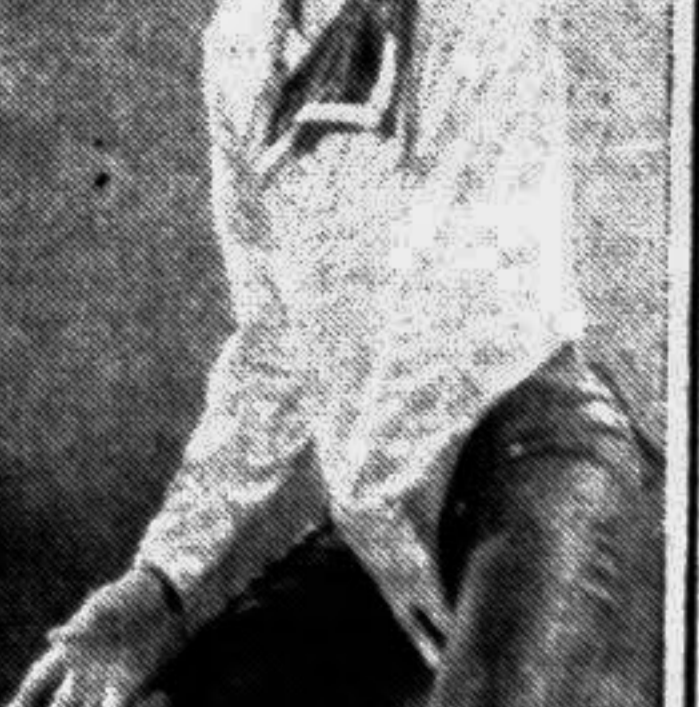
"Our evidence establishes beyond reasonable doubt that life emerged on earth at least 3.85 billion years ago, and this is not the end of the story," said Scripps' Stephen Mojzsis who authored the article. "We may well find that life existed even earlier."

The carbon inclusions the rock were analysed with UCLA's high-resolution ion microscope — an instrument that enables scientists to learn the exact composition of sample.

The form of life discovered was probably a simple micro organism, although its actual shape or nature cannot be ascertained, Mojzsis said, because heat and pressure over time have destroyed those traits.

The previous earliest evidence for life was presented by UCLA paleobiologist William Schopf who showed that a bacteria-like fossil much like modern pond scum existed on earth 3.46 billion years ago.

The report about her appeared Sunday in the weekly tabloid Sunday Mirror. It quoted an unidentified friend of the princess as saying she is in love with heart surgeon Hasnat Khan.



Jackson to become father early next yr

LOS ANGELES: Pop star Michael Jackson will become a father early next year when a long-time friend gives birth to their child, his publicist confirmed Monday, reports AP.

To avoid inaccurate reports in the media and tabloid press, Michael Jackson announced Tuesday that his long-time close friend of 15 years, Debbie Rowe, is pregnant and will have his child in early 1997, his publicist said in a news release.

The publicist denied reports that the child was conceived through artificial insemination.



Joan Jayraj of India (L) and Ireland's Niamh Marie Redmond (R) are pictured on Monday in New Delhi during a press call ahead of the Miss World Pageant final slated to be held in the southern Indian city of Bangalore later this month. — AFP/UNB photo