### 6 Russian civilians shot dead in Grozny

GROZNY, Russia, Dec 19: Six Russian civilians were shot and killed in their homes in the Chechen capital the day after six Red Cross workers were gunned down in their sleep, reports AP.

The two attacks have cast a shadow on the tenuous peace between Moscow and the separatists in the southern Caucasus Mountain republic.

The six Russians, from two families, were killed Wednesday in central Grozny and their bodies were found that afternoon, officials said Thursday.

"We will do our best to find and punish those who committed the crime," said Boris Gazgiryev, the deputy interior minister in Chechnya.

The identity and motive of the killers in both attacks was unknown. The Red Cross workers were shot before dawn Tuesday at a village hospital that the humanitarian group had opened three months ago just outside the capital.

Chechen and Russian leaders have condemned that attack and blamed it on forces trying to torpedo the peace process.

A cease-fire signed in August, which left the separatists largely in charge, has all but stopped 20 months of fighting. Russian troops are completing their withdrawal and preparations are being made for elections next month to choose a new president and parliament.

Chechen government leader Aslan Maskhadov called the at-

tack on the aid workers a "national catastrophe" and promised to do everything possible to see that the murderers

are found and punished. The Red Cross suspended relief operations in Chechnya and evacuated all but a handful of its staff.

The United Nations also decided Wednesday to suspending refugee operations in Chechnya in response to the slayings. Sylvana Foa, UN spokesman in New York, said the UN High Commissioner for Refugees has about 14 international staff and 30 Chechens who have helped some 80,000 people dis-

The Russian military pullout and the peace deal have enemies on both sides and tensions have been rising.

placed by the war.

In another development, a rogue Chechen field commander on Wednesday freed 22 Russian troops who had been kidnapped several days ago from their base on the border between Chechnya and the Dagestan republic.

In a separate kidnapping in-cident, reported by the ITAR-Tass news agency, a delegation of officials from the North Ossetia region has been held hostage near the Chechen village of Znamenskoye for several days by unidentified men seeking ransom. The officials reportedly had gone to Chechnya for talks with Chechen government officials.

Pak law minister quits over 'unjustified interference'

### Zardari charged with Murtaza murder ahead of release

KARACHI, Dec 19: The husband of ousted prime minister Benazir Bhutto has been charged with murder in connection with the shooting death of her brother, the authorities said Thursday, reports AP.

"Asif Ali Zardari, jailed since his wife's government was thrown out in November was charged late on Wednesday with murder, they said.

The charge was laid just hours after a Sindh High Court orderer Zardari freed from jail, where he has been held for more than one month on the maintenance of public order law.

The murder charge is in connection with the September 20 shooting of Benazir's estranged brother Murtaza Bhutto.

Killed in a hail of bullets outside his home in southern Karachi, Murtaza Bhutto had become an arch political rival of his sister's.

He had established a breakaway faction of her Pakistan People's Party and threatened to topple her from power in elections.

But Murtaza had lived in exile for 16 years before returning to Pakistan in 1993 and his rivalry was never considered a real threat to Benazir's political survival.

Believed to have led the mili tant group Al-Zulfikar and charged with hijacking a Pakistan International Airlines plane in 1981, Murtaza was arrested when he returned to appointed. Pakistan. Six months later he

was released on bail when he began a cross country campaign against his sister's government His death prompted a flurry family, not on merit but on paof accusations.

Benazir said it was a conspiracy to bring her government down and when President Farooq Leghari dismissed her in the early morning of November 5 she blamed him for masterminding her brother's death. But her brother's widow, Gh-

husband's political party, quickly blamed Zardari, however no charges were laid against him — until Monday. Neither Benazir or her representative was immediately

inva Bhutto, who now leads her

available for comment. Another report from Islamabad adds: Barely one month into his job, Pakistan's law minister resigned over "unjustified interference" in his ministry, dealing a serious blow to the interim government that took over from deposed prime

minister Benazir Bhutto. In his letter of resignation published Thursday, Law Min-

ster Fakhruddin Ibrahim said he took the job hoping to enact "beneficial laws" and clean up a system rife with corruption.

But he said he is leaving dis-

He accused the interim government, the chief justice and the president of doing much the same as Benazir was accused of doing giving jobs to friends and

Benazir was abruptly dismissed from power by president Farooq Leghari on November 5 on a litany of charges, including overloading government institutions and national industries with friends and rela-

Ibrahim took particular exception to the appointment of the new law secretary, who is a sitting judge and whose qualifications had been earlier questioned by the president.

What is more alarming is in insisting upon the appointment of his nominee.... my resistance was based on principle as well as the known limitation of the learned judge revealed to me by no less a person than yourself." Ibrahim said in his letter of resignation submitted to the presi-

Shortly after taking office Ibrahim came in with a new

anti-corruption law to try to root out the corrupt from Pakistan's rough-and-tumble politics. The sweeping new law pro-vided for a ban on politics for five years, a maximum jail term of 14 years and a stiff fine.

He then released a tough new election law, which required candidates to detail their assets and automatically disqualified anyone who didn't a big step in Pakistan where the rich often hide their wealth to avoid paying income tax.

But soon, Ibrahim said the interference began. First with amendments to the election law, making it easier for candidates to skirt the law.

"Both the laws were widely praised for their independent approach.... but because of certain pressures the government thought it necessary for political reasons to further amend the law," he said.

There was no immediate comment from the interim government.

Benazir's former attorney general Igbal Haider welcomed the resignation.

Mother Teresa

leaves hospital

after undergoing her third heart operation in five years wit-

The 86-year-old Roman

Catholic nun walked out of the

Indian heart clinic where she

had the operation last month.

and got into a Mercedes Benz

car which hospital officials

said was to take her to the Mis-

sionaries of Charity Religious

Teresa woke in such good

health Thursday that doctors

were considering releasing her

from the hospital later in the

Devi Shetty, the hospital's chief

cardiosurgeon, said, describing

the condition of her heart and

"So possibly we will release

Mother Teresa's recovery

from a heart attack last month

had been slowed by poorly

other organs as stable.

her today," he said.

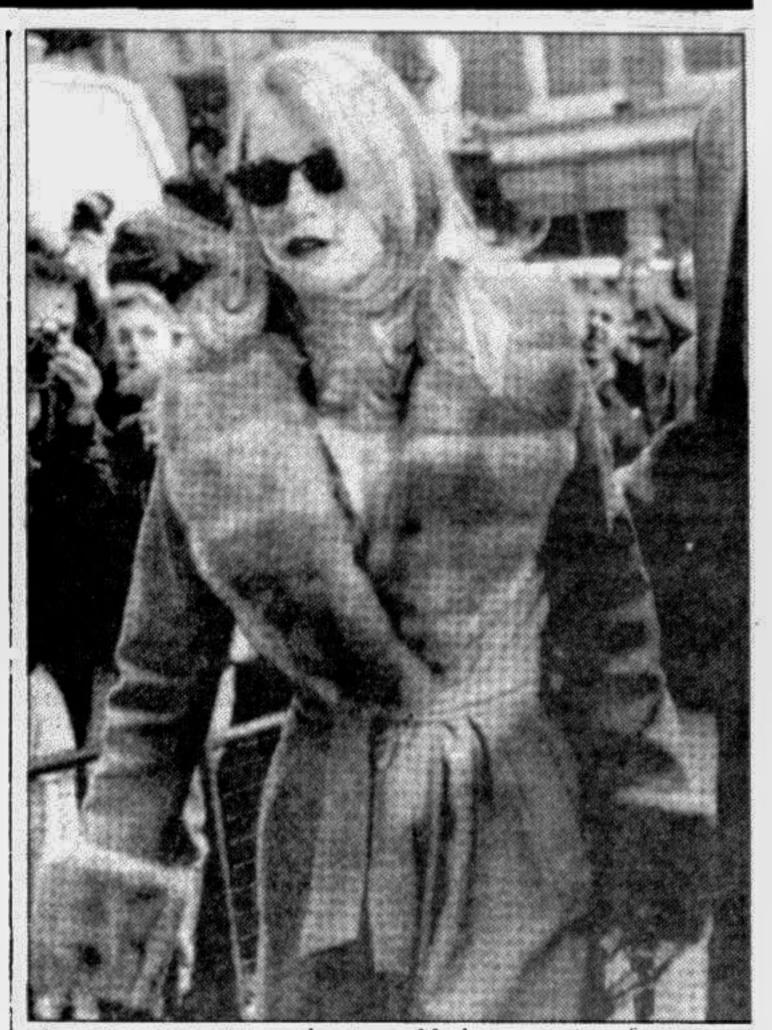
"Mother is keeping well," Dr

Earlier AP says, Mother

nesses said, reports Reuter.

CALCUTTA, Dec 19: Mother Teresa left hospital today for her Religious Order, three weeks

The resignation, he said "disproves the caretaker's tall claims regarding respect for law, constitution, justice, fair play and transparency."



American pop star and actress Madonna arrives for a series of interviews and press conferences at a London hotel Wednesday. The actress who has recently given birth, is in London for the premiere of her new film "Evita" tomorrow, which documents the life of Argentinian icon Eva Peron. - Reuter/UNB photo

# BUILTIT

Cabinet reshuffle likely in ROK: A partial Cabinet shakeup is expected this weekend following the appointment of South Korea's first envoy to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, the prime

minister said Thursday. AP reports from Seoul. Prime Minster Lee Soo-sung said in an interview with KBS Radio that the shakeup could come as early as Friday. The Cabinet reshuffle has been expected for weeks after president Kim Young-sam openly said he will name a Cabinet member to become South Korea's first ambassador to the Paris-based club of industrialised countries.

10 killed in Pak road mishap: Ten people were killed and 25 injured on Wednesday in a road accident involving two buses in the central province of Punjab

in Pakistan, police said, Reuter reports from Multan. Police said three of the injured were in critical condition after two buses collided with each other about 35 kms (20 miles) south of the city of Multan.

24 Russian newsmen killed in '96: Twenty four journalists were killed in Russia and the rest of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) this year, bringing the toll to 130 since the Soviet Union fell apart, ITAR-Tass news agency said on Wednesday, Reuter reports from Moscow.

Tass, quoting Oleg Panfilov, the head of the Glasnost defence fund that monitors human rights in the former Soviet Union. said they were print, television and radio journalists, they included foreigners and CIS citibens. Many were killed in the breakaway region of Chechnya, where Russian troops spent 21 months trying to crush an independence bid.

Coal mine collapse kills 2 in China: A coal mine operated by Chinese peasants has collapsed in Fuyang city in eastern Zhejiang province, trapping seven miners, a

newspaper reported yesterday. AFP says from Shanghai. The Liberation Daily reported that one miner had been dug out with serious injuries after the collapse, which occurred on Tuesday. Two bodies has been recovered as of Wednesday, the paper said. Rescue work was continuing but hopes of finding any more survivors were slim, the report said.

2 Palestinians get life-term: A prisonment and a third to 15 years for the killing of two Jewish settlers last week, judicial officials said, AFP reports from

The two Palestinians, Abdel Nasser Ismail al-Kaisse, 25, and Ibrahim Saleh Alkam, 24, were given life sentences with hard labour, and Ibrahim Mas'adhane, 25, received a 15-year sentence, Palestinian Attorney General Khaled al-Qidrah told

executed in Afghanistan: A man was executed in the grounds of a high school in Kabul on Wednesday for murdering a mother and three small children. The capital's first public execution since the Islamic Taleban took control in September, Reuter reports from Kabul.

21 selected for Sahitya

Akademi Awards '96

Russian Defence Minister Igor Rodionov (L) and NATO Secretary General Javier Solana addresses the media during their joint press conference at the NATO's headquarters, on Wednesday. Rodionov rejected a NATO proposal for an exchange of military liaison officers and stated his concerns about the expansion of the NATO in eastern Europe. - AFP/UNB photo

### HC sets aside presidential rule in Uttar Pradesh

LUCKNOW, Dec 19: In a landmark judgement, a Special Bench of the Allahabad High Court here today unanimously set aside the presidential proclamation re-imposing central rule in Uttar Pradesh, held its ratification by parliament as "unconstitutional" but granted time till December 26 to the centre to challenge it, reports PTI.

The three-member Bench comprising Justice B M Lal Justice Brijesh Kumar and Justice Markandeya Katju 'quashed the presidential proclamation and made the orders operative from December 26. Meanwhile, members of BJP Assembly, in both houses of parliament today demanded resignation of the UF government in the centre in view of the

When the Chief Standing Counsel for the central gov ernment. UK Dhawan sought suspension of the verdict for three weeks to enable the gov ernment to take necessary steps, the Bench rejected the request saying it had already granted a week's time before the verdict became operational

The Special Bench was constituted by the Chief Justice of Allahabad High Court follow

November 19 by the two member Bench comprising Justice S H A Raza and Justice A N Gupta on the constitutional validity of Uttar Pradesh Governor Romesh Bhandari's controversial decision of not inviting the single largest party to form the government and recommend

reimposition of president's rule on October 18 last. As a result of the unprecedented legal crisis, the Bench to nominate a larger Bench or

### had referred the issue to the Chief Justice of the Allahabad High Court with a request either an honourable third judge to hear the matter.

#### functioning kidneys, a bout of pneumonia, and an irregular heartbeat. **Burundian** army killed 4,000 Hutu refugees'

PARIS, Dec 19: The Burundian military massacred 4,000 Hutu refugees as they returned to the country from Zaire, the leader of the Opposition Front for Democracy in Burundi (Frodebu) said Wednesday, reports AFP.

Jean Minani, head of Burundi's main Hutu party, made the claim in comments on a UN report a week ago which said more than 1.000 people were massacred in Burundi in the four weeks from the end of October to the end of November.

Speaking to Radio France Internationale from Arusha Tanzania, Minani declared: 'A thousand people that's too many, but we know that 4,000 people have been killed because the 1,000 refugees were the refugees that could be counted that the United Nations could

#### Soldiers extend hunt for Tigers

COLOMBO, Dec 19: Government troops extended their reach into towns and villages of eastern Sri Lanka Thursday. hunting for Tamil rebels who overran a police commando camp last week, an official said reports AP.

A military spokesman claimed hundreds of rebels were on the run in the forests of the Ampara and Batticaloa dis-tricts, but he offered no evidence to support his claim We think about 400 Tigers

are trapped," said Brig Tissa Jayatunga, the military spokesman, on the fourth day of the offensive. The soldiers have not en-

countered rebel resistance so far, but have discovered several hastily abandoned guerrilla bases and training camps, the military said.

saved lives in Somalia, Sara

jevo and Kurdish areas of

northern Iraq, the record is

ended in humiliating retreat af-

ter American soldiers were

killed. The Bosnian interven-

tion was discredited after the

fall of the so-called safe haven

of Srebrenica. Humanitarian

agencies pulled out of Liberia

because of extensive looting.

Iraqi military action in

September left the northern

Iraq "safe haven" for Kurds in

Roberts said the key reason

The Somalia operation

badly flawed

## Off the Record

### Pioneer of 'girl power'

LONDON: Former Premier Margaret Thatcher - named last week by the Raunchy All-Women Supergroup the spice girls as their political role model - has acknowledged the group's admiration by sending them a Christmas card. The Daily Telegraph reported Thursday, says AFP.

The group's comments last week that "Thatcher was the first spice girl, the pioneer of our ideology - girl power." were reported in every British national newspaper.

Even the Austere Financial Times devoted as much space as the most sensationalist of the tabloids to report singer Victoria's opinion that the current Prime Minister John Major was "a boring pillock.

### Mystery of how insects fly solved!

NEW YORK: Researchers who put moths on tiny leashes and flapped oversized mechanical wings in the name of science have apparently solved the mystery of how insects can fly, reports

The puzzle has been how those tiny flapping wings can get the creatures off the ground.

In Thursday's issue of the journal Nature, Cambridge University zoologist Charles P Ellington and his colleagues came up with an answer: Insects create a whirling cylinder of air above their wings that provides lift.

The finding is "as close as we've come to explaining it," said

Ellington, who has studied insect flight for 25 years and whose findings were published in Thursday's issue of the journal Na-

To figure it out. Ellington's team studied hawkmoths with a wingspan of about 4 inches (10 centimetres). Hawkmoths are big enough and beat their wings slowly enough that the researchers had a good chance of seeing what was going on.

In one set of experiments, hawkmoths were snared in a loop of thread attached to a stiff wire to keep them in the breeze from a wind tunnel. The wind contained thin streams of smoke to

show how the air flowed over the wings. The researchers took 1,000 pictures a second with a videocamera. The telltale evidence appeared above and just behind the

front edge of the wing when the moth flapped down. Rather than just flowing over the top, the layer of air curled up into a cylinder, like a window shade wrapping around its roller. That cylinder maintained low pressure that pulled the top of the wing upward, providing enough lift for flying.

Most scientists had thought that such a "leading-edge vortex" was responsible for insect flight, but prior experiments had either failed to uncover one or found it was unexpectedly small, Ellington said.

The next step was to show how insects produce this air cylinder. To do that, Ellington and colleagues built a computer-controlled mechanical moth with a 3-foot (1-metre) wingspan, using elastic cloth stretched over a framework of brass tubes.

### Work on Pak-Afghan highway likely to begin in Jan

QUETTA, Pakistan, Dec 19: Pakistan and Afghanistan are expected to begin construction of a highway in January that will go up to the border of the Central Asian Republic of Turkmenistan, Pakistani officials said today

Pakistan has delivered heavy machinery to Afghanistan's Taliban Islamic Movem ent to build a 100-km (60-mile) portion of the road in the first phase, a senior Foreign Ministry official told Reuters.

Arif Ayub Director General for Afghanistan and South Asia, said this portion, estimated to cost 100 million rupees (2.5 million dollar) would link Pakistan's southwestern border town of Chaman with the southern Afghan city of Kandahar

"We have asked the Taliban government that construction of the (Chaman-Kandahar) highway should be completed

within six months," he said. They have assured us that construction would start in the first week of January. Afghanistan's road network has been destroyed by 17 years

Ayub said Pakistan would fund the cost of the highway up to Turkmenistan under an agreement it reached in 1994 with the now ousted Afghan government of Burhanuddin

of civil war.

Rabbani. After the completion of the first phase, the remaining part of about 400 kms (240 miles) of the highway from Kandahar to the Afghan border town of Torghundi will be built and is

expected to cost 400 million rupees (10 million dollars). With the construction of Chaman-Torghundi highway Pakistan and Afghanistan will have a road link with Turk-

menistan and other central Asian states, he said.

Israeli jets pound

### Ex-chief minister of Sindh held

NEW DELHI, Dec 19: Ashok

Mitra (Bengali), Sunetra Gupta

(English), Surendra Verma

(Hindi) Ashokamitran (Tamil)

and Ilyas Ahmad Gaddi (Urdu)

are among 21 selected yester-

day, for Sahitya Akademi

for his collection of essays Tal

Betal, Sunetra Gupta for the

novel. Memmories of Rain,

Surendra Verma for his novel

Mujhe Chand Chai-e, Asho-

kamitran for his collection of

short stories Appavin Sineh-

idar, and Ilyas Ahmad Gaddi

cluded Nirupama Borgohain

(Assamese) for her novel Abhi-

jatri, Gianeshowar (Dogri) for

collection of poems "Baddn

Kalave" Himanshi Shelat

(Gujrati) for collection of short

stories Andhari Galiman, G S

Amura (Kannada) for literary

Other awards winners in-

for the novel Fire Area.

Ashok Mitra gets the award

Awards for 1996, reports PTI.

KARACHI, Dec 19: Syed Abdullah Shah, the former chief minister of Pakistan's southern Sindh province, was arrested late Wednesday in a land corruption case, officials and family sources said, reports AFP.

Shah was picked up from his residence here by the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA).

FIA officials said Shah, who was appointed by deposed Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. was accused of selling costly land of the Karachi Port Trust (KPT) at allegedly throw-away

prices to favourites. The FIA has already arrested former KPT Chairman Admiral Akbar Khan in connection with an allegedly shady deal involving 75 acres (30 hectares) of KPT

# Aid agencies struggling to maintain impartiality in work

action in war, reports AP.

criticism 'Bhuvanada Bhagya.

Shankar Ramani (Konkani) for

collection of poems Nillem

Nillem Brahma, Raj Mohan

Jha (Maithili) for collection of

short stories Aai Kalhi Parsoo.

T Padmanabhan. (Malayalam)

for collection of short stories

Gowri R K Mahdubiir Singh

(Manipuri) for anthology of po-

ems Praloigi Meiri Raktagi

Gangadhar Gadgil (Marathi) for

autobiography Eka Mungiche

Maha Bharat, and Mohan

Thakuri (Nepali) for collection of poems Nishabada.

won the award for autobiogra-

phy Mo Jeebana Sangram.

Santikh Singh Dhir (Punjabi)

for collection of short stories

pakhi, Nem Narayan Joshi

(Rajasthani) for memips 'Olun

Ri Akhi Atan. Eshavachandra

Dash (Sankskrit) for collection

of poems Isha. Laksmi Khilani

(Sindhi) for Gufa Je Hun Paar

Sayanarayan Rajguru (Oria)

LONDON, Dec 19: For over a century, the Red Cross has operated under the banner of neutrality and impartiality in the world's trouble spots, two concepts long regarded as key requirements for humanitarian

> But a new study by an Oxford University professor says it is becoming more difficult to be neutral and impartial in humanitarian work in the 1990s.

'In actual practice the concept of impartiality often bursts at the seams." Prof Adam Roberts wrote in the 96-page report for the International Institute for Strategic Studies.

The need to physically protect aid workers and the people they are trying to help is jeopardising the impartiality of aid

Even if the forces involved are multinational and under UN auspices, they may be seen as favouring one side, especially if the UN is simultaneously involved in such political issues as enforcing sanctions. or trying to resolve the con-

Organisation to pull out of the Republic.

In many cases, aid workers have adopted partisan views about the causes of conflict, he said, citing widespread anti-Serb sentiment in Bosnia and anti-Butu sentiment in Rwanda.

Impartiality has also been flouted by undercover diplomacy, secret arms shipments and other activities of diplomats, armed forces and intelligence agencies, he said.

This has led organisations

like the Red Cross to distance themselves from other humani tarian agencies and to demand a clear separation of humanitarian and political activities Roberts said.

Red Cross nurse Fernanda Calados shakes hands with an old Chechen woman injured

with a mine in the hospital of Novy Atagui December 10. Calados and five other CICR

expatriates were killed in Grozny by masked gunmen on Tuesday prompting the

The Red Cross and others whose work requires coopera tion of all warring parties should not abandon the principle of impartiality, he said. But in many conflicts, he said "fairness in exercising judgement" may be a better guide to policy

Roberts' report was written before masked gunmen killed six Red Cross workers and injured a seventh in Chechnya early Tuesday in the bloodiest attack against the Red Cross in its 133-year history

But it highlights the problems that the Red Cross and

other relief agencies are facing. While several treaties call for protection of peacekeepers and humanitarian workers, both groups have experienced an upsurge in fatalities in the 1990s, a period when humanitarian action became a key part

ty's response to violent crises. Roberts said the reliance on humanitarian action is not only a result of the end of the Cold War but other factors that are likely to endure into the next century.

of the international communi-

These include the prevalence of civil wars and disintegrating nations, the reluctance of many countries to accept refugees, and support for humanitarian action in crisis areas to prevent any refugee exodus, he said.

While humanitarian efforts

for these setbacks is the international community's failure to ensure the security of aid workers and recipients - and to agree on realistic "political prescriptions" to solve the crises.

What of the future? "If the practice of the 1990s

has proved anything it is that humanitarian assistance cannot realistically be considered in isolation from security issues," Roberts said.

But he predicted that "humanitarian action may continue, sadly, to be a substitute for long-term policies and difficult strategic decisions."

Larry Minear, co-director of Brown University's Humanitar ianism and War Project, said the Red Cross murders were part of a recurring problem of violence in Chechnya.

the warring parties," he said.

Whether this will get worse depends in part on the kind of political and diplomatic pressure than is brought to bear on

### Hezbollah targets in S Lebanon

NABATIYEH Lebanon. Dec 19: Israeli warplanes attacked suspected guerilla targets in

south Lebanon after nightfall on Wednesday after launching similar raids in the morning Lebanese security sources said. reports Reuter. They said two planes fired four air-to-surface rockets shortly after nightfall into the

Ighm al-Toufah ridge which is controlled by pro-Iranian Hezbollah (Party of God) guerillas north of Israel's south Lebanon occupation zone. There was no immediate

word on casualties. Israeli planes also rocketed Hezbollah targets on the ridge three times in the early morning. No casualties were reported then.