International —

BRIFFIY

Anti-Taliban jet bombs Kabul: Aircraft from the coalition opposed to the Taliban Islamic militia bombed Kabul's airport yesterday, local residents said,

AFP reports from Kabul. They said an aircraft dropped one bomb on the eastern side of the airport. There are no buildings there and the bomb may have caused no damage or casualties. The bomber attracted

42 die as ferry capsizes in China: The death toll from a ferry capsized in the southwestern province of Sichuan has risen to 42, with the recovery of nine

intense anti-aircraft gunfire.

ropean nation.

more bodies, press reports said Sunday, AFP says from Beijing. The accident occurred January 3 in foggy conditions on the Tuojiang River when an overloaded ferry boat collided with a cargo barge. The ferry, licensed to carry 42 passengers, was loaded with 60 passengers and 500 kilogrammes (1,100 pounds) of oranges when it collided with the barge which was transporting nearly twice its cargo weight limit.

New FM appointed in Belarus:
Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko appointed a new foreign minister on Saturday, the Interfax news agency

reported, AFP says from Moscow. Ivan Antonovich, formerly a deputy foreign minister, replaces Vladimir Senko as foreign minister. Official sources said that Senko will soon be appointed ambassador to a Eu-

Filipinos torch own homes to get aid: Villagers in the southern Philippines are setting fire to their own homes in order to avail of government aid funds, a local newspaper reported in Manila, AFP reports from Manila.

The "Today" newspaper noted that President Fidel Ramos had promised 10,000 pesos (383 dollars) in aid to each family in the southern province of Sultan Kudarat, whose home was burned during a recent feud between Christians and Muslims. However, the newspaper quoted a police official in the south as saving, the offer only made some villagers set fire to their own homes in order to get some of the aid money.

Noted British author dies: Writer Elspeth Huxley, who described her childhood in colonial East Africa in her best known book, "The Flame Trees of Thika," has died at the age of 89. AP reports from London.

Huxley, who lived in a cottage in rural Wiltshire county in western England, died Friday at a nursing home in nearby Tetbury, family friend Lt Col F J Burnaby-Atkins said Saturday. The cause of death was not immediately announced, nor were funeral arrangements.

Soldier kills 4 in Russia: Four people were killed and two seriously injured Saturday when a soldier went on the rampage in the central Russian city of Perm, ITAR-Tass news agency reported, AFP says from Moscow.

The incident started at a guarded industrial facility in the city, located 1100 kilometres (700 miles) northeast of Moscow, when a guard. Oleg Lokhmatov, opened fire on his relief. another soldier and their commander. Lokhmatov then attacked residents of a nearby village, broke into a shop and seriously injured an employee and a customer, and then turned his gun on a passing car.

Blast hits police post in Ireland: An explosion on Saturday hit an unoccupied police post in Tempo village, in the southwest of northern Ireland, a police spokesman said. AFP reports from Belfast.

No one was injured, he added. The blast, at the front of the police post, was not preceded by any telephone warning. Police were alerted to the explosion by witnesses who told of hearing a strong detonation. The surrounding area was immediately sealed off. An investigation was underway.

Strong quake shakes Mexico: A strong earthquake shook Mexico City and other areas of the country Saturday but officials said there were no immediate reports of victims or damage. AFP says from Mexico City.

The national seismological service said the earthquake measured 7.3 on the Richter Scale and that its epicentre was located in a coastal area of the western state of Michaoacan. The quake occurred at about 2:30 pm (2030 GMT) and lasted about 80 seconds, officials said. Besides, Mexico City and Michoacan state, it could be felt in Guerre, o and Jalisco states as well.

US peace envoy due in Cyprus: A US peace envoy is to arrive in Nicosia yesterday in a bid to quell mounting tensions on the divided island over Turkish threats to attack if Greek Cypriots go ahead with plans to deploy Russian missiles, AFP reports from Nicosia.

Carey Cavanaugh's mission comes after Turkey repeatedly warned over the past week of both political and military action if Cyprus installs the S-300 anti-aircraft missiles, which the Greek Cypriots say are purely defensive. Cavanaugh will try to advance "concrete actions to reduce tension," as well as reduce "overall military activities." US State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said in Washington.

Hashimoto pays tribute to Ho Chi Minh: Visiting Japanese Premier Ryutaro Hashimoto laid a wreath at the mausoleum of Vietnam's revolutionary leader Ho Chi Minh vesterday at the end of a 24-hour trip to Hanoi, AFP reports

from Hanoi. Hashimoto chatted to officers charged with looking after the memorial, then marched solemnly up to the monument with members of his delegation after arriving by limousine from his hotel. After viewing the preserved body of Vietnam's former leader the visiting Japanese leader had a brief tour of the simple house on stilts a short distance away where Ho Chi Minh lived until his death in 1969.

Myanmar police halt supporters of Suu Kyi

YANGON, Jan 12: Prodemocracy activists hoping to hear weekend speeches by their leaders dispersed Saturday after seeing they were outnumbered and surrounded by security forces, reports AP.

About 50 supporters of prodemocracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi, who has been largely silenced by the military regime in recent months, waited briefly at an intersection near her home in hopes of hearing her speak.

The vice chairman of Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy, Tin Oo, then met with the group at the Goodliffe Junction, conveying a message from Suu Kyi thanking them for waiting for her. Then he asked them to leave.

More than 60 riot police in three light trucks were stationed around the junction Plainclothes members of Myanmar's powerful intelligence service were also seen in the area. Still largely confined to her

home, Nobel Peace Prize winner Suu Kyi has been sending her senior party leaders to speak to supporters she normally addressed at weekend rallies at her home.

By cordoning off her house. the military has forced the now much smaller crowds to gather at a nearby intersection.

Suu Kyi, who was released from a six-year house arrest in July 1995, last spoke at the intersection on Nov 23.

Japanese reporter, his Peruvian translator freed from jail

LIMA Jan 12: A Japanese reporter for the Asahi television network and his Peruvian translator were freed late Saturday after spending four days in jail for evading a police barricade, the network, and police

said, reports AFP. Reporter Hitomi Tsuyoshi. who s a Japanese, and translator Victor Borja, a Peruvian, were arrested Tuesday for entering the Japanese Embassy resi dence to interview Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement rebels holding 74 promi nent Japanese. Bolivians and Peruvians hostage.

The two had been freed by the National Anti-Terrorism Police, police told AFP.

"At this moment they are being freed. They are okay. They are fine," Dolly Mascarenas with Asahi television in Lima told AFP

Mascarenas also said that the Japanese foreign minister was in possession of the four cassettes that police had seized from the two journalists and would give them to Asahi head-

police.

ports AP.

GAUHATI, India, Jan 12:

Nearly 1,000 people were killed

in 1996 in the northeastern In-

dian state of Assam where se-

cessionist movements and

tribal warfare maintained a

According to figure released

steady cadence of violence, re-

Friday by state authorities, 734

people were killed by anti-India

militants, and about 200 people

were killed in clashes among

rival tribes in the isolated and

underdeveloped corner of India.

rebels of the Bodo tribe deto-

nated a land mine on a road as a

poe bus was passing. Two fed-

eral policemen were killed and

13 people, including five civil-

ians were injured, police said

The attack occurred near

Kokrajhar, 200 kilometres (160

bombing of a New Delhi-bound

The worst incident was the

miles) west of Gauhati.

On Saturday, suspected

quarters in Tokyo.

Peruvian Prime Minister Alberto Pandoli had previously said that Japanese network had agreed to give up the taped interviews in what became a battle between the government and the international press.

Tsuyoshi and Borja had been picked up for questioning by Peru's National Anti-Terrorism Police for alleged "terrorist connections.

Under a state of emergency ordered for Lima on December 18, the day after the hostage crisis began, the two could have been held indefinitely without formal charges.

Japanese Prime Minster Ryutaro Hashimoto has criticised the television crew and called their actions "extremely regrettable." Jiji Press reported.

Meanwhile, Nestor Cerpa Cartolini, the leader of rebels holding 74 hostages has bet the future of his dwindling Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement on the takeover of the Japanese ambassador's resi dence. Peruvian and US ana-

Serbian ultra-nationalist and opposition leader Vuk Draskovic (R) argues with a police

officer during an anti-government rally in central Belgrade Saturday. The regime of

strongman Slobodan Milosevic, seemingly bending to international pressure, announced a

review of cancelled opposition municipal election victories, immediately criticised; "I repeat

to those who are hard of hearing that we want total recognition of the results of

November 17," Draskovic told a crowd of some 10,000, who faced off with hundreds of riot

Violence claimed 1000

in Assam last year

train December 30 that killed at

least 34 people, said the report

A militant group of the Bodo

tribe, The Bodoland Liberation

Tiger Force, claimed responsi-

the northeastern states border-

ing China and Burma have been

overshadowed by the uprising

in Kashmir, largely because of

the support for the Muslim

Kashmiri rebels by Pakistan

and the potential for a fourth

northeast are equally deadly.

But the insurgencies in the

At least three groups are

fighting the Indian government

in Assam, the largest state in

the region and the center of In-

dominant ethnic group have

been fighting since the 1970s

for independence from India

Nationalist Assamese, the

dia's tea and oil industries.

India-Pakistan war.

In recent years, troubles in

bility for the train bombing.

The pro-Cuban group, formed in 1983, has demanded the release of some 440 people jailed for ties to the rebel movement as the price of freeing prominent Peruvian, Bolivian and Japanese hostages.

Analysts say anything less would mean the end of Tupac Amaru-which has already been severely weakened during the 6 and half years since President Alberto Fujimori came into of fice pledging to put an end to rebel bombings, kidnappings and attacks on military out

An estimated 30,000 people have died in political violence since another rebel group, the Maoist shining Path, first struck in 1980

Since 1930, the founders of both the Shining Path, the stronger of the two, and the smaller Tupac Amaru have been captured and sentenced to life in prison.

Tupac Amaru rebels had planed to seize the Peruvian Congress but that plot was

-AFP/UNB photo

which they say failed to stop

hundreds of thousands of poor

migrants illegally crossing

from Bangladesh, threatening

fighting against India since the

1940s. Extremists want an in-

dependent country for the Na-

gas, who are spread over four

northeastern Indian states and

Bodo militants, proved the

most deadly last year, said gov-

ernment reports. attributing

more than 225 deaths to the Bo-

dos. Most Bodo groups would be

satisfied with their own state

within India that would given

them control over their own

various insurgencies were 119

troops of Indian security forces

and police, the report said.

Among the casualties of the

lives and resources.

The most recent uprising, by

Naga tribesman have been

the ethnic balance.

thwarted when security forces stormed a rebels safe house in a December 1995 shootout in Lima.

Formed in 1983, the group was most active in late 1980s and early 1990s.

Carlos Tapia a political ana lyst who believes the Tupac Amaru has fewer than 80 armed men in two groups outside the ambassador's residence, said that the rebels had gained spectacular propaganda (but) ... can't continue as guerillas.

Carlos Degregoria Peruvian political scientist with the inter-American dialogue in Washington said that a negotiated settlement of the 25-day hostage-taking would reduce political tensions in Peru.

"This would be good for President Alberto Fujimori because it would give him democratic credentials and he would be able to say that he had changed and that he was no longer authoritarian. Degregoria told reporters in Washington last

won't contest

for her post

Teresa has virtually decided not

to contest the post of superior

general of her Roman Catholic

order as hectic preparations are

on for its elections on February

2. an aide said today, reports

decide my successor," the asso-

ciate of the 86-year-old Nobel

Peace Prize winner quoted her

her Calcutta-based Missionar-

ies of Charity Order in 1948 and

has led it since then with

charismas but frail health has

made it increasingly difficult

for her to run the order any-

Students hold

protest march

against Serbian gov

BELGRADE, Jan 12

Belgrade's students began a new

protest march against the

embattled Serbian government

early this morning after police

pulled out at the end of a face-

off of more than four hours,

The 100 police quit around 1:00 am (0000 GMT) after

blocking some 2,000 students in

an atmosphere that was much

more relaxed than previously.
The government of President

Slobodan Milbsevic said late

Saturday that it would review

the results of contested local

elections, but the move did

nothing to halt eight weeks of

protests in the capital Belgrade.

clearest sign yet that the regime

would finally back down from

its confrontation with adamant

Yeltsin's condition

stable

Yeltsin's condition stabilized

Saturday, but the Kremlin

stopped short of saying doctors

had achieved a breakthrough in

their battle with his pneumo

The presidential press ser-vice described Yeltsin as

"somewhat" more active on

Saturday and said doctors were

Sergei Mironov, said Yeltsin

caught a cold over the holidays

that turned into pneumonia in

both lungs. He said Yeltsin's

lungs sounded clearer on

Army turns down

offer by LTTE to

return 27 bodies

Lankan military authorities

have turned down an offer by

Tamil Tiger guerillas to return

the bodies of 27 people killed in

a major confrontation three

days ago, relief workers said,

Tamil Eelam (LTTE) had agreed

to give the bodies believed to be

those of government soldiers to

the local Red Cross but the mili-

tary had turned it down saying

identification was not possible.

scheduled handover of the bod-

ies today could not take place

because the military did not

want to take charge of bodies

Red cross officials said the

The Liberation Tigers of

COLOMBO, Jan 12: Sri

The chief Kremlin doctor,

treating him with antibiotics.

MOSCOW, Jan 12: Boris

opposition protesters.

nia, reports AP.

Saturday.

reports AFP.

Reuters/UNB photo | that were beyond recognition.

The statement was the

reports AFP.

The legendary nun founded

as saying late last week.

more, her aided said.

"It is the God, who will now

CALCUTTA, Jan 12: Mother

Mass funeral for 140 rebels held

Tigers mount fresh attack against army positions

COLOMBO, Jan 12: Tamil Tiger guerillas launched a fresh attack against an army bunker line in northern Sri Lanka today, killing five soldiers and losing at least one of their own fighters, officials here said.

reports AFP Gunmen of the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) mounted the attack against army positions at Chettikulam in the district of Vavuniya at dawn and the fighting went on for nearly four hours, officials said.

They said at least 16 soldiers were wounded in the attack and the army used artillery guns to beat off the Tiger onslaught.

It was the first big attack by the Tigers since a massive raid against two army camps further to the north of the country on Thursday. In that attack both sides lost hundreds of men killed and wounded.

Earlier report says, Tamil Tiger guerillas held a mass funeral for over 140 rebels killed in a major assault against security forces while the military braced for more

attacks, officials and rebel radio said today. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) said over

their clandestine radio that funerals were held on Saturday in the northern region of Wani and the area was decorated with red and vellow flags as a sign of mourning

"Twenty-seven bodies of soldiers killed by the Tigers were also handed over to the local Red Cross to be returned to the military," the LTTE's Voice of Tigers radio said.

It said sombre music was played in areas under their control in the north of the country, as a sign of respect for the guerillas killed in Thursday's pre-dawn raid against the Paranthan and Elephant Pass army camps.

The LTTE said it killed over 200 army soldiers in both attacks but the Defence Ministry here said the military death toll was 161 while another 232 escaped. However, the ministry

claimed that more than 350 Tigers were killed.

Mother Teresa Off the Record

Charles, Di agree to bury the hatchet

LONDON: Prince Charles and his divorced wife Princess Diana want to bury the hatchet for the sake of their children and the monarchy, according to the Sunday Times, quoting "a senior royal source," reports AFP.

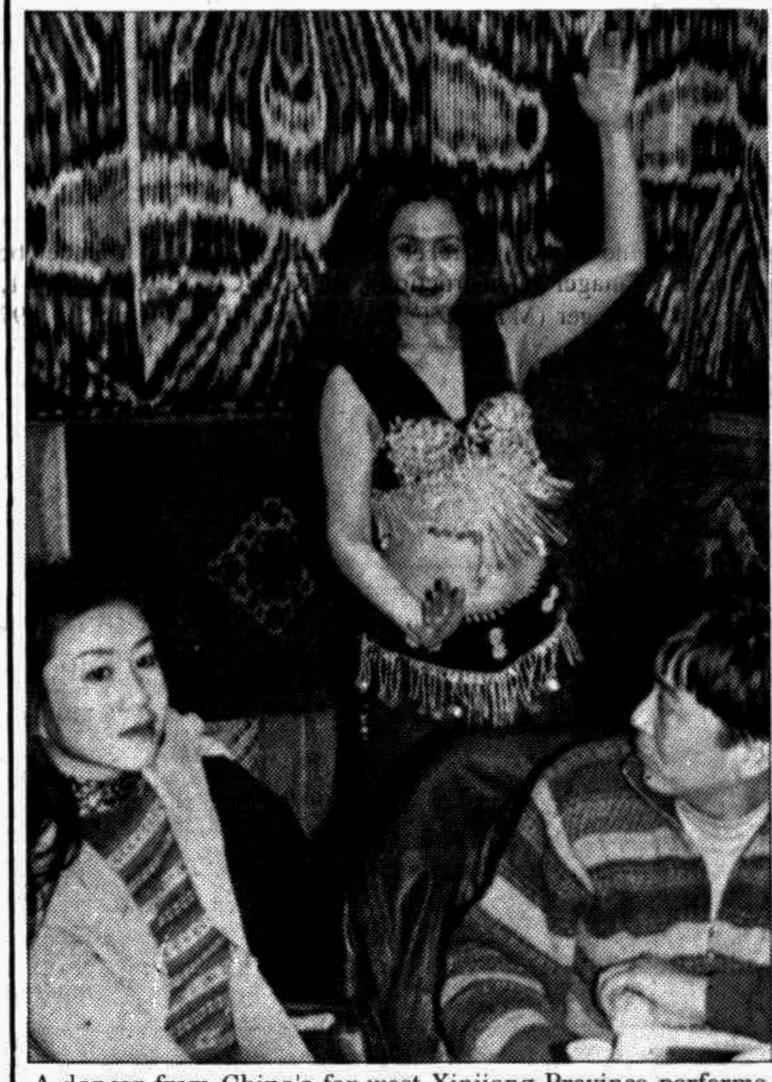
The paper said the couple had even decided to attend an official ceremony together later this year, provided their separate agendas allowed it, the paper said

The prince has reportedly complained in the past that his ex-wife had deliberately undertaken official engagements on the same day as he had in order to put him in the shade.

Last week it was reported that a strategy group had decided to launch a long-term programme to groom Charles for the throne including taking on more of the queen's official duties. The group reflects concern over his negative public image.

following his divorce last year from Princess Diana. A recent controversial television show conducted a mammoth straw poll of 2.6 million people which indicated that half the population felt the monarchy would not last another 50 years, though two-thirds of them said they supported it as an

institution. The BBC reported that the plan for what was being termed a "people's prince," was also designed to dispel any suggestion that he might stand down as heir to the thrown in favour of his eldest son, Prince William, or even his sister, Princess Anne.



A dancer from China's far west Xinjiang Province performs at a restaurant in Beijing on Saturday entertaining guests with a traditional Xinjiang belly dance. Beijing, once known for its quiet nightlife, is now on a upswing with the latest discos, nightclubs and various other - AFP/UNB photo entertainment outlets.

Example for would-be hoaxers

BEIJING: A Chinese woman who joked that she had a bomb in her bag prior to boarding a plane was detained for 10 days under China's tight airline security regulations, a report said Sunday, reports AFP.

The woman, identified only as Liang, was about to board a flight at Guangzhou's Baiyun Airport on December 28, when she became concerned that another passenger had designs on her hand baggage, the Xinmin Evening News said.

"Don't touch my bag, there's a bomb inside," Lang shouted at the passenger as they started to board.

Her comment was taken seriously by airport security staff. who insisted on searching Liang's belongings.

Although the search revealed nothing and despite Liang's protestations that she was only joking, the airport decided to detain her for 10 days as an example to other would-be hoaxers, the newspaper said.

UNSCOM resumes search for

Prospect of face-to-face talks raises hopes for end to Lima crisis two hours inside the residence provide details.

LIMA Jan 12: The prospect of a face-to-face meeting this weekend between government negotiators and rebels holding 74 hostages has boosted hopes that the four-week standoff at the Japanese ambassador's residence can be resolved peacefully, reports AP.

Talks to end the crises stalled after the Tupac Amaru rebels spoke to reporters on December 31, violating an agreement with the government.

Peruvian negotiator Domingo Palermo broke the silence Friday, speaking with rebel leader Nestor Cerpa over a two-way radio. They agreed that Palermo and another key intermediary, Roman Catholic Archbishop Juan Luis Cipriani,

would visit the residence. Cipriani spent more than Saturday, accompanied by a Red Cross worker. He left without speaking to reporters but waved and flashed a smile, fuelling speculation that he and Palermo might return Sunday. Peruvian police Saturday

evening released a Japanese reporter and his Peruvian interpreter who had been in custody since they sneaked inside the compound for two hours Tuesday to interview the rebels.

TV Asahi reporter Tsuyoshi Hitomi and his Peruvian interpreter Victor Borja were detained after they left the resi-

Hitomi was to leave Peru Saturday night and would not make any comment, TV Asahi correspondent Junichi Kitasei said. He confirmed that Borja was also released, but he did not

Another TV Asahi representative said the video tape the

two recorded inside the compound was turned over to Japanese Embassy officials in Lima and had not yet been returned to the company. A spokesman at the Japanese Embassy said the tape would be sent TV Asahi headquarters in

Palermo's convation with Cerpa on Friday ended with a bit of banter.

"OK, Nestor, sir, then probably we'll meet for a while this weekend. How does that sound?" Palermo asked the

rebel leader. "No problem," Cerpa replied. "We aren't going anywhere." With that, both men laughed. A recording of their conversation was broadcast on local TV and Japan welcomed the resump-

Actors Chris Farley and Nicollette Sheridan, stars of the new film "Beverly Hills Ninja"

pose at the film's premiere Saturday in Los Angeles. Farley plays the title role.

tion of talks. Foreign Ministry spokesman Hiroshi Hashimoto said Saturday that his government "hopes progress toward a way out of the crisis comes about through direct contact" with the rebels.

The leftist guerillas stormed the ambassador's residence on December 17, capturing more than 500 people attending a cocktail party. The rebels released most captives but are holding onto the rest to demand freedom for about 300 comrades in Peruvian jails.

Japan's ambassador, Morihisa Aoki, and several Japanese executives are among the remaining hostages. President Alberto Fujimori

ruled out any prisoner ex-

change. But he said in an interview with The Associated Press late Friday that he was confident he could reach a deal with Cerpa — even if it takes weeks of tough bargaining. We expect to continue these

conversations, which will

probably take some time and

consume a lot of patience," Fujimori said. Fujimori said December 31 in a written reply to questions from The Associated Press that

the rebels might be allowed to leave Peru. Cerpa rejected the option during an impromptu news conference the same day. Fujimori and his aides have since said the option remains open, but refuse to identify

which countries they have been

in contact with. "I cannot make

statements about these official

contacts," he said in Friday's AP interview.

Fujimori said the government broke off negotiations after the rebels allowed journalists to enter the residence without police approval on December 31. The impromptu news conference had violated an agreement to have the rebels speak with reporters in exchange for the release of a large number of hostages, he said.

No hostages have been released since seven were let go on January 1.

Bolivia, meanwhile, denied reports that its ambassador to Peru, Jorge Gumicio, tried to negotiate his own release from the residence by promising favourable treatment for Tupac Amaru rebels in Bolivian jails.

banned missile parts in Iraq The searches are aimed at BAGHDAD, Jan 12: United Nations weapons inspectors re-

sumed on Saturday their search for banned missile components in Iraq, officials said.

"The experts are pursuing their mission, an official with the United Nations Special Commission on Disarming Iraq (UNSCOM) told AFP.

The official released no details on the results of the latest search mission which began five days ago.

Goran Wallen, director of the UNSCOM monitoring and verification centre, here, said on Monday that the inspectors were monitoring Iraqi excava tions at one site outside Bagh-

dad. He said they were looking for new missile remains and doc uments.

finding engine parts from Soviet made Scud missiles which were not included in an inventory Iraq gave to UNSCOM. prompting suspicions Baghdad is still hiding between six and 16 missiles. The 10 member inspection

team is expected to stay until the end of January. The UN Security Council last

month urged Iraq to stop preventing UN inspectors from transferring nearly 130 engines for Scud missiles to the United States for study. The analysis would allow

UNSCOM to deduce how many Scuds Iraq retained after determining whether the engines not stockpiled at UNSCOM of fices in Baghdad were imported from Russia or made in Iraq