

International

BRIEFLY

US urges PA to help stop terrorism

Quake shakes Nepal: An earthquake measuring 5.0 on the Richter Scale shook the northern Nepali district of Rasuwa yesterday...

Road mishap kills 8 in Bangkok: Eight people, including six Muslim school girls, were killed in a head-on collision between a chartered school bus and a heavy truck in southern Thailand...

Elton John turns 50: Flamboyant rock star Elton John turned 50 Tuesday and joined Britain's music establishment, AP reports from London.

3 DPRK men seek asylum in ROK: Three North Koreans are seeking asylum in South Korea from a third country, a Seoul intelligence official said yesterday...

Return to barracks, army asks Albanian deserters: TIRANA, Albania, Mar 25: Albania's Defence Ministry appealed for deserters to return to their barracks and help restore order Monday...

UK asks US to fulfil promises to pay UN bills: UNITED NATIONS, Mar 25: Concerned over attacks on the United Nations from the US Congress, the British government is reaffirming its support for Secretary-General Kofi Annan and urging the Americans to fulfil promises to pay their UN bills, reports AP.

Police set up roadblocks around PNG's parliament: PORT MORESBY, Mar 25: Armed police set up roadblocks around Papua New Guinea's parliament house on Tuesday as pressure grew for the resignation of Prime Minister Sir Julius Chan...

Violence claims 36 in Kenya: NAIROBI, Mar 25: Thirty-six people were killed and 85 wounded when some 200 armed bandits, believed to be Ethiopian tribesmen, attacked a village in northern Kenya...

Estrogen gene influences time of puberty, breast cancer risk: RESTON, Virginia, Mar 25: A common variation of a gene that controls estrogen production appears to influence when girls go through puberty and whether they get breast cancer someday, reports AP.

Final list of winners: LOS ANGELES, Mar 25: The following is a final list of winners at the 69th Annual Academy Awards announced on Monday, reports Reuter.

Academy Awards 'The English Patient' named best film of 1996: LOS ANGELES, Mar 25: The English Patient, a poetic portrait of a doomed romance played out in a landscape of passion and war, was named best film of 1996 and dominated the field Monday at the academy awards, reports AFP.

Coal mine blast kills 21 in China: BEIJING, Mar 25: A coal mine explosion in China left 21 dead in the Central province of Henan, a local government official said today, reports AFP.

4 Maoist guerillas gunned down in Andhra Pradesh: NEW DELHI, Mar 25: Indian security forces gunned down four Maoist guerillas in the southern Indian state of Andhra Pradesh, the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported today, says AFP.

NASA to develop rocketless space vehicles: WASHINGTON, Mar 25: NASA announced plans Monday to develop four unmanned space vehicles capable of flying 10 times the speed of sound without the use of rocket engines, reports AP.

And without criticizing Arafat, White House press secretary Mike McCurry said the United States expected all parties to you "expand 100 per cent effort" to thwart terrorism. The militants struck after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced ground would be broken for new Jewish homes in east Jerusalem - a decision President Bill Clinton criticised as ill-timed and as shaking the confidence Palestinians are entitled to have in Israel's willingness to negotiate the city's future.

Spokesman John Dinger said there was increasing concern that Arafat had "loosened his grip" on Hamas. And a US official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said, "We are not certain that Chairman Arafat gave the green-light for a violent response to Israel's decision to build a new Jewish neighbourhood in east Jerusalem - thereby implying he might have."

Regardless of what may have been done in the past, whatever signals may have been thought to have been received, it's important now to set the record straight and make clear there is no room for terrorism in the Middle East," Dinger said.

He welcomed Annan's "commitment... in setting the United Nations on the path of reform, so that it can better measure up to these challenges." "But to succeed, the United Nations needs not only to reform but also to be able to rely on the financial resources which member states have voted to it," Rifkind said.

The British Mission to the United Nations on Monday circulated copies of remarks made last Thursday in the House of Commons by British Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind in support of the world organization.

Speaking to the Commons, Rifkind said the United Nations was uniquely placed to meet global challenges such as climate change, environmental threats and the promotion of democracy.

Once the problem of arrears has been dealt with, the British government hopes that it will be possible speedily to complete the process of UN reform and thus to relaunch the United Nations on its urgent new agenda," Rifkind said.

They also covered in a 45-minute conversation "the best ways to put the peace process back on track," said Gadi Baltiesky, the Israeli Embassy spokesman. He described the atmosphere as "very friendly" but declined to provide further details. Reuter adds: Palestinian President Yasser Arafat said today he was ready to meet Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to discuss peace in the Middle East.

"Why not, if this if for peace I am ready, but if it is for propaganda, it is something different," Arafat said at a news conference in the Sri Lankan capital Colombo just before ending his 24-hour visit to the island.

"Peace is an open target, our target is a comprehensive, lasting peace in the area," Arafat said.

"We have worked hard for peace and don't forget that the majority of the Israeli people are for peace." Israel has said it has not closed its door on restoring severed contacts with the Palestinian authority despite a deepening rift in the wake of last week's suicide attack in Tel Aviv.

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Off the Record



This photo released by OK! Magazine Monday shows singer Michael Jackson (C) his wife Debbie Rowe, and their new baby son. The magazine will publish in its next edition an interview in which the name of the baby will be revealed. Photo courtesy of OK! Magazine. - AFP/UNB photo

Hillary, Chelsea plunge into wilderness

DAR ES SALAAM, Tanzania: US First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton and her daughter Chelsea plunge into the Tanzanian wilderness Tuesday for a close look at east Africa's elephants, rhinos, lions and other beasts, reports Reuter.

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Best picture of the year: 'The English Patient' (Miramax), a tiger moth production Saul Zaentz, producer.

Best performance by an actor in a leading role: Geoffrey Rush in "Shine" (fine line features).

Best performance by an actress in a leading role: Frances McDormand in "Fargo" (Gramercy).

Advertisement for Rupali Bank Limited. It features a stylized illustration of a person and text in Bengali: 'স্বাধীনতার জন্যে লাঞ্ছিত শহীদের আত্মদান কুলে কুলে বিকশিত হোক' and 'রূপালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড'.

Advertisement for the Academy Awards. It features a photo of Juliette Binoche and text: 'Academy Awards "The English Patient" named best film of 1996'.

Advertisement for Rupali Bank Limited. It features a photo of a person and text in Bengali: 'স্বাধীনতার জন্যে লাঞ্ছিত শহীদের আত্মদান কুলে কুলে বিকশিত হোক' and 'রূপালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড'.