

Myanmar troops attack dissident student base near Thai border

BANGKOK, Apr 20: Myanmar government forces have attacked a dissident student base close to the Thai border triggering a new exodus of refugees into southern Thailand, sources said Saturday, reports AFP.

Media fear more political turmoil

NEW DELHI, Apr 20: India's media reacted with dismayed resignation rather than election Sunday after the United Front selected Inder Kumar Gujral its new head, signalling the end of three weeks of political turmoil, reports AFP.

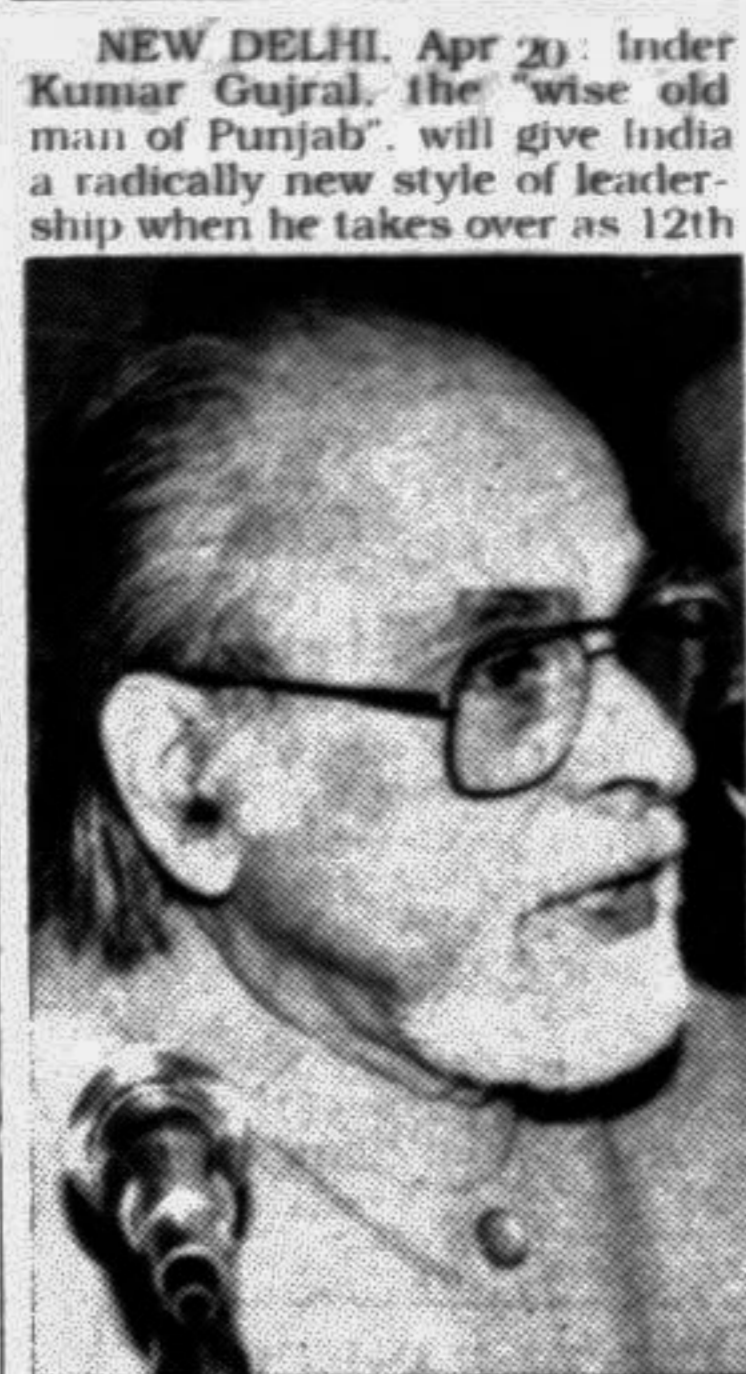
Selection of Gujral as head of govt

headlines ran. The Times of India was equally downbeat, arguing that the leadership 'race' got decided not by how many were supporting a particular candidate but who were opposing him.

Gujral pledges to improve ties with S Asian nations

NEW DELHI, Apr 20: Prime Minister designate Inder Kumar Gujral said on Sunday that he would continue to try to improve relations with India's South Asian neighbours while defending an independent foreign policy, reports Reuters.

Profile of IK Gujral



NEW DELHI, Apr 20: Inder Kumar Gujral, the 'wise old man of Punjab', will give India a radically new style of leadership when he takes over as 12th prime minister of the world's largest democracy tomorrow, reports AFP.

His entrance into national politics came in 1967, when he was elected to parliament's lower house, he was put in charge of a series of ministries. While at works and housing, he was credited with drawing up the design for the modern New Delhi.

BRIEFLY

Quake rocks Japanese island: An earthquake measuring 3.6 on the Richter scale rocked the southern Japanese island of Kyushu yesterday, but there were no reports of casualties or damage, the meteorological agency and police said, AFP reports from Tokyo.

Kabila, Mandela hold talks: Zairean rebel leader Laurent Kabila and President Nelson Mandela held talks in South Africa on Wednesday, rekindling hopes for a peaceful settlement to the war in Zaire, AFP reports from Cape Town.

Top DPRK defector arrives in ROK: The highest ranking defector ever to flee North Korea arrived in South Korea Sunday, bringing with him a trove of eagerly sought information about the secretive communist nation, AP reports from Seoul.

Former Pak food minister held: Pakistani police on Friday arrested the former food minister of central Punjab province on corruption charges as a wheat flour crisis gripped the country, officials said, AFP reports from Islamabad.

Chinese warships arrive in Chile: Chinese warships, on their first visit to South America, have arrived in a Chilean port, officials said Saturday, AFP reports from Valparaiso.

IRA claims responsibility for blasts in England: LONDON, Apr 20: The Irish Republican Army claimed responsibility Saturday for an explosion and bomb threats a day earlier that disrupted roads and rail lines in northern England, but caused minimal damage, reports AP.

Kabila vows to liberate Kinshasa

LUBUMBASHI, Zaire, Apr 20: At a victory celebration that has become the hallmark of his rebellion, rebel leader Laurent Kabila told a cheering crowd Saturday that he would press on to the capital, Kinshasa, reports AP.

would not agree to step down. Security by troops from the rebel Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire was the tightest yet at a Kabila victory rally. The 56-year-old rebel leader has made a practice of holding a rally in every major town and city his forces have taken.

and replaced him with a Kabila cousin. Although Kabila spent much of his speech addressing local political concerns and telling the crowd that he was aware of the special problems in the region, he reiterated his ban on political movements other than his own — at least until all of Zaire was under rebel control.

Arafat orders Palestinian forces to resume cooperation with Israel

JERUSALEM, Apr 20: Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat has ordered Palestinian security forces to resume cooperating with their Israeli counterparts, radio reports said Saturday, reports AP.

meetings, involving the heads of Israeli and Palestinian agencies, are regarded as crucial to the peace process because these services are directly concerned with preventing attacks such as the March 21 Tel Aviv cafe bombing.

also present. A few days earlier the head of the Israeli Shin Bet security service met heads of the Palestinian Preventive Security Service.

2000 killed in Mina fire, claims Saudi opposition leader

NICOSIA, Apr 20: A Saudi opposition group claimed Saturday that 2,000 Muslims had been killed in last week's huge fire during the Makkah pilgrimage, compared to an official toll of 343, reports AFP.

Off the Record

It is good for drought stricken Africa

TEL AVIV, Israel: Ice cream made from camel milk may not sound like a treat, but it could be a stopgap solution to mass hunger in drought-stricken Africa, an Israeli scientist says, reports AP.

Croat refugees may go for polls

ZAGREB, Apr 20: Croat refugees and other minorities who fled or were expelled from Vukovar, the main town of Serb-held eastern Slavonia, appear to have decided elections there, reports AFP.

Peruvian minister, police chief resign

LIMA, Apr 20: Peru's interior minister and police chief resigned on Saturday after admitting responsibility for the security lapse that allowed Marxist rebels to storm the Japanese Ambassador's home, where they have held 72 hostages since December, reports Reuters.

Turkish army officer blasts govt

ANKARA, Apr 20: In a rare public outburst by the military, a senior army official compared the governing Islamic party to Muslim guerrillas in Algeria, reports said Saturday, reports AP.



Children from the schools of Fier are all smiles as they gather with a message of peace at the city's central square to greet the international aid to Albania, Saturday. Some 200 kids gathered and took place in music happening.

Chirac to go for early polls

PARIS, Apr 20: President Jacques Chirac, feeling the pinch on his popularity ratings and fearing tough times ahead, has decided to go for broke and call early legislative elections, the French press reported this weekend, reports AP.

First batch of Chinese troops enters HK today

HONG KONG, Apr 20: The first Chinese troops to enter Hong Kong under British rule arrive Monday, the Queen's birthday, to share the Prince of Wales barracks with the black watch garrison complete with their bagpipes and kilts, reports AFP.

any military base across the border. Hong Kong residents are hoping they can deal with the culture shock quickly and quietly.

The PLA are best remembered by most people here for their brutal suppression of a pro-democracy movement in China in 1989. In June that year a million people here, about a sixth of the total population, took to the streets in protest against the Tiananmen Square massacre.

says British forces spokesman Roger Goodwin. A dozen of the group will be housed on stone cutters island on Kowloon side.

not least because they will have very little money with which to enjoy the capitalist delights which Hong Kong has to offer.