

# BRIEFLY

**Mobutu won't travel to SA:** Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seko will not travel to South Africa this week for a much expected meeting with rebel leader Laurent Kabila on ending Zaire's civil war, his son and spokesman said on Monday. Reuter reports from Kinshasa.

"Apparently President Mobutu doesn't want to travel to South Africa. He prefers somewhere else," Nzanga Mobutu told Reuters. It's a long flight and he's still convalescing. Mobutu, 66, had prostate cancer surgery in August and is still receiving treatment, although he looked in fair shape at his last public appearance a few days ago.

**Ex-Philippine president Macapagal dies:** Former Philippine president Diosdado Macapagal, who lost his reelection bid to Ferdinand Marcos some 30 years ago, died of illness in a Manila hospital on Monday evening. He was 86. Reuter reports from Manila.

His doctor, Gary Lopez, said yesterday that Macapagal suffered from heart failure, acute kidney failure and pneumonia. He went into hospital on Monday morning. Macapagal served as the Philippine president from 1961 to 1965. He was defeated during his reelection bid by the late president Marcos, who ruled the country for the next 20 years.

**Road mishap kills 19 in India:** Nineteen people were killed when a bus fell off a bridge in pouring rain near the western Indian city of Aurangabad, the United Nations of India (UNI) reported yesterday. AFP reports from New Delhi.

Eighteen others were injured in the accident late Monday. The survivors included the driver, who said he lost control of the vehicle because of poor visibility.

**18 executed in China:** Eighteen convicted criminals have been executed in southern China for crimes including murder, rape, and armed burglary, a report said yesterday. AFP reports from Hong Kong.

They were immediately taken to an execution ground on Monday after a court upheld their convictions at a public hearing held in the border city of Shenzhen, the Express daily said. The hearing at Ronggang Middle School was attended by 10,000 people, the report said.

**4 killed in Colombian prison riot:** As many as four inmates were killed and 18 seriously injured in a prison riot late on Monday in southwest Colombia, local media reports said. Reuter reports from Bogota.

The Radionet News Network quoted a government official in Popayan, provincial capital of Narino province, as saying the bloodshed occurred when guards moved to quell an uprising involving as many as 1,500 inmates in an overcrowded jail. But other reports said no more than two inmates had been killed in the latest of more than a dozen full-scale prison riots to break out in Colombia since the start of the year.

**Brazilian youths burn Indian to death:** Five teenagers set fire to an Indian chief sleeping at a bus stop and burned him to death a day after a national commemoration for indigenous people, AP reports from Brasilia.

Galdino Jesus dos Santos, a chief of the Pataxo tribe, died early Monday at the Asa Norte hospital. Ninety-five per cent of his body was burned, hospital officials said. The governor of Brazil's federal district, Cristovam Buarque, decreed three days of official mourning and called for "the most rigorous punishment possible."

**Grave site found in Honduras:** A farmer digging foundations for his house in northern Honduras turned up a grave site containing the skeletal remains of six bodies, AP reports from Tegucigalpa.

The mass grave, located in an area where an army battalion was based in the 1980s, may contain more bodies, police said Monday. Local police in the northern city of Trujillo, 185 miles (300 kilometres) north of Tegucigalpa, said they would continue excavations at the site. The grave was found Saturday by Ovidio Antonio Espinoza while he prepared to add a new room to his house in the town of Jerico, about 13 miles (20 kilometres) east of Trujillo.



Diana, Princess of Wales, is presented with the first rose to be named after her at the British Lung Foundation offices in central London Monday. It is expected that sales of the rose, which goes on public display for the first time at the Chelsea Flower Show next month, will raise thousands of pounds for research into lung diseases.

## International

# Zairean rebels close off refugee camps : 60 dying a day

KISANGANI, Zaire, Apr 22: Rebels closed off refugee camps after the slaughter of six Zairian villagers sent local residents on a rampage, looting and storing foreign journalists and aid workers, reports AP.

The closure raised fears that the 100,000 Rwandans might try to flee deeper into the jungle. The refugees — dying at a rate of 60 per day from malaria, dysentery, pneumonia and cholera — have enough food to last about two days.

The rebels said they were sealing off the camps to restore order after gunmen shot and killed six villagers in their mud huts in Kasese, 15 miles (25 kilometres) south of Kisangani.

It was unclear who committed the attack, but villagers claimed to hear the killers speaking the Rwandan language, Kinyarwanda, and blamed Rwandan Hutu militiamen from the refugee camps.

Many ethnic-Tutsi rebels also speak Kinyarwanda. International agencies, which had suspended aid shipments because of earlier mob attacks, wanted rebel assurances they could safely return and prepare for a planned airlift taking the refugees home to Rwanda.

"We're concerned about what's happening in the camps, because we've got nobody there," said Paul Stromberg, spokesman for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

UN refugee workers planned to fly over the camps Tuesday to see whether refugees were fleeing, Stromberg said.

The United Nations linked the recent attacks by Zairian mobs to rebel stalling of what would be the biggest refugee airlift in Africa. The United Nations wants to fly the refugees south of Kisangani to the Rwandan border, then repatriate them.

"Today, the military told us that we would not be allowed in the camps," the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Sadako Ogata, said in a statement. "We must have access and we must begin the airlift."

In the rebel-held city of Lubumbashi, rebels warned the United States and other countries against sending in troops to evacuate their citizens, saying the mere presence of foreign troops would be considered a declaration of war.

"Any foreign soldier on our soil will be a target," said the rebel finance minister, Mwama Nanga Mawampanga. "Be it American, Chinese, French, whoever — they will be a target."

About 3,000 American, French, Belgian and British troops are in the region — many of them in neighboring Brazzaville, Congo — to evacuate foreign nationals should the fighting pose an immediate danger to them.

AFP adds: The United States Monday urged Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seko and rebel leader Laurent Desire Kabila to hold talks in South Africa, lamenting the difficulty in arranging the meeting.

It is "important for the rebels and the government to respond favourably to the South African proposal" for a summit, said State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns.

Obstacles to holding the meeting were "quite disappointing, because we think the only way that any progress is going to be made in the current civil war in Zaire is through such dialogue," Burns said.

Washington will give "all necessary support" to the efforts of the South African government and the UN special envoy Mohamed Sahnoun to arrange the direct talks, he said.

## Cong (I) leader shot dead in Delhi

NEW DELHI, Apr 22: A leader of India's Congress (I) Party was shot dead by five men in front of his shop here Monday, police said today, reports AFP.

Mukesh Chaturvedi, 38, vice-president of the party's youth wing in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh, was visiting New Delhi when he was shot from close range.

He was hit 20 times, including six in the head and three in the chest.

The Congress is the second largest party in parliament and backs the country's centre-left government.

**6 killed, BJP MLA house blown up in Patna**

PATNA, Apr 22: In fresh violence, six persons, belonging to upper caste Bhumihar community, were gunned down and building of the BJP-MLA, Janadan Shama, was blown up by armed members of the banned CPI-ML (party unity) at Raghupur village in Patna district last night, the police said, reports PTI.

Heavily armed members of the ultra-leftist party swooped down on the village and sprayed bullets indiscriminately on villagers. Six persons died on the spot while six others were injured in the attack.

The victims are suspected to be supporters of the private army of landlords — Ranvir Sena, police sources said.

The extremists also detonated dynamites and hurled bombs to blow up the house of the BJP MLA from Paliganj, Shama. The house was badly damaged.

## Limitation on US investment likely in Myanmar

WASHINGTON, Apr 22: The State Department is expected to announce limitations on US investments in Myanmar on Tuesday in response to persistent human rights abuses by that country's military government, an administration official said Monday night, reports AP.

The restrictions would be applied under terms of a law enacted last year that authorises sanctions against Myanmar under certain conditions.

The sanctions would ban new American investment in Myanmar, but would not be retroactive, allowing previous contracts to stand, the New York Times said in Tuesday's editions, quoting an unnamed senior administration official.

## Lankan troops kill 5 Tigers

COLOMBO, Apr 22: Sri Lankan soldiers killed at least five Tamil Tiger rebels believed to have taken part in an ambush in which 12 soldiers died, a military spokesman said today, reports Reuter.

Troops surrounded the village of Kalmaru in eastern Batticaloa district where the rebels were hiding and shot and killed at least five of them. They recovered five bodies, the spokesman told Reuters.

Military officials in the east said the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rebels had taken refuge in the village after ambushing an army patrol on Monday near Valaichchenai.



Leaders of the principal French political parties listen, Monday, in the studios of channel 2 in Paris, to President Jacques Chirac's television speech where he announced the dissolution of the National Assembly and early legislative elections in two rounds on May 25 and June 1.

## Alija appeals to int'l community to enforce Dayton peace accord

SARAJEVO, Apr 22: Bosnia-Herzegovina will disintegrate if the international community does nothing to enforce the Dayton peace agreement, Bosnian president Alija Izetbegovic warned Monday, reports AFP.

In a message to the governments of the European Union and the member states of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), Izetbegovic put the blame on the Bosnian Serbs, and called for an end to international support for them.

Under Dayton, Bosnia was split into a quasi-autonomous Bosnian Serb republic and a Muslim-Croat federation, with

their own presidents and assemblies. Izetbegovic, a Muslim, was elected the country's overall president.

In his message published here he said the peace accord still had a chance, but he warned, "this is a critical moment."

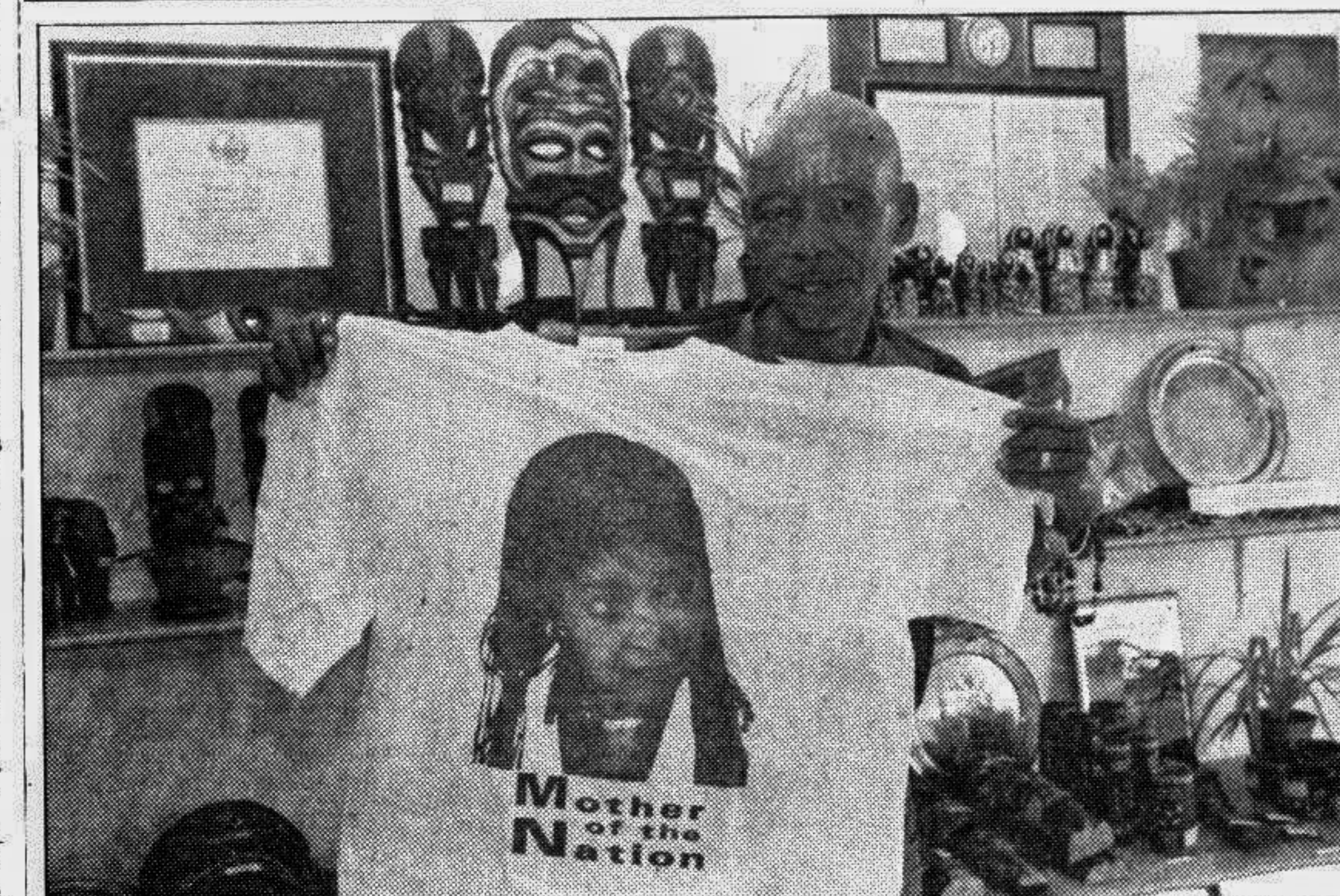
Izetbegovic accused the Serbs of not allowing Muslim and Croat refugees to return to their former homes in Serb-held territory, and of flouting the obligation to hand suspected war criminals over to the international tribunal in The Hague.

He also said that neighbouring Yugoslavia, comprising

Serbia and Montenegro, was not respecting the integrity, sovereignty and political independence of Bosnia.

Yugoslavia and the Republic of Srpska, which recently signed a "treaty" in alleged violation of Dayton, were not carrying out their obligations to make arms cuts, Izetbegovic said, "so we still have some military imbalance which is threatening the peace."

He accused the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which has been organising elections in Bosnia, of making compromises which effectively legitimised so-called "ethnic cleansing."



Zabeth Hlophe, displays a souvenir tee-shirt bearing Winnie Madikizela-Mandela portraits and written "Mother of the Nation" at Mandela's residence in Soweto Monday. Winnie Madikizela-Mandela has turned her garage from the house she shared in the 1950s with her former husband, President Nelson Mandela into a courier shop. Bottles containing soil from premises cost 50 ran (11 US dollars) and comes with a certificate of authenticity signed by Mandela-Madikizela and a history of the house in Orlando West, a section of Soweto.

## TMC urged to withdraw boycott of UF coalition

NEW DELHI, Apr 22: India's ruling United Front coalition today stepped up pressure on an influential regional party to call off its boycott of the country's newly-elected government, officials said, reports AFP.

The Tamil Nadu Congress (TMC) decided to pull out of the government following an acrimonious coalition leadership contest in which its chief lost out to new prime minister Inder Kumar Gujral.

Front officials said they had held several meetings with TMC leader GK Moopanar, pressing him to reconsider.

The TMC decision has forced the highly-respected former finance minister, Palanippa Chidambaram, to quit his post.

The Harvard-educated Chidambaram was the architect of the previous United Front government's widely-acclaimed Indian budget for 1997-98, which has yet to be ratified by parliament.

Front officials said the campaign to woo back Moopanar —

which would then lead to Chidambaram reclaiming the finance portfolio — was being led by the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M), which has originally opposed Moopanar becoming front leader.

The communists were suspicious of Moopanar's links with the Congress (I) party, the new minority front government, like its predecessor relies on Congress backing to stay in power.

The previous front administration fell after the Congress withdrew its parliamentary support on April 11.

Moopanar, a veteran politician from the southern state of Tamil Nadu, was a Congress member for nearly 40 years until he broke away last year to form the TMC.

Jyoti Basu, India's best known communist said he telephoned Moopanar Monday.

I told him the TMC is a valued part of the United Front. So he cannot just stay away from it, Basu said.

## Jiang in Moscow to boost ties with 'key partner'

MOSCOW, Apr 22: Chinese President Jiang Zemin flew into Moscow today for a five-day visit to Russia aimed at boosting ties between the two giant neighbours who view each other as key strategic partners in the next century, reports Reuter.

Jiang, accompanied by his wife, Wang Yeping and senior Chinese officials, was welcomed at the government's Vnukovo-2 airport by Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin.

Relations between Moscow and Beijing are at their best since the Chinese and Soviet Communist parties bitterly split in the late 1950s.

Jiang's summit with Russian President Boris Yeltsin is expected to yield a joint statement on international affairs declaring that the two countries have agreed to abandon "Cold War thinking" and to dedicate themselves to establishing a new, universal security concept to promote world peace, according to China's state-run Xinhua News Agency.

Beijing and Moscow would like to counter US influence over world affairs. They also share an interest in promoting stability among the volatile central Asian states along their borders.

During Jiang's visit, he and Yeltsin will meet jointly with the leaders of the former Soviet republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to sign a border troop-reduction treaty agreed upon last year.

China and Russia already are in the process of drawing down troop levels along their own 4,300 kilometre (2,700-mile) frontier — evidence of growing trust after the three decades of enmity that ended with a May 1989 summit in Beijing.

The collapse of the Soviet block discredited the Chinese Communists, who have rejected all challenges to their own monopoly on power.

Leaders on both sides have carefully avoided talk of an alliance, stressing that their relationship does not pose a threat to other countries.

## De Klerk on miseries of apartheid 'My hands are clean, my conscience is clear'

ELON COLLEGE, North Carolina, Apr 22: Former South African president FW de Klerk says "my hands are clean and my conscience is clear" regarding the miseries of apartheid, including political killings and torture, reports AP.

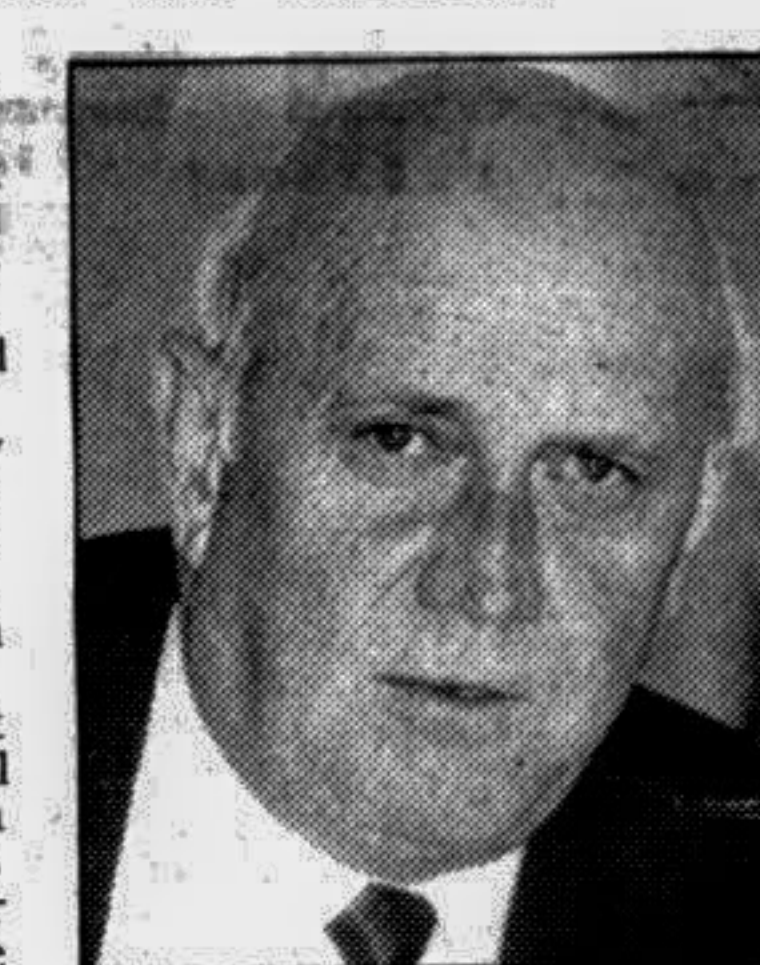
"My head does not lie uneasy on my pillow because I have a clear conscience," he said Monday before addressing graduating honours students at Elon College.

De Klerk, 61, was president of South Africa from 1989 until 1994, when Nelson Mandela took office after the country's first all-race elections. One year earlier, the two men shared the 1993 Nobel Peace Prize for working to end apartheid.

De Klerk was asked Monday if he would consider going back before South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission and give more details of atrocities if he were granted amnesty.

"Amnesty is there for people who have committed serious violations of human rights," he said. "I have not done so. I would be lying."

The commission was formed in 1995 to investigate political crimes committed under apartheid. It has the power to



grant amnesty to individuals who make full confessions.

De Klerk was invited to speak at the small liberal arts college in the town with the same name as part of a week-long programme: "South Africa in Context: Celebrating Transformation." The programme included speeches, panel discussions and films like "Mandela and de Klerk."

Before delivering his convocation speech, de Klerk spoke privately with a group of Elon students.

## 'DPRK capable of scorching ROK, Japan with N-arms'

SEOUL, Apr 22: A high-ranking defector from North Korea says the communist nation "is capable of scorching" South Korea and Japan with nuclear and chemical weapons, a Seoul newspaper reported Tuesday, reports AP.

The Chosun Ilbo, a major national daily, said Hwang Jang Yop made the disclosure in a secret report he wrote last August. An excerpt of the report was carried by Chosun Ilbo Tuesday.

Hwang warned in the report, titled "The Chosun (Korea) Issue," that economically hardpressed North Korea may start a war out of desperation.

Chosun did not say how it

obtained Hwang's report, but it had previously published several letters it and the Seoul government said were written by Hwang before he defected in Beijing in February.

Hwang's report, if proven to be authentic, would be the most credible testimony so far that North Korea has developed tactical atomic weapons.

North Korea has denied that it had or has a nuclear weapons programme. The CIA said in 1996 that the North was believed to have secretly extracted enough plutonium to make at least one atomic bomb.

Hwang, 74, a former tutor of North Korean leader Kim Jong Il, arrived in Seoul on Sunday.

## Children main victim of transition to capitalism in ex-Soviet bloc

BONN, Apr 22: With increases in teen-age suicides, child prostitution, sexual abuse and poverty, millions of children in the former Soviet bloc are suffering from the region's transition to capitalism, UNICEF said in a report released here Monday, reports AP.

The 170-page study is the most detailed of how children are faring behind the former Iron Curtain eight years after the revolutions of 1989 raised hope for a bright future.

The report is unsettling. "With the elimination of authoritarianism and the introduction of demand-led market economies, there were great hopes that the needs of children would be better met in the short term," says the report.

"These hopes have been

largely betrayed," says the study, which was presented to journalists by John Donohue, an American who is director of UNICEF's efforts in the former Soviet bloc.

One big reason for the problems is that public systems for child welfare that were dismantled or drastically reduced after communist dictators were overthrown have not been replaced, Donohue said.

"In countries like Moldova, Georgia and Armenia, the public child protection system has virtually collapsed," the report says.

Another reason is that families are struggling with costs of living that have soared over the past few years.

UNICEF, which is the UN children's agency, called on countries of the former Soviet

bloc to implement greater protections for children.

"There has been a staggering increase, across the region, in the number of families living in poverty" since 1989, Donohue said.

More than 60 per cent of Russian families with children under age 7 are living in poverty, up from 39.7 per cent in September 1992, the study says.

Across Central Europe, says the report, the number of children living in poverty has ballooned to 2.5 million from 1 million in the past several years.

Throughout the former East bloc, there are more children living in orphanages and other state institutions — about 1 million — than in 1990, the study says.

"In 10 out of 14 countries for which data are available, the rates of infants and toddlers in institutional care have risen since 1989," the report says.

Some of the child-care institutions are marked by "sub-human conditions," Donohue said.

The plight of children is generally worst in the former Soviet Union, but children are also suffering in countries that are starting to achieve prosperity, the study says.

Even in the Czech Republic, a country with more coherent reforms, stronger family benefits and community services and declining rates of children in infant homes, the proportion of older children in public care has risen since 1990, the study says.

In Poland, the study says,

nearly one in 10 children aged 7 to 9 are reported to be left without adult supervision for more than two hours a day by parents who have to work.

Teen-age alcohol addiction, drug abuse, suicides and pregnancies have risen across the region, the study says, as have divorces — which are contributing to youths' stress.

More children are having to work to supplant their families' incomes, with some selling their bodies, the study says.

"In Lithuania 20 to 50 per cent of prostitutes are believed to be minors" and in Estonia it's 20 to 30 per cent, the study says.

Police in Budapest estimate there are 200 to 500 girl prostitutes in the Hungarian capital, "with many more working the roads and highways throughout the country," the report

says. The sexual exploitation of children has increased with their vulnerability.

"In Romania, where there is a large number of children in institutions, European pedophiles claiming to work for charitable organisations have befriended and sexually abused boys," the report says.

In Russia, the report says, in 1994 there were 450 reported violations of laws against the manufacture of pornography depicting minors — seven times more than in 1991.

Crimes committed by and against juveniles have risen.

The number of reported murders committed by teens nearly tripled in Russia from 1989-95, the study says, mainly because of juveniles' involvement in organised gangs.

## UN seeks ratification of chemical weapons ban

GENEVA, Apr 22: With the US Senate poised for a crucial vote on a global chemical weapons ban, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan on Monday urged as many countries as possible to ratify it, reports AP.

"This treaty is too important for the security of every state and future international stability to be handicapped by the failure of some to become parties," said Annan.

The US Senate has delayed ratifying the 1992 accord because of objections from conservatives, including Jesse Helms, the North Carolina Republican who chairs the Foreign Relations Committee.

The full US Senate has scheduled a vote on ratification for Thursday. The Convention on Chemical Weapons is to enter into force on April 26.

But Annan said the treaty could be fully effective only if all nations ratified it, and noted that countries that failed to do so would "undermine their credibility in subsequent arms regulation and disarmament negotiations."

Annan noted that the treaty had taken almost 30 years to negotiate and nearly five to obtain the necessary number of ratifications to enter into force.