

# India relaxes visa rules for Pakistanis

ISLAMABAD, June 27: India has taken steps to liberalise visa procedure for Pakistanis to encourage contacts between the peoples of the two countries, according to the Indian Embassy here, reports AFP.

The relaxation comes amid dialogue between Pakistan and India to improve their long-strained relations.

The measures, listed in a statement here by the Indian High Commission last Thursday, include a one-year triple entry visa for bonafide businessmen.

The maximum number of cities that Pakistani nationals can go to during a visit to India

has been increased from eight to 12 and more for senior citizens.

The International Airport at Chennai in Madras will be opened for arrival and departure of Pakistani nationals in addition to the existing check points of New Delhi and Mumbai airports the embassy said.

Non-police reporting visas will be granted as far as possible to artists, journalists, students, poets, writers and businessmen, it added.

Reputed artists from Pakistan will be permitted to give commercial performances in India.

In talks here earlier this

# Take action against Laloo or quit, BJP asks Gujral

NEW DELHI, June 27: India's main opposition party today said Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral should quit if he could not force a colleague charged with corruption to resign, reports AFP.

The Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) accused Gujral of failing to act and said he was "squarely" responsible for solving the crisis over Laloo Prasad Yadav, a chief minister accused of embezzling millions of dollars.

Yadav, head of the state government of Bihar in the east of the country, is also president of Gujral's Janata Dal (People's Party) which fronts the united front minority coalition ruling India.

Yadav has adamantly refused to quit despite being charged by federal detectives in a 271-million dollar corruption scandal involving over 50 politicians and bureaucrats which dates back to the 1970s.

BJP spokesman Yashwant Sinha said: "While democratic

# Pol Pot should face int'l court, says Sihanouk

PHNOM PENH, June 27: Cambodia's King Norodom Sihanouk said Khmer Rouge leader Pol Pot should face an international court, but if that could not be arranged a Cambodian court was likely to sentence him to life in prison, reports Reuters.

Personally, I reckon that Pol Pot should be tried by an international court for crimes against humanity, the king said in an interview released by the palace on Thursday.

But in the absence of an international court a Cambodian court could try him in Cambodia itself, the king said in the interview with his regular bulletin.

Cambodia's two prime ministers announced on Saturday that Pol Pot had been captured by a breakaway Khmer Rouge faction.

In a rare display of public unity the two premiers sent a letter to the United Nations seeking the world body's help in bringing to justice those responsible for crimes committed during Pol Pot's 1975-79 killing rule.

# 2 more killed in Karachi

KARACHI, June 27: Two people have been killed and three more injured in the latest violence to erupt in Pakistan's strife-torn city of Karachi, police said today, reports AFP.

Unidentified gunmen killed two men late Thursday in Gulshan Hadeed on the eastern outskirts of the city and in the western area of Mongho Pir, a police spokesman said.

The victims were not identified.

Also on Thursday, a lawyer, Sarful Islam, his son and a guest were wounded by armed men who forced their way into his home and fired guns, a police spokesman said, adding that the injured were taken to hospital.

Islam is representing a jailed senior police official, Waheed Durrani, who faces trial on charges of involvement in the murder of Mir Murtaza Bhutto, brother of former prime minister Benazir Bhutto.

The former premier's husband, Asif Ali Zardari, is also in jail along with several other accused in the murder case.

Murtaza was killed, along with seven of his political allies, in a police shootout in Karachi last year.

# Lankan troops pound LTTE-held town

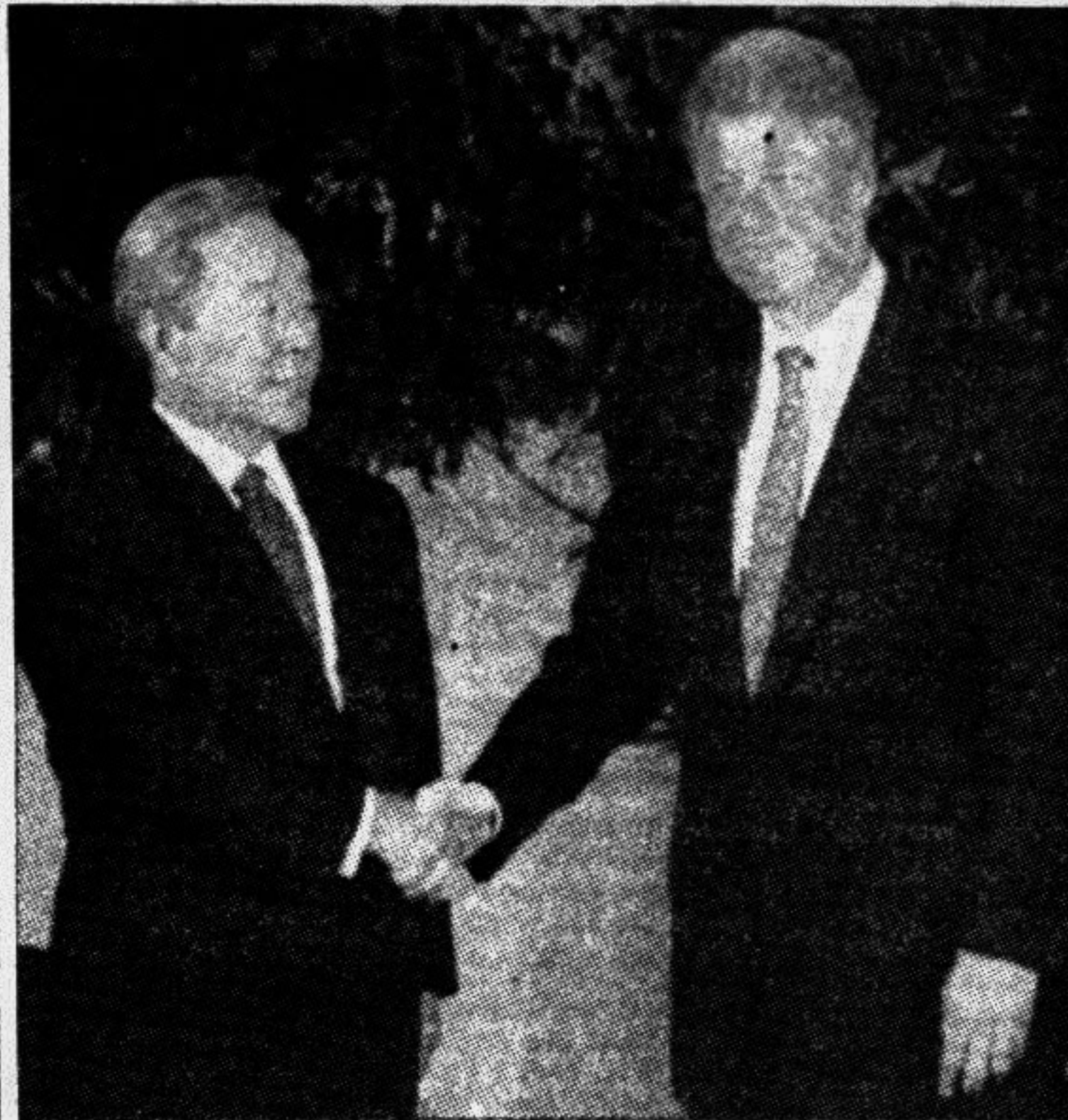
COLOMBO, June 27: Government forces pounded a key Tamil-held town in northern Sri Lanka after the guerillas had staged a major attack against advancing troops, the rebels said today, reports AFP.

The separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) said security forces fired artillery shells and kept up air attacks against the town of Puliyanakulam after Wednesday's rebel onslaught on troops nearby.

In a statement from its London office, the LTTE said the military carried out "non-stop air assaults on Puliyanakulam." The rebels accused the government of halting the supply of food to civilians in Tiger-held areas of the country's north, a charge denied by the authorities.

Security forces were closing in on the town of Puliyanakulam when the Tigers mounted a ferocious counter attack, leaving 251 killed on both sides.

Military spokesman Brigadier Sarath Munasinghe told reporters here Thursday that they will push ahead despite the massive Tiger counter



US President Bill Clinton (R) meets with South Korean President Kim Yung Sam Thursday after his address to the Earth Summit Plus Five at the United Nations in New York. The two leaders met at the United States Mission to the United Nations. — AFP/UNB photo

# Clinton pledges to help bridle threat of global warming

UNITED NATIONS, June 27: Trying to silence worldwide criticism, President Clinton pledged Thursday to help bridle the "real and imminent" threat of global warming but rebuffed European demands to take immediate action, reports AP.

Painting a gloomy picture of rising oceans and deadly heat, the president told the United Nations Earth Summit, "The science is clear and compelling: We humans are changing the global climate."

America's record "is not sufficient," Clinton admitted. But he promised evidence of a "strong American commitment" in time for negotiations in December toward a global greenhouse gas treaty.

"No nation can escape this danger. No nation can evade its responsibility to confront it," the president said in remarks prepared for delivery. "We must all do our part."

Europe doesn't think he's doing enough.

The European Union proposes cutting greenhouse gases — carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide — by 15 per cent below 1990 levels, with a deadline of 2010. Under pressure from corporate lobbyists and lawmakers who fear strict limits would cost thousands of jobs, Clinton has refused to commit to targets before the treaty talks in Kyoto, Japan.

His top environmental aide, Kathleen McGinty, said the EU's 15 per cent goal "is impossible to reach," but she offered no alternative target. The president will talk to American leaders in science and business before proposing his target, she said.

# Off the Record

## 'Deadly quartet' of risk factors for heart disease

ATLANTA: High blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes and excessive weight may work together as a "deadly quartet" of risk factors for heart disease and strokes, federal health officials said on Thursday, reports Reuters.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) said a survey of more than 2,000 adults age 45 and above in Louisiana found that black women were seven times as likely as white men and almost three times as likely as white women to have the "deadly quartet" of risk factors.

"When those four risk factors occur in the same person, the risk for heart disease is especially high," the CDC's Dr. Ursula Bauer said.

In Louisiana, which has one of the highest death rates from cardiovascular disease in the country, 73 per cent of older adults had at least one of the four major risk factors.

Researchers found 40.2 per cent of adults 45 and over had high blood pressure, 38.1 per cent were overweight, 34.5 per cent had high cholesterol and 12.3 per cent were diabetics.

The survey, conducted between 1995, found that 4.8 per cent of black women had all four risk factors. The figure was 2 per cent among white women and 0.7 per cent among white men.

Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death in the United States, accounting for 45.2 per cent of all deaths.

# MILF postpones peace talks with Manila

COTABATO, Philippines, June 27: Muslim separatist rebels announced Friday they will not participate in scheduled talks on a general ceasefire after the military overran a major rebel camp in the southern Philippines, reports AP.

At least 25 people were killed Thursday as the military pounded the camp in Pikit, North Cotabato province and pursued Moro Islamic Liberation Front guerillas who had seized 60 bus passengers as hostages.

The clash raised to at least 70 the number of people killed in sporadic skirmishes since June 17, when rebels took 43 government surveyors hostage in Sultan Sabarongis in Maguindanao.

Authorities on Friday said all of the hostages have been rescued, had escaped or were abandoned by the rebels as they fought troops in a running battle around Kabacan town in North Cotabato, about 910 kilometres south of Manila.

MILF vice-chairman and chief peace negotiator Ghazali Jaafar said that because of the massive military offensive, the MILF Central Committee decided to postpone the scheduled meeting on June 28-29 "until the situation normalises."

Jaafar earlier said the MILF will pull out of the talks if Camp Rajamuda is taken by the government but his statement Friday indicated the rebels have not abandoned the talks altogether.

"It is our conviction that this atmosphere is not conducive to the peace talks," Jaafar said in a letter to Presidential Executive Secretary Ruben Torres.

# Consolations for cigars, pipes smokers

LONDON: Smokers who switch from cigarettes to cigars or pipes halve their risk of dying early, but still have a much higher risk than no-smokers, researchers reported on Friday, reports Reuters.

A study of more than 21,000 men showed that those who switched from cigarettes to pipes or cigars got a much lower dose of tobacco because they don't inhale as much.

They cut their risk of dying from heart disease or cancer by 46 per cent, Nicholas Wald of London's St Bartholomew's Hospital and colleagues wrote in a report in the British Medical Journal.

They retained a much higher risk of dying than cigar or pipe smokers who had never smoked cigarettes — but Wald's group concluded that kicking the cigarette habit was still worth it.

"Cigarette smokers who have difficulty in giving up smoking altogether are better off changing to cigars or pipes than continuing to smoke cigarettes," they wrote.

"Much of the effect is due to the reduction in the quantity of tobacco smoked, and some is due to inhaling less," they added.

# BRIEFLY

## Clinton attends uncle's funeral:

President Bill Clinton made a sombre tour of his boyhood hometown on Thursday, visiting his mother's grave and attending a funeral for the great-uncle who influenced his earliest years, Reuters reports from Hope, Arkansas.

After leaving a bouquet of fresh flowers at the grave of his mother, Virginia Kelley, at Rose Hill Cemetery, Clinton addressed mourners at the funeral of Henry Oren Grisham, who died on Monday at age 92. Clinton knew him as "Uncle Buddy."

Speaking at the funeral chapel, Clinton remembered his great uncle as being both "Brutally honest and always kind."

## US signs accord with Vietnam:

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright yesterday signed a landmark copyright protection agreement with Vietnam, and announced the opening of a US consulate in Ho Chi Minh City, AFP reports from Hanoi.

Albright said the accord "is an important step in normalising US-Vietnamese economic relations based on the rule of law."

Albright, who arrived in Hanoi late Thursday, also announced that the United States would be opening a consulate in Ho Chi Minh City, formerly known as Saigon.

## Attack on police in Belfast:

A police patrol escaped without injury when it came under grenade attack late Thursday in north Belfast, police said, AFP reports from Belfast.

The home-made device used was of a type frequently used by the Irish Republican Army (IRA), security sources added.

A car thought to have been used in the attack in the Limestone road area of the city was found burned out near the scene of the incident.

## 6 die as volcano erupts in UK island:

At least six people were killed and between 15 and 20 were missing after a new eruption of the Soufriere Hills Volcano on the British island of Montserrat, authorities said Thursday, AFP reports from Pointe-a-Pitre, Guadeloupe.

The eruption on Wednesday triggered two heavy lava flows down the north and north-eastern flanks of the mountain, setting fire to more than 100 buildings on a deadly march of destruction through seven nearby villages.

## Israel rockets Hezbollah posts:

Two Israeli helicopters fired rockets at suspected Hezbollah targets in south Lebanon on Thursday night, wounding one guerilla, security sources said, Reuters reports from Nabatieh.

The sources said the injured man was driving a Hezbollah military jeep which was hit by one of the rockets in the raid, the 41st on Lebanon this year. Another Hezbollah fighter who was in the jeep was not hurt.

## Japan for China's inclusion in G-7:

Japanese Finance Minister Hiroshi Mitsuoka says China should be included in the Group of Seven consultations of the world's top industrialised nations, AP reports from Shanghai.

"It will become important for China to join" the G-7, and it is natural for Japan to support its neighbour, as a potential participant, Mitsuoka told reporters late Thursday night.

Mitsuoka welcomed Russia's presence in the economic summit in Denver and said that the G-7's expansion to a Group of Eight, including Moscow, was an "essential development."

## Hall takes over US forces in Japan:

Air Force Lt. Gen. John B Hall assumed command of all United States forces in Japan on Friday, the US military announced, AP reports from Tokyo.

Hall, who takes charge of some 47,000 American troops stationed in Japan's main islands and on the southern island of Okinawa, also took over command of the Fifth Air Force based at Yokota Air Base, west of Tokyo. Hall replaces Lt. Gen Ralph E. "Ed" Eberhart in both posts.

## Moderate quake shakes Japan:

A moderate earthquake struck part of southwestern Japan on Friday, but there were no immediate reports of damages or injuries, AP reports from Tokyo.

The quake, which had a preliminary magnitude of 4.1, was centered 10 kilometres (6 miles) underground in the western part of Kagoshima prefecture, the Meteorological Agency said, Saburo Shigenaga, a spokesman for the Kagoshima prefectural police, said by telephone that no reports of damage or injuries had been filed immediately after the earthquake.

## 14 criminals executed in China:

Chinese authorities have executed 14 people for drug trafficking and violent crimes in far western Xinjiang, the official Legal Daily reported Friday, AP says from Beijing.

The 14 were executed by gunshot Tuesday immediately following a mass sentencing rally in Urumqi, Xinjiang's capital, the newspaper said. Five of those put to death had been convicted of drug crimes. The newspaper provided no further details on the crimes, nor did it name any of the executed.

## Peruvian rebel wanted to go to Cuba:

The leader of leftist rebels who held hostages for four months in the Japanese ambassador's mansion wanted to exchange the hostages for passage to Cuba, but was overruled by his younger lieutenants, AP reports from Lima.

In police recordings of the rebels' conversations during the crisis, Tupac Amaru leader Nestor Cerna, 43, argued with his subordinates over whether to accept the government's offer of safe passage to Cuba if they released the 72 hostages. The recordings also showed that Cerna was tired by the length of the standoff and that his hold over his young rebels was shaky.

# India's population of over 60 may rise to 71m by 2001

NEW DELHI, June 27: Ageing India may have 71 million people over the age of 60 by the start of the next century, many of them without adequate family support, an aid official said yesterday, reports AFP.

SS Sandhu the director general of Helpage India, a non-governmental organisation, called on the government to act, adding that India could "end up with a crisis of great magnitude," the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported.

Official statistics, Sandhu said, showed that India's population of over 60s was expected to rise from 65 million in 1991 to 71 million by the end of 2001.

Sandhu added that more and more young people, meanwhile, were moving away from home in search of work, leaving the older generation to increasingly fend for themselves.

# UN chief says

## Israel not yet abandoned settlement on occupied land

UNITED NATIONS, June 27: Secretary-General Kofi Annan said on Thursday Israel had not abandoned its construction of a new settlement on occupied territory south of Jerusalem and that this was "viewed as particularly serious," reports Reuters.

His comments were contained in a written report expected to be made public shortly.

It was requested by an emergency special session of the General Assembly in April which demanded the immediate cessation of construction at the site, called Har Homa in Hebrew and Jabal Abu Ghneim in Arabic.

The Assembly resolution, adopted by a vote of 134 to three with 11 abstentions, also demanded a halt to all other Israeli settlement activities and called for an end to all support for "illegal Israeli activities" in the occupied territories.

"According to the information available to the United Nations, the government of Israel, as of June 20, 1997, has not abandoned its construction of a new Israeli settlement at Jabal Abu Ghneim," Annan said.



(L to R) Cherie Blair, The Queen of Jordan, British Prime Minister Tony Blair and King Hussein of Jordan pose for the media during a photo call in 10 Downing Street on Thursday. — AFP/UNB photo

# Washington welcomes outcome of Indo-Pak talks as positive steps

The U.S. has welcomed the outcome of the meeting of Indian and Pakistani foreign secretaries, and noted that previously to Washington had "commended recent discussions between the two countries."

Dinger said, "the establishment of working groups is a very positive step in our view in this continuing dialogue, and we hope that this will contribute to resolving differences between India and Pakistan."

He said "the working groups' agenda, as included in the statement issued at the end of the talks, was quite realistic. It addressed the significant issues which divide the countries and we certainly wish both countries well in this initiative."

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