

# India willing to sign CTBT in return for technology concessions

NEW DELHI, July 6: India is willing to sign a nuclear global test ban treaty in return for the lifting of blocks on the transfer of nuclear-related technology, Foreign Ministry officials were quoted as saying today, reports AFP.

Newspaper reports quoted senior ministry officials as saying that New Delhi would be willing to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) in return for technology concessions.

The Indian Express said officials described the offer as "contingent on the kind of concessions the west is willing to offer."

But the paper added: "At the same time, there is no question of halting the ongoing programme to weaponise and deploy nuclear missiles."

India staged a series of nuclear tests in May, triggering a matching response from arch-rival Pakistan. The detonations drew severe international condemnation and selective sanctions.

The Indian Express quoted foreign secretary K. Raghunath as saying that India was also prepared to relinquish its insistence on being recognised as a nuclear power by the declared nuclear weapons states if nuclear-related technology was granted to New Delhi.

Raghunath said the attempt would be to "bring in a system in which nuclear denial based on the nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is abolished."

India has traditionally opposed the 1996 CTBT, branding it discriminatory and an at-

tempt by the five declared nuclear powers Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States — to retain their nuclear dominance. It refused to ratify the treaty last year.

The 1968 NPT, also opposed by India, restricts the transfer of dual-use technology — which could have weaponry applications — to non-nuclear weapons states which are not signatories to the treaty.

Pakistan has also refused to sign both pacts.

The Times of India said India's offer was part of a damage control exercise following the May tests, which have included several diplomatic visits abroad to try and explain India's position. India says its security concerns — it has fought border war with both Pakistan and China since its independence — have not been understood.



Algerian opposition parties demonstrate against a new law the Algerian government has moved to impose Arabic as the sole official language, Sunday in Algiers, on the 36th anniversary of Algerian independence. The law would prohibit official use of other languages, including French, which is widely used in cities. — AP/UNB photo

# Violence flares up in Belfast as troops halt march

BELFAST, July 6: Violence flared Sunday night in Belfast and several other towns in Northern Ireland as angry demonstrators set fire to cars and built barricades after police and troops blocked a highly symbolic march by the Protestant Orange Order in Portadown, reports AFP.

In Belfast police twice fired rubber bullets to disperse demonstrators who attacked them with petrol bombs in the city centre.

By Sunday evening, more than 10 cars had been torched in Belfast alone, according to the security forces.

Several barricades of burning tyres went up in Protestant loyalist areas of Belfast and in the towns of Ballymena in the north and Millisle, both radical loyalist strongholds as well as in Lisburn, Carrickfergus and Antrim.

people were arrested in Newry, a Catholic majority town in the south of the province, as they were trying to set fire to a Protestant building.

The situation was actually far more calm in Portadown itself where hundreds of Orangemen have settled in for a lengthy face-off with about 2,000 police and soldiers preventing them marching through a Catholic area of the town along a route used since 1807 by the Orange Order.

The recently created Independent Parades Commission banned the marchers from going down the Garvaghy Road through a staunchly republican area to avoid a repeat of the violence which marred the same march last year and in 1996.

The Orange Order had vowed to ignore the ban Sunday but the 2,500 marchers were forced to stop half way along their route by an impressive deployment of police and troops.



People form a human pyramid during an unsuccessful attempt to make a 10 storey human tower in the Catalan town of Terrasa 50 km north of Barcelona, Sunday. Human pyramid building has a long tradition in the region of Catalonia. — AP/UNB photo

# ROK to close 20 embassies, consulates

SEOUL, July 6: Cash-strapped South Korea is to close 20 overseas embassies and consulates and cut 50 diplomatic posts as part of a drive aimed at whittling down expenses, officials said today, reports AFP.

The Foreign Ministry said it would shut the low-priority missions by the end of this year to save an unspecified amount of money.

"We will shut down these missions gradually until the end of the year or thereabouts," a Foreign Ministry spokesman told AFP.

Other officials said the streamlining was "in line with government efforts to beat the economic crisis." Only six missions have been earmarked for closure so far, an official said — embassies in Belgium, Uruguay, the Cameroon, Gambia and Yugoslavia and a consulate, in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Fifty diplomatic posts will be eliminated after 1998 and 1999, officials said, adding that plans to buy new buildings to house Seoul's missions abroad would be shelved for the time being.

# 16 Tamil Tiger suspects arrested

COLOMBO, July 6: Police arrested 16 Tamil Tiger suspects in the attack on a former rebel turned politician while he was visiting a prison near Colombo, officials said Monday, reports AP.

"It is too early to say what course the investigation and trial will take, but a beginning has been made," said Sangarapillai Sivadasan, a leader of the Eelam People's Democratic Party (EPDP).

Douglas Devananda, secretary general of the EPDP, was beaten into coma last week in the prison in Kalutara, 40 kilometres south of Colombo. Devananda had gone to the prison to check on the condition of Tamil militants being held there.

# After Dolly, now cloned calves

TOKYO, July 6: Two female cloned calves have been born in Japan, using the same technique that produced Britain's Dolly the sheep — the world's first adult-animal clone, an official said today, reports AFP.

The female twin calves were born Sunday in Ishikawa prefecture, central Japan, exactly two years after the birth of Dolly.

The calves were born more than a month premature, and about 40 per cent underweight at 18 kilograms and 17 kilograms each.

They are the world's first calves produced by cloning cells taken from an adult cow with unfertilized eggs. Calves had previously been successfully cloned through the cultivation of ova with fertilised egg cells or somatic cells from a cow foetus.

Japan last year decided on a policy of banning clone studies on humans, while promoting them on livestock. The new technique is hoped to be used to breed better cattle strains with higher-quality beef or greater milk capacity, the official said.

# Assad appoints new intelligence chief

LONDON, July 6: Syrian President Hafez Al-Assad has appointed a new military intelligence chief to replace general Bashar Najjar sacked over allegations of fraud, the London based Al-Qod Al-Arabi daily reported in its Monday edition, reports AFP.

The newspaper said that Assad signed a presidential decree Saturday appointing General Mohammad Shakka, head of the Syrian Army's corps of engineers as Chief of Intelligence.

It quoted Syrian officials as describing Shakka, a former intelligence chief in the region of Quneitra and had of security for Syrian troops serving with the allied troops during the 1991 Gulf War — as a powerful man trusted by President Assad who considers him the right person for difficult missions.

# Holbrooke concludes talks to defuse Kosovo crisis

BELGRADE, July 6: US envoy Richard Holbrooke ended three days of talks to defuse the crisis in Kosovo on Sunday saying a change in its status within Yugoslavia was needed to stop bloodshed, reports Reuters.

"Some change in the current status of Kosovo within the boundaries, the international boundaries, of Yugoslavia is essential in our view," Holbrooke told reporters after a final meeting with Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic.

He said the decision on any change was "up to the people of Yugoslavia and declined to be drawn on whether Milosevic agreed with him."

Ending his latest round of intensive shuttle diplomacy between Belgrade and Kosovo's capital Pristina, Holbrooke chose his words carefully to describe the results of his mission.

"I'm not going to say it's making progress because that would be misleading, but it's certainly not a failure," Holbrooke said.

"The mission continues," Holbrooke said, noting that US ambassador to Macedonia Christopher Hill who assisted

in the talks would return to Pristina before weekend.

"It neither succeeded nor failed, it simply continues intensively."

Holbrooke, who brokered the end to the Bosnia war, has said violence in Kosovo could trigger another Balkan war. He had found no signs of a unified command structure among ethnic Albanian guerrillas fighting for Kosovo's independence.

Some 300 people have been killed Serbian security forces began a crackdown this year on the guerrillas.

Asked if the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) had a command structure that would allow them to participate in talks with Belgrade, Holbrooke said, "I don't know but I would doubt it at this point."

It doesn't appear to but they would have to come forward, identify their leaders and see if they have a role to play in this process.

He said he was not convinced that ethnic Albanians outside the province had much control over gunmen in Kosovo.

He issued a warning against what he said were reports of a recent rash of tit for tat kidnappings in Kosovo by Serbs of ethnic Albanians and vice versa.

We think any people who had been taken hostage or kidnapped by either side whatever the circumstances should be released, he said.

He again endorsed moderate ethnic Albanian leader Ibrahim Rugova as the key figure backed by the US and other Western powers.

# Road mishap 27 Hindu devotees killed in India

NEW DELHI, July 6: At least 27 religious devotees died and 50 were injured when a truck plunged into a ravine in northern India, the Press Trust of India reported today, reports AFP.

The news agency said the accident occurred around midnight near the town of Shimla, in the Himalayan foothills in the state of Himachal Pradesh.

It said more than 100 people were clinging to the truck and a trolley it was towing. The dead and injured were returning from a prayer meeting at a nearby Hindu temple.

# Trial of 1st Bosnian Serb accused of war crimes begins

THE HAGUE, Netherlands, July 6: A Bosnian Serb accused of orchestrating atrocities against scores of Muslims and Croats in three notorious prison camps is going on trial in the Yugoslav war crimes tribunal's first genocide case, reports AP.

Milan Kovacevic, 57, is charged with genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity for his "key role" in atrocities committed in the Prijedor municipality of northwest Bosnia in 1992.

He has pleaded innocent to genocide and was scheduled to enter a plea to the other charges before his trial got under way Monday. If convicted, he faces a maximum life sentence.

His trial, the UN court's seventh, was initially scheduled for May but was delayed when prosecutors filed additional charges against him. He now faces a total of 15 counts.

Prosecutors and defense lawyers were scheduled to present their opening arguments in the trial, which will publicise alleged atrocities in three of the Bosnian war's most infamous prison camps, Omarska, Keraterm and Trnopolje.

According to his indictment, Kovacevic, an anesthesiologist, was among a group of municipal officials who engineered a violent campaign to expel Bosnian Muslims and Croats from Prijedor between April and December 1992.

Kovacevic was the vice-president of the so-called "Crisis Staff," which ordered attacks on non-Serb villages, the

seizure and detention of Bosnian Muslims and Croats and the establishment of prison camps.

The alleged atrocities began with attacks on non-Serb vil-

lages involving heavy artillery bombardments by Serb forces. Some of those who survived the attacks were executed. Many others were rounded up and taken to one of the camps.

## Off the Record

### Cricket de la peanut

PHNOM PENH: Residents in Cambodia's capital Phnom Penh are licking their lips over the arrival of a favourite local delicacy — crickets, reports Reuters.

The seasonal invasion of the insects, during a full moon in the early part of the rainy season, is considered a bonanza, sparking a rush to capture and cash in on the bugs.

UK Heang sells crickets at Phnom Penh's central market. The 15-year-old vendor said she buys the insects from cricket hunters who work in the countryside around the city. She sells about 2,500 of the insects a day, earning about 40,000 Riel. Four members of her family are involved in the cricket business.

"The cricket hunters dig holes in the ground where the crickets are living and pour in water, forcing them out," she said.

Chhum Him, enjoying a beer with some friends at a city restaurant, says he's a big fan of crickets — lightly grilled with a peanut placed in the abdomen.

"They smell delicious when they're properly cooked," he said.

### For sake of perfection

NEW YORK: Hauling 40 pounds (18 kilos) of equipment on eight-kilometre marches with only three hours of sleep wasn't too appealing for cast members of "Saving private Ryan," reports AP.

Before filming began on Steven Spielberg's new movie, Tom Hanks and the cast endured a 10-day boot camp under the instruction of a former Marine captain.

Most wanted to bail out after four days, but Hanks voted to stay.

"It was absolutely necessary to do it right," Hanks told Newsweek for its July 13 issue. "It probably would have been more fruitful if it were twice as long."

# China, US plan to hold military exercises

BEIJING, July 6: China and the United States are planning joint military exercises to start undoing years of mistrust between the two sides, the official China Daily reported today, reports AFP.

In an editorial to mark US President Bill Clinton's landmark visit here, the newspaper said small-scale joint maneuvers could go ahead.

"It is possible the two sides will hold joint military exercises on a small scale in the near future, including participation in a non-military on-sea rescue or anti-piracy exercises," the editorial said.

The cooperation between the two sides will reduce mutual skepticism and help avoid strategic confrontations," it added.

During Clinton's summit in Beijing on June 27, the two sides agreed not to target their strategic nuclear weapons at each other and signed three joint statements on landmines, nuclear non-proliferation and biological weapons.

They also agreed to increase military exchanges, including the observation of each other's military exercises and the coordination of efforts for disaster relief.

"With the existence of the Taiwan issue and the Korean peninsula problem, as well as the issues of regional nuclear proliferation and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the two sides inevitably share common security interests," the editorial said.

# New Zealand Post cancels stamps on Diana

AUCKLAND, New Zealand, July 6: New Zealand Post announced Monday it has cancelled an issue of stamps commemorating the first anniversary of the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, reports AP.

The postal service said it was concerned about the "over-commercialisation" of the princess' death, and added that a four-month wait for approval for the stamps from the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Trust meant the company could not meet print deadlines.

The stamps, featuring a photograph of Diana, were scheduled for issue on Aug. 26 but were withdrawn from the stamp programme.



New Bangladesh High Commissioner to Canada M. Aminul Islam seen with the Governor General of Canada Romeo LeBlanc immediately after presentation of his credentials in Ottawa recently.

# Tibetans hope US will push talks with China

NEW YORK, July 6: Days after the Chinese president opened the door to talks with the Dalai Lama, more than 1,000 people crowded a Central Park field Sunday to celebrate the first World Tibet Day, reports AP.

With a mass meditation, music, dance and speeches in Central Park's Great Hill, the event united activists fighting for human rights in Tibet, which China seized in 1950.

US President Bill Clinton put the spotlight on the Tibet issue during his recent visit to China when he urged Chinese President Jiang Zemin to begin a dialogue with the exiled spiritual leader.

Jiang said that as long as the Dalai Lama was willing to acknowledge that Tibet is part of China, then "the door to dialogue and negotiation is open."

"We are celebrating the little achievements in Beijing last week," said Bhuchung Tsering, director of the International Campaign for Tibet, based in Washington DC.

But Clinton needs to be more active in following up on what was started, Tsering said.

Reb Benjamin Gilman, chairman of the House International Relations Committee, is a critic of Clinton's policy of engagement with China.

He said they would get to like each other, and that certainly isn't impressing upon Jiang Zemin about what has to be done," Gilman said at the celebration, referring to the Chinese president and the Dalai Lama.

The Dalai Lama supports Tibetan autonomy within China rather than independence. However, Tibetans refuse to accept China's contention that their homeland was always part of China.

Though they welcomed Jiang's apparent willingness to discuss the issue, several Tibetans questioned whether it would translate into autonomy.

"They were just talking about their personal views," Tsamla Tsamla, a 24-year-old Tibetan who lives in Queens said of Clinton and Jiang. "There's no improvement in Tibet."

Dressed in a traditional robes, Tsamla and hundreds of other Tibetans living in the New York City region attended the celebration, which coincided with the Dalai Lama's 63rd birthday.

Brahma Das, one of the organisers of the event, said similar festivities were held around the nation in Denver and Chicago and in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and Switzerland.

Standing in front of a microphone, World Tibet Day founder Ma Jaya Bhagavati urged Tibetans to persevere.



The Prince of Wales talks with members of the girl band 'All Saints,' (left to right) Nathalie Appleton, Shaznay Lewis, Melanie Blatt and Nicole Appleton, during party in the Park, a concert in aid of the Prince's Trust at Hyde Park in London Sunday. The Prince's Trust is a charity headed by Prince Charles. The open-air concert has attracted thousands of pop music fans to the one day central London festival. — AP/UNB photo

# BRIEFLY

**4 killed in Malaysia car crash:** Two cars crashed into each other at a hairpin bend, killing four people and leaving six others injured in western Malaysia, the national news agency reported yesterday, AP says from Kuala Lumpur.

One of the cars skidded and went out of control, causing the crash late Sunday near the town of Ipoh in Perak state, Bernama news agency said, quoting police. Two people were killed instantly, while two others died in Ipoh Hospital, police said. All were in the same car.

**Ahmadiyya Muslims meet in Canada:** About 8,000 Ahmadiyya Muslims from around the world gathered at a Mosque to celebrate their right to religious freedom in Canada, AP reports from Ontario.

In my country, people are prosecuted for their religious beliefs," Mujib-ur-Rahman, a lawyer for Pakistan's Supreme Court, told members Sunday at the finale of the weeklong convention. "No one has a right to superiority." The main purpose of the convention was for members to learn more about their religion, said Naseem Mahdi, president of Canada's Ahmadiyya Muslim community.

**Five electrocuted in China:** A family of five was electrocuted while trying to adjust their television antenna, the Lao Dong (Labour) newspaper reported yesterday, AP says from Hanoi.

The incident occurred last Wednesday in the southernmost province of An Giang. A couple and their three children were killed when the antenna fell onto a power line.

**Troops attack Moro rebels:** Philippine troops fired mortar shells at Muslim separatist guerrillas in Maguindanao province both sides said yesterday, AFP says from Philippines.

Regional military spokesman Rosque Garingalao said soldiers fired two mortar shells at about 100 guerrillas of the Muslim insurgent Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) on Sunday after they were observed preparing to attack a military detachment.

**Tornado leaves 11 dead in E. China:** A violent tornado whipped through eastern China killing 17 people and leaving 265 seriously injured, news reports said yesterday, AFP says from Beijing.

The tornado and torrential rain swept through Suxi county in Anhui province on July 2 and levelled two villages, the Yangcheng Evening News said. More than 1,000 houses collapsed in 11 nearby villages, the newspaper said.

**Escaped inmate caught in US:** A phoned-in tip helped authorities arrest an inmate who escaped from a Mississippi sheriff and then evaded and eight-day manhunt in Alabama where he was sought in the killing of a police officer, AP says from Pascagoula, US.

Mario Centobise was arrested on Sunday near the Mississippi-Alabama state line, 415 kilometers from where he had been sought by hundreds of authorities in the slaying of Moody, Alabama, police officer Keith Turner was killed June 27.

**Blast kills teenager in Moscow:** A 14-year old boy was killed yesterday when he tried to disassemble an artillery shell, a news agency said, AP reports from Moscow.

The boy found the shell lying outside a munitions depot located near the village of Talovy, in Russia's Far East region, the ITAR-Tass news agency reported, quoting the local police.

**Philippine grounds US choppers:** The Philippine air force grounded its fleet of about 30 US-made MG-520 attack helicopters yesterday while it investigated why two of the aircraft collided, killing three people, officials said, AP says from Manila.

The two helicopters, struck each other and crashed shortly after taking off from a southern Philippine air force base Sunday, killing three men in one chopper, air force spokesman Col. Jose Mendoza said the helicopters will be inspected and remain grounded until the cause of Sunday's accident is determined.

**Death penalty for Aum member sought:** Japanese prosecutors for the first time yesterday sought the death penalty for a former Aum Supreme Truth cult member charged with murder, AFP says from Tokyo.

Kazuaki Okazaki, 37, is one of six people, including guru Shoko Asahara charged with murdering anti-Aum lawyer Tsutsumi Sakamoto, his wife and their one-year-old son in November 1989.