

International

BRIEFLY



Former White House intern Monica Lewinsky, centre, walks through the lobby of a Washington hotel Sunday morning. Lewinsky arrived in Washington Saturday, to submit to an interview sought by House prosecutors in President Clinton's impeachment trial or "forfeit her protections" under her immunity deal with independent Counsel Kenneth Starr.

—UNB/AP photo

Blast kills 35 in China: A gas explosion at a privately run coal mine in China's southwestern province of Guizhou has killed 35 people and injured eight, the official newspaper Worker's Daily said yesterday. AP reports from Beijing.

The mine's owner, Huang Jinyou, and three other people have been arrested in connection with the Jan. 16 blast at the mine in Hezhang country, 1,800 southwest of Beijing, the report said. Nine days after the explosion, one miner was still missing.

Queen Mum undergoes surgery: Britain's Queen Mother, 98, had a small operation on her nose Sunday to stop it bleeding, the Mirror tabloid reported Monday. AFP says from London.

She underwent a cauterisation of the internet blood vessels on the advice of aides worried at frequent nose bleeds over the past three weeks, the paper said.

The operation comes a year after she had her second hip replacement operation in two years following a fall while visiting the Sandringham stable.

Japan approves sale of Viagra: Japan's Health Ministry has approved the anti-impotence drug Viagra for use in Japan, a ministry official said yesterday. AP reports from Tokyo.

The drug's developer, Pfizer Pharmaceuticals, Inc., was given permission to import and produce the drug here, said a ministry official who spoke on condition of anonymity. Viagra will go on sale in Japan in between one and two months, said company spokesman Takashi Hirota. The price in Japan has not yet been decided, he said.

S'pore PM leaves hospital: Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong was discharged yesterday from Singapore General Hospital after three-day treatment for urinary tract infection, the government said. AP reports from Singapore.

Goh, 57, has recovered completely, the government said in a press statement. Goh took office in 1990 as Singapore's second prime minister.

US agriculture secy in Russia: US Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman arrived in Moscow on Sunday for a two-day visit focusing on American food supplies to Russia, the ITAR-Tass news agency reported. AP says from Moscow.

Glickman and his Russian counterpart Viktor Semyonov will discuss the possible donation of US corn and vegetable seeds, as well as the delivery of new agricultural machinery and technologies to Russia, ITAR-Tass said.

Chinese PM to visit Russia in Feb: Chinese Prime Minister Zhu Rongji will pay an official visit to Russia next month. Deputy Foreign Minister Zhang Deguang said yesterday. AFP reports from Beijing.

Zhu and his Russian counterpart Yevgeny Primakov will hold the fourth regular meeting between Prime Ministers of the two countries, the official Xinhua news agency reported. Zhang as saying.

32 hurt in accident in Austria: A bus full of Hungarian students returning from a ski outing went off the road Sunday in Southeastern Austria, killing 18 people and injuring 32 others, Red Cross officials said. AP says from Graz.

Police said the bus skidded, went over an embankment and rolled over several times on the state road between Trahuetten and Deutschlandsberg, a mountainous region near the border with Slovenia. The cause of the accident was unclear; officials said neither snow nor icy roads was a problem at the time. The Austria Press Agency said most of the passengers were teenagers from an agricultural high school in Koszeg, Hungary, accompanied by about 15 adults.

Golden Globe Awards '99

Where Shakespeare and Elizabeth reigned

BEVERLY HILLS, California, Jan 25: And the big winner going into the Oscars is — Queen Elizabeth.

She ruled during the time Golden Globe-winner "Shakespeare in Love" and was played in "Elizabeth" by Cate Blanchett, who also won a Globe on Sunday night, reports AP.

Otherwise, the ceremony that often serves as a predictor for the Academy Awards left the Oscar race pretty much where it was before the Golden Globes: A battle between "Saving Private Ryan" and "Shakespeare in Love," with "The Truman Show" still holding an outside shot for best picture.

"Saving Private Ryan" was named best dramatic movie and its director, Steven Spielberg, was also honoured at the 56th Golden Globes, while "Shakespeare in Love" won best musical or comedy film, best film comedy actress, Gwyneth Paltrow, and for screenplay.

"The Truman Show" earned Jim Carrey an unusual award for best dramatic actor while co-star Ed Harris was named best motion picture supporting actor. The film's score also won a Globe.

Spielberg, whose film is a major contender for an Oscar, extended his thanks to "all the veterans that are out there that saved Western Civilisation and stopped the Holocaust in 1945."

Carrey is better known for comedy than the serious role he played in "The Truman Show" — a man who realises his whole life has been a TV show.

Blanchett's portrayal of the title role in "Elizabeth" won best dramatic film actress over Susan Sarandon in "Steepmorn," Meryl Streep in "One True Thing," Fernanda Montenegro in "Central Station" and Emily Watson in "Hilary and Jackie."

Michael Caine of "Little Voice" was best actor in a musical or comedy motion picture.

US applauds call for Baghdad to comply with UN resolutions

Iraq storms out of Arab League FM's meeting in Cairo

CAIRO, Jan 25: Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammad Said Al-Sahaf stormed out of an Arab meeting here Sunday to protest a final statement which failed to meet Baghdad's demands, a senior member of the Iraqi delegation said, report agencies.

The final communiqué is a cover up for maintaining forever the UN embargo, Nabil Najim, an undersecretary at the Iraqi foreign ministry, told reporters here.

Baghdad wanted Arab foreign ministers to unilaterally lift the crippling eight-year-old sanctions which were slapped on Iraq after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

"This statement is a mockery," Najim told reporters at the Arab League headquarters where the foreign ministers and other representatives of the 22 member pan Arab organisation met.

According to participants at the closed door meeting called to discuss the Iraqi crisis, Sahaf and his delegation angrily walked out after hearing a reading of the final statement.

The amendments and strong pressure from the meeting's Egyptian hosts failed to secure the return of Sahaf who boycotted the adoption of the final statement accusing his Arab counterparts of "plotting."

After the reading of the original text Sahaf launched a

scathing attack on Arab governments. The document is a plot aimed at covering up new US and British attacks on Iraq, he said.

The one day meeting which had already been postponed from last month, was called to consider Yemeni requests for a full Arab summit to consider the December 16-20 US and British air strikes on Iraq.

Baghdad pressed fellow Arab governments to issue a clear condemnation of the air strikes and to agree to defy the UN sanctions that have crippled Iraq since its 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

But Sahaf charged that the Hurghada group, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia conspired to draw up a communiqué which instead of condemning the aggression on Iraq placed the responsibility on Iraq.

The foreign ministers of Egypt, Yemen, Oman, Syria and Saudi Arabia met twice this month in the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Hurghada to map out Sunday's meeting.

The useless and very negative statement was written under pressure from the United States because it did not call for an immediate lifting of the sanctions and did not condemn outright the US-British strikes," Sahaf said.

Some of the stronger criticism of Iraq included in the ear-

lier draft was excised from the final text.

References to Baghdad provoked "it's neighbours and demands that it" recognise that its occupation of Kuwait was a mistake were dropped as was a clause saying that such an Iraqi "recognition" is an essential condition for reaching real Arab solidarity.

A section which originally urged Iraq to "put an immediate end to its provocations" was changed to read "put an immediate end to these positions", according to the official text read to reporters here.

Kuwait and Saudi Arabia were adamant that Baghdad should apologise for its 1990 invasion and respect the UN demarcated border with Kuwait. In recent weeks Iraq has threatened repeatedly to scrap the border.

The Arab foreign ministers also urged Baghdad to cooperate with the security council in implementing resolutions concerning Iraq.

The final statement also established a follow-up committee to oversee the efforts to end the sanctions and in response to Iraqi complaints that all its members were governments "hostile" to Baghdad, added Bahrain to the list originally announced.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Mussa insisted that the statement was a good one for Iraq and strongly urged Sahaf to return to the meeting.

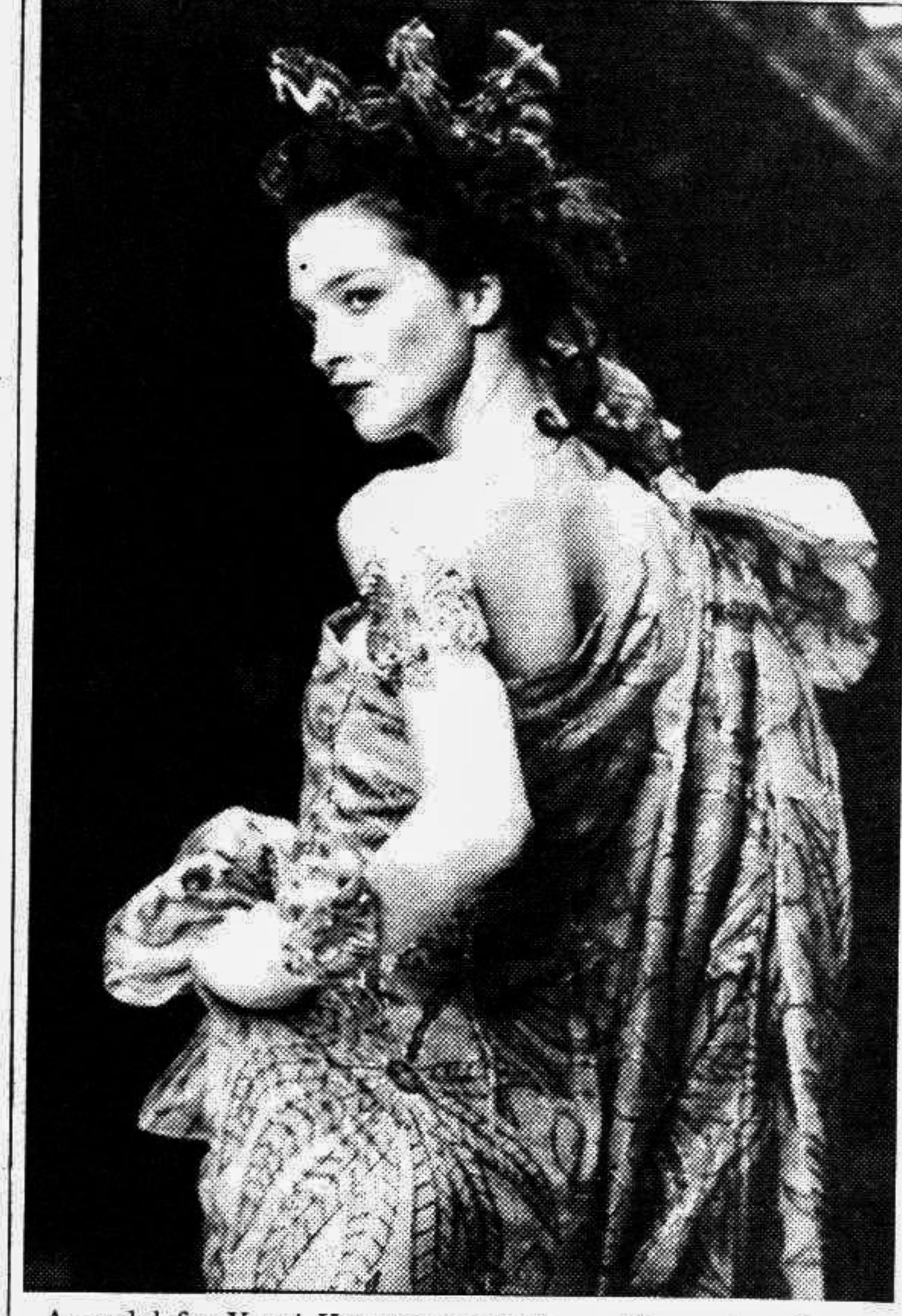
Both he and Arab League chief Esmat Abel Meguid described Sahaf's walkout as "deplorable."

Meanwhile, the United States on Sunday applauded the Arab League's call for Iraq to comply with UN resolutions on weapons inspections and said Baghdad's walkout from the meeting only underscored its isolation.

State Department Spokesman James Foley said Washington also was "particularly pleased" with the league's rejection of "Iraq's recent threats against its neighbours" including Kuwait.

The 22 nation group met in Cairo to map out demands for an easing of United Nations sanctions imposed on Iraq after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait and to respond to US-led air strikes last month over Baghdad's alleged failure to cooperate with UN arms inspectors.

While it condemned the attacks and backed the lifting of the sanctions, the league's statement also called on Iraq to implement UN resolutions on weapons inspections and refrain from making any "provocative actions" toward its neighbours.



A model for Yumi Katsura presents a silk evening dress embroidered with floral motifs at Rome's high fashion show, Sunday.

—UNB/AP photo

Riot death toll rises to 50

Troops patrol Indonesian island after mob murders soldier

AMBON, Indonesia, Jan 25: Thousands of troops and police patrolled the debris-strewn streets of Ambon Island Monday after a soldier was murdered by rioters who refused to hand over their weapons, reports AP.

Days of rioting among rival Christians and Muslims left at least 50 people dead, police said.

Baleo, a non-governmental organisation in Ambon, claimed witnesses accounts indicated that the death toll could be more than double that.

Police said civilians were helping security personnel search the ruins of dozens of burned out buildings for the bodies of any more victims.

The Jakarta Post newspaper quoted a local politician, Mohammad Kasabah, as saying a mob, armed with machetes and knives, attacked a 28-year-old army private on Saturday.

They slashed his face and stabbed him in the stomach.

Earlier that day another mob dragged five Muslims from a car and burned them to death.

Residents contacted by The Associated Press by telephone

said the island's main city, also named Ambon, was quiet but tense Monday.

The rioting was the latest in a series of violent outbreaks that have wracked crisis-ridden Indonesia for more than a year.

On Sunday night, Indonesia's military commander Gen. Wiranto and prominent opposition leaders met in Jakarta and called for an end to the fighting.

"No one will benefit from the division of the nation," the newspaper Kompas quoted Wiranto as saying.

Security forces patrolled past shuttered houses guarded by wary residents with knives and clubs. Officers with loudspeakers urged people to go back to work Monday.

Despite this, most shops and offices remained closed.

Military transport planes ferried in rice, food and other essential commodities after several markets were reduced to ashes.

More than 100 foreigners — including Americans, Britons, Australians and Dutch — have been evacuated from the islands.



Jordan's King Hussein, centre, and his American-born wife, Queen Noor, sit amongst their 12 children, including an adopted daughter, in a file picture provided by the Royal Palace in 1995. The picture shows two strong candidates to the Jordanian throne, Prince Abdullah, 36, who sits in the far right in the second row, and his younger brother, Prince Hamza, 18, top left corner.

—UNB/AP photo

Missile attack on Iraq again: civilians killed

BAGHDAD, Jan 25: Iraq said a number of civilians were killed and wounded in a US and British missile attack on a town near the southern city of Basra today, reports AFP.

The official news agency INA said the missile crashed into a "densely populated" area of Al-Jumhuriya, some 500 kilometers from the Iraqi capital. According to first estimates, a certain number of citizens were killed and a number injured, mostly women and children," it said.

Local religious leaders have called for calm and reconciliation.

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The trial adjourned on Jan 14 for Muslim festivities at the end of Ramadan after the prosecution, in closing its case, took the sex out of the sex-related charges against Anwar.

That threw Anwar's lawyers into disarray. They asked the judge for a long adjournment to reformulate their arguments.

Tamil leader shot dead in Jaffna

VAVUNIYA, Sri Lanka, Jan 25: Suspected Tamil Tiger rebels shot and killed a former Tamil rebel-turned-politician in the streets of northern Jaffna, local officials said Monday, reports AP.

Thillayanthan Chandriman, 31-year-old leader of the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam was targeted when he was going home on his bicycle Sunday, said M. Kiruparajah, a member of the Jaffna Municipality.

Chandriman died instantly and one of his supporters, also on a bicycle, was critically wounded in the attack, said Kiruparajah.

The Sri Lanka army recaptured Jaffna Peninsula from Tamil Tiger rebels in 1995.

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Children are more at risk because they breathe faster and because their lungs are still developing and thus more susceptible, the report says, citing several studies.

Pollution has been shown to damage the cilia in the airways — the tiny hairs that sweep out pollutants and invaders.

Without the cilia, harmful chemicals can get deep into lung tissue and cause permanent damage, Davis said.

To make matters worse, leaded gasoline is still used in many countries, and several studies have shown that lead from fuel emissions ends up in children's bodies. Lead can cause brain damage, retard growth and, in extreme cases, kill.

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