

Actors from left to right: Michael J Fox, Keri Russell and Dylan McDermott old the awards they won at the 56th Annual Golden Globe Awards in Beverly Hills Sunday. Fox won best actor in a television comedy series, Russell won best actress in a dramatic television series and McDermott won for best actor in a television drama series.

Russia vetoes release of report

Butler outlines long-term UN monitoring for Iraq

UNITED NATIONS, Jan 26: The top UN arms inspector on Monday outlined long-term monitoring proposals for Iraq that could be implemented if the UN Security Council decides to turn the page on Iraqi disarmament in order to lift sanctions, reports AFP.

In a report to the UN Security Council, UN Special Commission (UNSCOM) Chairman Richard Butler warned that an enhanced verification effort in the absence of total disarmament of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction would require a substantial increase in personnel and financing.

Key extracts of the 200-page report and its annexes were obtained by AFP.

Butler acknowledged that his review "takes into account the possibility that the full accounting of Iraq's prescribed weapons will not be achieved."

He listed priority areas on which Iraq has failed to fully account for its weapons of mass destruction programmes, including the lethal chemical agent VX. biological warheads. missiles propellant, artillery shells filled with mustard gas and aerial bombs.

"These remaining issues must be resolved," said Butler.

Russia, which is demanding UNSCOM's replacement by a new body, blocked the report's release as an official document during Monday's closed-door council session focusing on how to deal with Iraqi disarmament in the aftermath of last month's air strikes on Iraq, diplomats

There is no consensus in the Security Council to have something from UNSCOM," Russian ambassador Sergei Lavrov told As a result, the report re-

mains an informal document. US ambassador Peter Burleigh said that the Security Council should consider the UNSCOM report, which also provide a four-page paper produced by the International Atomic Energy Agency IAEA on

The IAEA recommended that technical inspections be carried out by "competent international agencies rather than subsidiaries of the security council," such as UNSCOM.

The IAEA is responsible for monitoring Iraqi compliance in dismantling its suspect nuclear programme, while UN-SCOM verifies the destruction of Iraqi chemical, biological and long-range missiles. Butler's report detailed Iraq's determined efforts to

thwart the UN inspectors through organised concealment operations. He noted that the special se-

curity services, which also protect Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, were responsible for the concealment which had been directed in its early days by Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz.

- AFP photo

China, Russia and France maintain that following the US and British air strikes, the UN Security Council should lift the sanctions which are linked to Iraqi disarmament and establish a new body to ensure that Iraq does not reconstitute weapons of mass destruction.

The Security Council is expected to resume discussions on Wednesday on Canadian proposals for disarmament and humanitarian reviews on Iraq, in an attempt to rebuild the council's consensus which was shattered by the air strikes.

Butler pointed out in his report that an enhanced longterm verification regime would require Iraq cooperation, as well as access and information.

Butler's last report to the council on December 15 on Iraq's failure to provide full cooperation prompted the US and British air strikes from December 16-19.

Indonesia death toll up to 54

Military vows to hunt down ringleaders of riots

Indonesia's military commander has vowed to hunt down the ringleaders of religious rioting that left at least 54 people dead as rescuers searched Tuesday for more victims, reports AP.

Residents of riot-torn Ambon island said they heard shots late Monday and staved indoors, obeying a curfew ordered by authorities. Many shops were closed and public buses stayed off the debrisstrewn streets.

Police and soldiers have frequently fired warning shots to disperse mobs of Muslim and Christian rioters in the past week, but the worst of the violence appears to have abated.

The unrest has left many areas on Ambon in ruins, and Baileo, a non-governmental organisation, has said the number of people killed could be move than double the official death toll.

a series of violent outbreaks that have wracked economically struggling Indonesia for more than a year.

The rioting was the latest in

Armed forces chief Gen. Wiranto said he would pursue perpetrators or unrest in the

AMBON, Indonesia, Jan 26: Southeast Asian nation of 210 million people.

Many Indonesians resent the armed forces because of its image as a human rights violator under former President Suharto, who was forced from power in May by riots and protests after 32 years of au-thoritarian rule.

Of immediate concern for many Ambonese were food shortages and rising prices. Witnesses said small groups looted some stores Monday while other residents lined up for food from the few shops that opened their doors.

The military earlier threatened to shoot on sight rioters who refused to surrender they Fighting between the two re-

ligious groups has flared on Ambon and two other islands in eastern Indonesia since last Tuesday.

The unrest in Maluku was the worst in Indonesia since the violence that helped oust Suharto.

Most of the dead were Muslim. About 90 per cent of In-donesia's people are Muslim, making it the world's most populous Islamic country.



King Birendra of Nepal (Left) is greeted by Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee upon his arrival at the presidential palace for an official welcoming ceremony Monday. King Birendra is on a six-day official visit to India, and the guest of honour for the country's Republic Day celebrations. - AFP photo

Anwar Ibrahim's trial resumes

Prosecution's conduct a shame, lawyers say

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 26: Denouncing the prosecution as "disgraceful," the lawyers of dissident Anwar Ibrahim demanded on Tuesday that the judge ignore key testimonies against their client, reports AP. "This must be the first case

where the prosecution has come to a court of law to seek conviction on evidence which they openly admit has been procured by threat of violence and trickery," said Raja Aziz Addruse. one of Anwar's lawyers.

Arguing against the prosecution's case, presented before the trial adjourned on Jan. 14, the lawyer said the police had openly admitted to using coercion against witnesses. "The conduct of the prosecu-

tion has been wholly disgraceful. They are trying save their case," he said as the sensational trial resumed after the first long break since it began three months ago. The adjournment came during the Eid-ul-fitr holidays

The two key witnesses in the case had initially been forced by Malaysian police to withdraw their allegations against Anwar. That occurred when Anwar was still Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad's designated successor, the two now stand by their accusations and have testified about how the retractions were obtained.

Five of the 10 charges

against Anwar relate to using his powers to force police to obtain retractions from Ummi Hafilda Ali and Azizan Abu Bakar. The others are of illegal sex, including sodomy, a crime in predominantly Muslim

Ummi has accused Anwar of having an affair with his secretary's wife while Azizan.

"The value of the evidence by Ummi and Azizan is nil." the lawyer said. "The prosecution hasn't established that these allegations are true."

Just before the trial adjourned, the judge allowed prosecutors to amend four corruption charges, for which Anwar is being tried now, so that they would not have to prove the al legations made by Ummi and Azizan to show abuse of power. In the amended charges, prosecutors changed the words

sodomy committed by him" to "allegations of sodomy." The prosecutors never explained why they amended the charges, but defence lawyers say it has to do with lack of evi-

committed sodomy or adultery. Raja Aziz also criticized the prosecutors for failing to call important people like Mahathir and Malaysia's police chief to testify. He described them as "essential witnesses" in the

dence to prove that Anwar

UN envoy holds talks with Taliban

ISLAMABAD, Jan 26: UN coordinator for Afghanistan Erick De Mul Monday visited the major stronghold of the Taliban militia Kandahar and held taiks with senior Taliban leaders on ways to facilitate the return of UN aid staff to the warravage country, reports Xinhua.

Erick De Mul met with senior Taliban spokesman Wakil Ahmed Motawwakil and governor of Kandahar Mulla Hasan. the Associated Press of Pakistan quoted Afghan Sources as

The details of the talks were not immediately known.

Yeltsin talks to Albright over phone

MOSCOW, Jan 26: President Boris Yeltsin held a telephone conversation Tuesday with visiting US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright from the hospital where he has been recovering from a bleeding ulcer. officials said, reports AP. The Kremlin had hinted ear

lier that Yeltsin might meet with Albright during her visit, but reversed course on Monday. saying his hospitalisation ruled out a meeting. Presidential foreign affairs

advisor Sergei Prikhodko said the phone conversation took place on Yeltsin's initiative, the Interfax news agency said. Prikhodko would not pro-

vide any details of the conver-

11 civilians killed in missile strike

US blames Saddam for 'initiating attack'

WASHINGTON, Jan 26: US military officials says they regret the civilian casualties caused by an American missile attack in southern Iraq, but they say the blame lies with President Saddam Hussein for threatening US pilots patrolling Iraqi skies, reports AP.

Gen. Anthony Zinni, commander of US forces in the Gulf area, said Monday the American military will continue to hit Iraqi air defence radars, missiles and communications facilities in response to what he called increasingly hostile actions by Iraq.

Zinni said Iraq tripled the number of surface to air missile, or SAM, batteries in the southern "no-fly" zone patrolled by US and British warplanes in recent weeks. He said Îraqi fighter aircraft are trying to draw allied pilots into "SAMbushes" in hopes of shooting one down.

Zinni said he could not yet confirm that the extensive damage and casualties to residential areas in and around the southern port city of Basra on Monday was caused by errant US missiles.

"We deeply regret any civilian casualties regardless of what the cause may be," he said. "But these exchanges have been initiated by Saddam Hussein." He said the United States

wanted its Arab allies in the region to understand that US missile attacks do not target civilians.

"No one can guarantee that these strikes will not have errors or we might not have errant ordnance, but we do take every possible attempt to ensure that doesn't happen," Zinni

The four-star Marine Corps general said it was premature to consider apologising for the civilian losses.

Zinni said air crews that re-

turned from Monday's mission over southern Iraq were interviewed as part of a painstaking effort to pinpoint what happened in the attacks. In Iraq, Basra governor

Ahmed Ibrahim Hamash said two American aircraft fired five missiles that killed 11 people and injured 59. The official Iraqi News

Agency said one American missile hit the Al-Jumhuriya neighbourhood of Basra, a southern port city. Others hit later in the nearby village of Abu al-Khaseeb, as well as the Basra airport and an oil field. US officials said the Ameri-

can planes targeted an Iraqi SA-3 surface-to-air missile battery north of Basra and "associated integrated air defense sys-

Primakov proposes pact between Yeltsin, both houses of parliament

MOSCOW, Jan 26: Russian Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov has proposed a pact be-tween President Boris Yeltsin and both houses of parliament to ensure political stability in the run-up to elections, news agencies said today, reports

The proposals had been sent to Yeltsin and the Speakers of the state Duma, the Communist-dominated lower house, and the federation council, the upper house, Interfax and ITAR-Tass reported, quoting government sources.

Duma Speaker Gennady Seleznyov, quoted by Interfax, said he had received a letter from Primakov suggesting that if Yeltsin pledges not to dissolve the Duma, the lower house would abandon attempts to oust the president.

The government, for its part. would not introduce confidence motions in the parliament.

The respective undertakings would be in the form of "declarations of intent" and not a formal agreement, which could be in breach of the constitution.

The reports said Primakov's initiative was a response to requests from the leaders of parliamentary groups with whom he had talks at the end of last

Legislative elections are scheduled for December this year and presidential elections for June next year, when Yeltsin, 67, who is in poor

ULFA kills 2 in Assam

GUWAHATI, Jan 26: ULFA extremists killed two CRPF personnel and injured nine others, two of them seriously, in an ambush in upper Assam's Sibsagar district early today as the 17-hour general strike and boycott of the Republic Day called by six militant outfits started at midnight, reports PTI.

Official sources said here that a group of heavily armed ULFA militants ambushed a CRPF patrol party, led by Additional SP (security) R Chetia, with automatic weapons killing two on the spot near the Gamon Bridge under Sibsagar police station at around 0145 hours.

Chetia, for other CRPF personnel, two civilians and two drivers were injured in the crossfire.

health, is due to step down. Opposition members of the Duma are currently engaged in

an attempt to impeach Yeltsin, accusing him of illegally dissolving the Soviet Union, storming parliament with tanks in October 1993, launching the 21-month Chechen war and ruining the Russian armed Any, one of these charges

could cost Yeltsin his job should both chambers of the Russian parliament and later the constitutional court see through the lengthy process of impeachment.

However, analysts give the procedure scant chance of suc-

Meanwhile the head of opinion pollsters public opinion. Alexander Oslon, told Moscow Echo Radio late Monday that around 90 per cent of Russians had no confidence in Yeltsin. But Primakov enjoys around 40 per cent confidence, Oslon

He added that since the financial crash of last August Russians had gone from hope to a feeling that Russia is a "third class state, left behind developed countries."



Gladys Staines and her daughter Esther, 13, attend the funeral of her husband, Australian missionary Graham Staines and sons Philips, 10, and Timothy, 8, Monday, in Baripada, India. A group of Hindu radicals in eastern India attacked the family Saturday morning and burned the three alive while they were sleeping in their jeep.

- UNB/AP photo

Provincial election in Sri Lanka

Kumaratunga's party takes commanding lead prompt her to call a general election ahead of schedule to

COLOMBO, Jan 26: President Chandrika Kumaratunga's party took a commanding lead Tuesday in a provincial election, but independent monitors said intimidation by the ruling party was so widespread that the election should be declared void. reports AP

An overnight curfew imposed Monday in the Northwestern Province to prevent clashes between rival political parties was lifted at 9. am (0300 GMT) Tuesday. At least 15 people were injured in the poll-related violence, police said, and two people were killed in the month-long campaign leading to Monday's vote.

Kumaratunga's People's Alliance won 20 of the 35 seats declared, while the main opposition United National Party won 13 and the Marxist Peoples Liberation Front won 2, the government Information Department said. Results were not immediately available for the rest of

the 52 seats in the provincial council.

The election was seen as a test of Kumaratunga's popularity. A decisive victory could

Tamil militants. The ruling party was winning 56 per cent of the votes counted, compared with 38 per cent for the UNP. The Election Commission estimated the voter turnout at 75 per cent.

seek the parliamentary support

she needs to carry out a consti-

tutional reform she hopes

would end the 15-year war with

Ballot fraud in many of the polling stations prompted the Center for Monitoring Election Violence, an independent watchdog group, to demand that the election be nullified. Charges of systematic voter

intimidation, the removal of opposition polling agents through the use of force, the blatant stuffing of ballot boxes in full view of observers/monitors and the sheer brute force of the People's Alliance violent presence in the vicinity of the polling booths, have in (our) considered view irrevocably undermined the validity of the election an exercise of the pub-lic's free and fair choice," the Centre said in a statement Tuesday.

BRIFILY

Fire kills 14 in Chinese factory: A fire killed 14 people at a company backed by Taiwanese investment in south China, the state-run Xinhua News Agency reported, AP reports from Beijing.

The fire broke out in the early hours of Saturday in the

Dongju Electric Co in Shijie township of Dongguan City in

Guangdong, Xinhua reported late Monday. It said the 14 people

died of suffocation. Faulty wiring in two old air conditioners was believed to have caused the blaze. Richardson to visit KSA: US Secretary of Energy Bill Richardson is to visit Saudi Arabia in February. The first such visit since 1990 to promote energy cooperation

with the Arab Kingdom, a department of energy statement said Monday, AFP reports from Washington. Richardson's three-day visit with top Saudi energy officials and representatives of US energy companies aims at reinforcing bilateral relationships and promoting energy cooperation, the statement said. "These discussions underscore the importance of the kingdom and our bilateral relationship to energy security and stability worldwide," the statement quoted Richardson as saying.

4 killed in road accident in Vietnam: Four people were killed after a truck plowed into a food stall in southwestern Vietnam, police said yesterday, AFP reports from Hanoi.

The four people were killed when the truck slammed into a food stall at Tien Giang on the Hanoi-Ho Chi Minh City highway on Friday, police told AFP. Three were killed on the spot after the driver of the speeding truck lost control in a curve and hit the stall. Another died on the way to hospital. Australian donation for Fiji flood:

Australia on Tuesday donated 200,000 Australian dollars (US

dirs 128,000) to help Fiji overcome disastrous floods that

claimed seven lives and devastated large parts of the main

island of Viti Levu, AP reports from Canberra.

Pressure mounts on BJP govt for action against anti-Christian violence

BARIPADA, India, Jan 26: India's Hindu nationalist government was under pressure from political allies and foreign governments Tuesday to punish the killers of an Australian evangelist and his two sons, the first victims of a Hindu extremist campaign against Christian missionaries, reports AP.

The month-long attacks against missionaries appeared to be building towards a political problem for Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's fragile coalition, with several partners demanding swift action to steam the anti-Christian vio-

In a funeral procession led by the lepers he cared for, Graham Staines and his two sons were buried in a common grave Monday, three days after they were burned to death in a nearby village by a mob screaming slogans of a radical Hindu movement.

The procession ended on the edge of town in a Christian cemetery where Staines' widow and daughter were the first to throw handfuls of pebbly earth, landing with a dull thud, on the three wooden coffins.

funeral.

Policemen with guns slung over the shoulders guarded the

Police have arrested 49 sus- quoted him as saying. pects linked to the radical Barang Dal, a group affiliated to the right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party that governs India. The Bajrang Dal denied its activists were involved in the killings

Anti-Christian activity began Christmas Day in western India, where dozens of churches, schools and other Christian properties were destroyed. Hindu activists claimed the missionaries were bribing or forcing poor Hindus to convert to Christianity - a charge the missionaries deny.

Three regional parties supporting the protested the inaction against the Hindu radicals spearheading the anti-missionary campaign. Mamata Banerjee, leader of

the Calcutta-based Trinamul Congress Party, demanded the resignation of the powerful home minister in charge of security, Lal Krishna Advani, for his "failure to protect the country's minority communities." Advani denied that Hindu

organisations linked to his

Bharatiya Janata Party were

responsible for the attacks. "I

have known these organisa-

tions and they have no criminal

record," an Indian news agency

In the southern state of

Andhra Pradesh, the Telugu Desam Party demanded a meeting of a national council to formulate a consensus on how to deal with the issue, and reminded the government that it could withdraw it support. The powerful leader of the neighbouring state of Tamil Nadu, J Jayalalitha, demanded that the killers be hunted down like ter-

Prime Minister Vajpayee has condemned the violence and called for harsh, quick punishment for the attackers, but his response failed to satisfy his regional allies.

The withdrawal of any of Vajpayee's partners would throw the BJP-fed coalition into a crisis that could lead to an early election or a takeover by the opposition Congress Party. The United Christian Forum for Human Rights counted some

100 incidents ranging from the

rape of nuns to Bible-burning in 1998. The figure represented more violence against Christians, the group said, than in any year since India's independence in 1947. Some Christian leaders say

lence has increased with the

this horrific way. Even before the slaying, the European Union had voiced its it is no coincidence that vioconcern over the wave of at-

tacks.

coming to power of the BJP. which they say has emboldened the fringe groups. Staines embraced Indian

turn in Baripada. The mayor spoke at his four-hour funeral service as did friends and ministers from several denomina-Staines, who was 58, and his wife, Gladys, natives of Beaudesert, Australia, had

culture and was embraced in

three children born and raised in Baripada. Staines settled here more than three decades ago, living in a simple concrete-floored house behind Baripada Baptist Union Church. He dispensed drug treatment to lepers from a church-run clinic, preached on occasion and led Bible-study

The way he lived his life has been an inspiration to us all," said Father Anand Pal, a Catholic priest.

In Australia, Foreign Minister Alander Downer, said Staines devoted his life to serving others and it said it was unconscionable that he and his sons should have been killed in

State Department says

Discussion on sending US ground troops to Kosovo 'premature'

WASHINGTON, Jan 26: Any discussion of sending US ground troops to Kosovo as part of an international peacekeeping force is "premature," the State Department said Monday, reports AFP.

Spokesman James Foley reiterated Washington's stance that it would consider such a move only when a peace settlement is reached between Serb authorities in Belgrade and the ethnic Albanians living in the troubled province.

If it were decided that a peacekeeping force was necessary to implement such a political settlement "then it would be examined role if any the United States might play in such a scenario, Foley said. The administration would examine the options, consult with allies, consult with Congress but I really think that it's premature at this stage, he said noting the ongoing violence in Kosovo.

What we are facing now is far from that prospect we are facing still an across the failure on the part of the Serb authorities to comply with the terms of the October (cease-fire) agreement." Foley said Washington

would totally welcome a peace settlement but cautioned that it could still be far in the future. His comments followed a

meeting earlier Monday of

North Atlantic Treaty Organi-

zation (NATO) ambassadors

who discussed ways of ending as 'warning' to Belgrade to force it to scale back it forces in Kosovo. "We expect the NATO council to draw up a warning for an immediate cease-fire and the withdrawal of military forces

ister Laberto Dini said on the sidelines of an EU foreign ministers meeting. The warning would be accompanied by a "deadline," he said without elaborating.

in Kosovo. Italian Foreign Min-

Washington proposed last week that the major western powers deliver an "ultimatum," backed by the threat of airstrikes to coerce Yugoslav to respect the terms of last Oc-

President Slobodan Milosevic tober's cease-fire which includes a partial pullout by Serbian forces and their return to barracks.