

International

Albright in Oslo to mend fences with Russia

NATO zeroes in on fuel supplies

BELGRADE, Apr 13: Aiming to bring the Yugoslav war machine to a halt by wiping out fuel supplies, NATO planes early Tuesday targeted the country's biggest oil refinery for the second time in 24 hours, along with military installations and transport centers, reports AP.

Attacks continued well into daylight hours on Tuesday. Four big detonations were heard at mid-morning in the Kosovo capital of Pristina, with first reports indicating military barracks were being targeted.

Heavy explosions were reported early Tuesday across the republic.

On Monday, a midday NATO strike at a railway bridge appeared to accidentally hit a passenger train that was on it at the time.

Serb officials said 10 people were killed and 16 injured. Reporters brought to the scene by Yugoslav authorities described scattered human limbs, smashed rail carriages and the stench of burning flesh.

NATO foreign ministers, meeting in a show of unity Monday in Brussels, Belgium, expressed regret over the loss of civilian life. But they vowed to continue the campaign until Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic withdraws the forces he sent to Kosovo as part of a crackdown on ethnic Albanian rebels seeking independence for the province.

In Washington, defence officials said they were planning to send "several hundred" more US warplanes — including ground-attack jets, radar-jamming planes and refueling tankers — to beef up NATO forces attacking Yugoslavia.

The Clinton administration, meanwhile, was pressing its insistence that the conflict in the Balkans could be resolved by air power alone, despite a movement in Congress to arm Clinton with the ground troop option.

Several NATO planes flew in multiple waves over Belgrade shortly before midnight Tuesday, and Yugoslav defence responded with heavy anti-aircraft fire, the official Tanjug news agency reported.

Shortly afterward, strong detonations were heard at the country's largest oil refinery in Pancevo, just across the Danube River from Belgrade. Local officials confirmed the refinery was hit for the second straight night. Yugoslavia's parliament,

meanwhile, voted to join an alliance with Russia and Belarus — an apparent move to try to draw Russia into the conflict. Russia has said it will not get involved militarily.

Russia favours the idea of incorporating Yugoslavia into an existing alliance with Belarus, but said membership wouldn't be instantaneous and military aid wouldn't be automatically granted, it said.

Along Yugoslavia's border with Albania, fighting between Serb forces and Kosovo rebels was reportedly intensifying Monday. Serb artillery fire reportedly struck the Albanian border village of Kamenica, hit several times in recent days.

Tanjung claimed at least 150 members of the rebel Kosovo Liberation Army were killed in a border clash if true, the highest single toll in months.

In Oslo, US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright is holding out to Russia a role in peacekeeping in Kosovo while cautioning against providing military intelligence or aid to Yugoslavia.

"We believe Russia has a constructive role to play in helping to bring about and implement a settlement," US State Department spokesman James P. Rubin said early Tuesday upon arriving in Oslo with Albright.

Tuesday's fence-mending meeting here with Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov follows a North Atlantic Council meeting in Brussels in which the 19 NATO allies considered having Russian and other European troops join in enforcing a settlement in the province if Yugoslavia accepts peace terms.



AIADMK party leader Jayalalitha Jayaram (C) is mobbed by reporters as she arrives at a New Delhi hotel Monday. India's political crisis deepened after Jayalalitha declared that she would withdraw her support to the Hindu nationalist coalition, a move that could topple the government. — AFP photo

BRIEFLY

Rebels attack prison in E Timor: Pro-independence rebels attacked guards at an East Timor prison with gunfire and gasoline bombs, police said Tuesday. Three police officers were wounded, AP reports from Jakarta.

The attack at the coastal town of Baucau was the latest outbreak of violence in the disputed territory where fighting has escalated between groups either wanting to remain with or break away from Indonesia. A sergeant and two privates were badly injured in one explosion, said East Timor police spokesman Capt Widodo.

IAF jet crashes in Haryana: An Indian Air Force Mig-21 aircraft crashed yesterday in the northern Indian state of Haryana, close to New Delhi, but there were no reports of casualties, an air force spokesman said, Reuter reports from New Delhi.

The pilot ejected before the aircraft crashed. We have no information regarding any casualties," he said. The spokesman said a rescue team had gone to the crash site at Hissar, about 150 km from the capital.

Commuter train derails in S'pore: Singapore's 12-year-old commuter train system suffered its first derailment on Tuesday shutting down service between two stations, AP reports from Singapore.

Passengers said they lost their balance when the front car of the train lurched off the track between Ang Mo Kio and Bishan stations at 9:59 am (01:59 gm). There were no passengers on the derailed coach, and those in other cars suffered no serious injuries, police and transit officials said.

US singer BoxCar Willie dies: BoxCar Willie, whose gentle country voice and songs of life on the road evoked memories of a time when hobos watched America pass by from the door of a freight car, died of leukemia. He was 67, AP reports from Branson.

He died Monday at home, a family spokeswoman said. BoxCar Willie had recently announced he was cancelling his 1999 season of shows when the disease, first diagnosed in 1996, returned. Until his health began to fail, he was not only a Branson performer but one of the music town's elder statesmen.

Ho Chi Minh City population now 5m: The population of Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam's largest city, has surpassed 5 million, preliminary census figures show, government officials said Tuesday, AP reports from Hanoi.

That is a significant increase since the end of the Vietnam War in 1975. Ho Chi Minh City was known then as Saigon and had a population of 3.4 million. City officials said migration from other parts of the country was the main cause of the increase.

Jackson comes in aid of Kosovo refugees

LONDON, Apr 13: US pop star Michael Jackson has written a new single entitled "What more can I give?" dedicated to the plight of the Kosovar ethnic Albanian refugees. It was reported today, says AFP.

In an interview with Britain's Mirror tabloid, Jackson, 35, said all proceeds from his record would go towards helping the refugees forced out of Kosovo, and said he planned a star-studded video to accompany it.

The singer also told the mirror of his anguish at being the subject of child abuse allegations, which he called "wicked lies and rumours."

In an interview claimed by the Mirror as his first with a British newspaper for 20 years, Jackson said: "I feel so sad when I see the pictures of those poor kids."

"I just want to go to

Yugoslavia and hug every one of those children and tell them I love them. The TV footage just breaks my heart. It is just horrifying. I have to turn the TV off — it makes me cry every day.

"It's time we did something. It's not enough to turn your head and pretend it doesn't exist."

"I've written a song for the refugees called 'what more can I give?' and I am going to give all the profits to the Kosovar Albanians."

"I want to do what we did with the people in Africa, get all the celebrities together and sing for those poor families."

Jackson was interviewed in London at the Harods Department Store owned by Egyptian millionaire Mohammed Al Fayed, who is helping with the Kosovo project.

Police warn against rally in KL ahead of verdict

KUALA LUMPUR, Apr 13: Malaysian police have issued a warning against illegal gatherings linked to the imminent verdict in the trial of former deputy premier Anwar Ibrahim, press reports said today, reports AP.

Opposition groups were planning an overnight vigil near the federal courthouse in central Kuala Lumpur where the corruption trial of Anwar comes to a climax on Wednesday with the reading of the verdict.

The opposition Parti Islam Semalaysia (PAS), which has joined with Anwar supporters, has also called for a rally late Wednesday at its suburban headquarters. Anwar's wife will be a key speaker.

"We have not issued a permit for any gathering in the city," Kuala Lumpur Police Chief Kamaruddin Ali was quoted as saying by the New Straits Times.

He said the police would act against "those intending to disrupt peace" in the capital.

US jets strike Iraqi missile sites

WASHINGTON, Apr 13: US Navy jets patrolling the "no-fly" zone over southern Iraq struck two surface-to-air missile sites 100 miles (160 kilometers) south of Baghdad on Monday, the Defence Department said, reports AP.

US Central Command at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, said the F/A-18 Hornets struck the sites and response to anti-aircraft artillery fire Monday and to Iraqi targeting of coalition planes and a subsequent SAM attack Saturday.

US authorities said the Navy planes returned safely and that assessment of battle damage is continuing.

Israel develops nuclear missile

TEL AVIV, Apr 13: Israel has developed a longer range version of its Jericho ballistic missile believed capable of carrying nuclear warheads, according to a report published Monday by a Tel Aviv institute, reports AP.

The Middle East Military Balance published annually by the Jaffee Centre for Strategic Studies at Tel Aviv University said the "third generation of the Jericho ground-to-ground missile has a range of 1,500 kilometers (900 miles)."

The report provides no additional details and cites only foreign sources for its information on the Jericho due to Israel's stringent military censorship regulations.

Rebels hijack Colombian plane, kidnap all passengers

BOGOTA, Apr 13: A Colombian airliner with 46 people aboard was hijacked on Monday by Marxist rebels who forced it to land on a remote airstrip and kidnapped all the passengers and crew, authorities said, reports Reuter.

It was the first time Colombia's guerrillas have hijacked a commercial aircraft, effectively extending their three decade old uprising into the nation's airspace.

The Dutch made Turbo Prop Fokker 50 operated by Avianca disappeared from radar screens minutes after taking off from the northeast city of Bucaramanga en route to Bogota with the hijackers apparently among the passengers.

Shortly after the plane landed on a clandestine airstrip in nearby Bolivar province, a traditional guerrilla stronghold,

gunmen wearing olive green combat fatigues swarmed around it. They bundled the passengers and five crew members into canoes on a nearby river and vanished, police said.

A confidential police document obtained by Reuters blamed the hijack and abductions on a joint commando of the National Liberation Army (ELN) and Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the hemisphere's oldest and largest rebel army.

"We reject this criminal action. We are in charge of security measures but sometimes things get out of hand and this plane has been hijacked by surprise," said Gen Rafael Hernandez, Commander of the Army's Joint Chiefs of Staff.

"Terrorist actions are easy to carry out but difficult to prevent."

The passenger list, supplied by Avianca, Colombia's largest airline, included at least two Congressmen, the president and financial director of the state-run Natural Gas Distribution Company Ecogas, an Italian citizen, a judge from the National Electoral Council and a small town mayor.

"Police arrived at the spot where the plane landed but they did not find any of the crew of passengers. It seems they have been kidnapped and this may have been carried out by guerrillas," a spokesman for the National Police said.

An unknown number of hijackers appeared to have boarded the plane in Bucaramanga as ordinary passengers, he added.

Taliban dismiss UN talks

KABUL, Apr 13: Fighting blocked a strategic crossroad in northern Afghanistan today as opposition soldiers struggled to gain territory from their Taliban enemies, who rule much of the country, an opposition spokesman said, reports AP.

Also Tuesday the Taliban dismissed United Nations criticism of their decision to put an end to UN brokered peace talks with the northern-based opposition.

Abdul Hai Mutlmain, a Taliban spokesman, called the UN talks a ploy to unseat Mullah Mohammed Omar as head of

Afghanistan.

"In our country we need one leader ... The United Nations should not be disappointed but should realise that in 90 per cent of Afghanistan we are in control and we have brought peace," he said in a satellite telephone interview from his headquarters in southern Afghanistan.

Meanwhile, several hundred kilometers northwest of Kabul in Samangan province the Taliban and the opposition waged a fierce battle at Dary Suf, a strategic crossroad that leads to the troubled central province of

Bamyan.

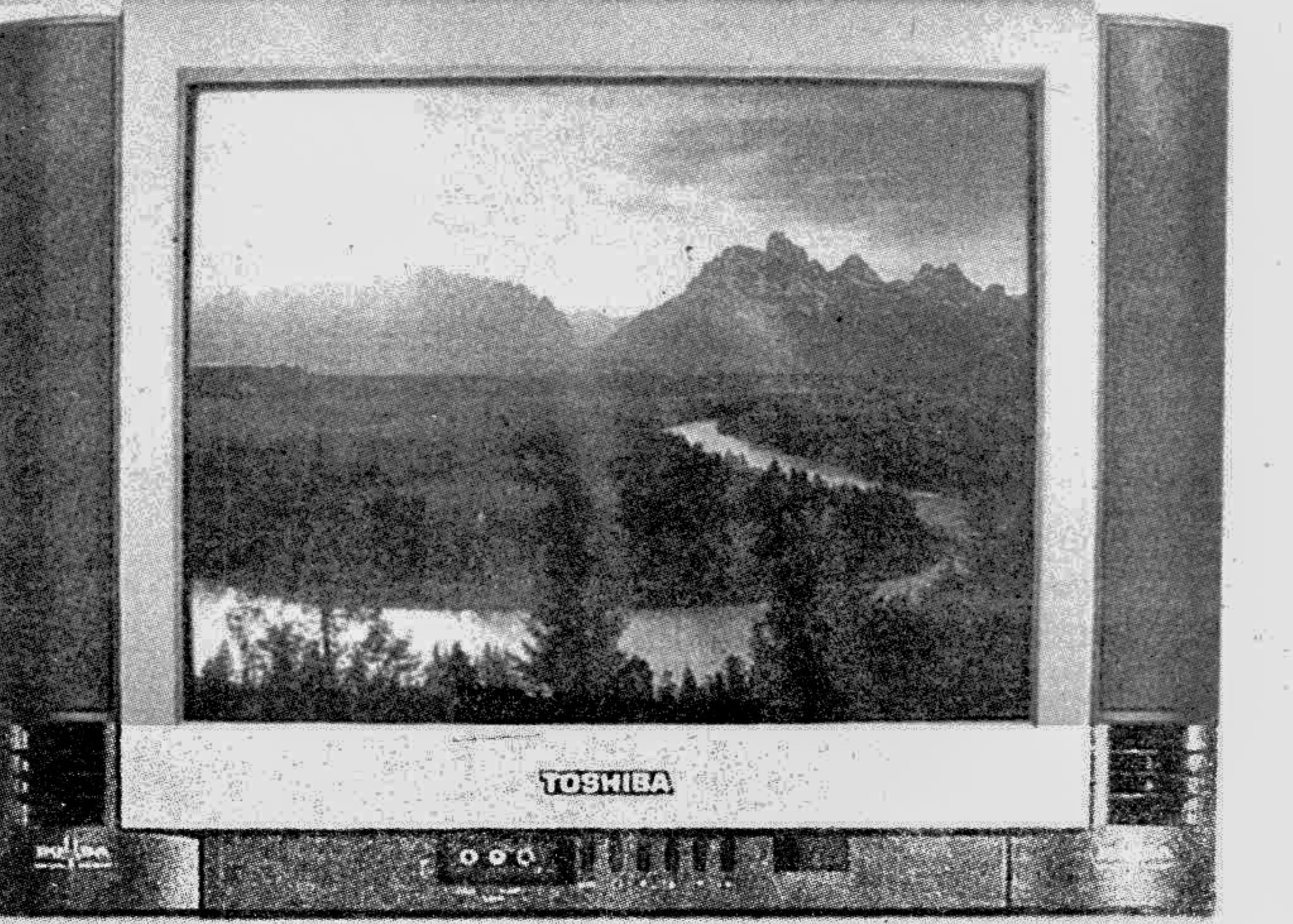
According to an opposition spokesman, who belonged to the Shi'ite Muslim group Hezbe-Wahadat, but did not want to give his name, the fighting had resulted in scores of casualties.

The Shi'ite Muslim party is trying to open the road to the central province of Bamyan, which is largely dominated by Shi'ite Muslims also known as Hazaras.

There have been unconfirmed reports of heavy fighting also in Bamyan where the Taliban are in control of most of the area.

TOSHIBA 21 INCH COLOR TV

নতুন সূর্যের ভোরে জুগে সর্বশ্রম জানাতে
 RANGS নিয়ে এলো TOSHIBA-র সর্বাধুনিক এবং সর্বশ্রেষ্ঠ
 টিভি টেকনোলজি



DYNAMIC BOMBA SOUND SYSTEM:
 Speakers are fitted into separate casing providing distortion free powerful output of 20 Watts (RMS).

SUPER BLACK PICTURE TUBE : Reducing all external light reflection contrast is improved by 20% compared to conventional tubes. You get brilliant pictures of out standing quality.

● Auto Voltage ● Hyper Tuner ● 100 Positioning System with ASM automatically scans all available channels.
 ● AV in - Out ● On timer off time ● Full multi system &