NATO spells conditions for halting attack on Y'slavia US sends 2000 more troops to Albania



British Prime Minister Tony Blair (L) shakes hands with NATO Secretary General Javier Solano (R) while US President Bill Clinton (center R rear) and French President Jacques Chirac (center L rear) give an applause, at the commemorative ceremony of the NATO Summit Friday in Washington, DC. The summit marks the 50th anniversary of the NATO alliance. - AFP photo

War fatigue dampens

NATO's birthday party

WASHINGTON, Apr 24:

NATO leaders, having declared

their determination to bomb

Yugoslav President Slobodan

Milosevic into submission,

were moving Saturday to the

key questions of the alliance's

future - and the possibility of

more conflicts like Kosovo, re-

province of Serbia, where Yu-

goslav army and special police

forces are attempting to empty

the province of its ethnic Alba-

nian majority, dominated the

first day of the three-day NATO

summit and put a damper on

what was to have been a cele-

bration of the alliance's 50

years of maintaining the peace

table today have determined

that brutality cannot prevail in

Europe," NATO Secretary-Gen-

eral Javier Solana said Friday

at the end of a long session on

Kosovo, where the allies pledged

not to allow Milosevic's "cam-

"In short, we're winning. He's

President Bill Clinton led

the 19 presidents and prime

US President Bill Clinton

speaks during the NATO's

50th Anniversary Summit

- AFP photo

Friday in Washington, DC.

paign of terror to succeed."

losing. And he knows it."

'The 19 countries around the

The crisis in the southern

ports AP.

in Europe.

BELGRADE, Apr 24: NATO launched new airstrikes Saturday against targets in northern and southern Serbia after the United State announce it was sending more troops to Albania to step up the campaign against Yugoslav forces in Kosovo, re-

ports AP. Also, American diplomats began drafting a UN Security Council resolution Friday calling for the demilitarisation of Kosovo and an international peacekeeping force. The move appeared aimed at silencing Eu-ropean critics who had complained that the alliance ignored the United Nations in launching its air campaign on March 24

Serb TV was back on the air Friday, hours after missiles slammed into its Belgrade headquarters as part of NATO's pledge to silence Milosevic's

"propaganda machine." Yugoslav officials said at least 10 people died in the missile attack on the stations, and rescuers dug through jumbled concrete and steel for 20 still missing. Pentagon officials

hinted that the station could be targeted again despite opposi-tion from international journalist groups.

In Washington, Western leaders marked the 50th anniversary of the NATO on Friday and pledged to continue the air attacks until Milosevic accepted Western terms for a peace agreement in Kosovo, including the return of ethnic Albanians driven from their homes by Serb forces.

Summit leaders set out conditions Milosevic must meet for NATO to call of the airstrikes: Stop all violence, withdraw his military and police forces from Kosovo, agree to the stationing of an international military force, permit the safe return of all refugees, and accept autonomy for the province.

"There can be no compromise on these conditions," a three-page statement said.

NATO's supreme commander in Europe, US Gen Wesley Clark, told summit leaders that Milosevic is "losing and he knows it."

Alliance jets were in action

before dawn Saturday over Yugoslavia, striking the southern city of Nis, which serves as the headquarters of the army group responsible for operations in Kosovo.

Serb authorities said NATO fired 26 missiles at Nis during a half-nour period, wounding at least one person, damaging the railway and water mains, and shaking the city with "exceptionally strong detonations." Yugoslav media said. An office building was destroyed, while several homes and the Nis Machine Industry complex were severely damaged in what the state-run Tanjug news agency said was the alliance's ninth attack on the area.

Belgrade remained under alert from late Friday to shortly after dawn Saturday. Air raid sirens also sounded late Friday in Kragujevac, Cacak and elsewhere.

Two missiles hit a fuel storage depot at Bogutovac in central Serbia, state-run media said Saturday. NATO has targeted the depot several times in its monthlong campaign.

NATO fired missiles early Saturday at "the populated part" of Novi Sad in northern Serbia, and also struck the city's oil refinery, Tanjug said. Explosions were heard in the direction of Mt Fruska Gora where a TV relay tower is located south of the

In Washington, Defence Secretary William Cohen approved plans to send 2,000 additional US troops to Albania to protect 24 US Apache attack helicopters sent there to strike Yugoslav forces in Kosovo. The deployment of the new forces will bring US troop levels in the region to 5,350, the Pentagon

Units will begin deploying next week. The Apaches arrived in Albania this week but have not yet flown in combat.

NATO's 19 members said in a statement Friday they would seek a legally binding Security Council resolution demanding the withdrawal of Serb forces. the demilitarisation of Kosovo, and the deployment of an international military force "to safeguard the swift return of all

refugees and displaced persons." Several Western diplomats at the United Nations indicated that the resolution would not be put before the Security Council until there are signs Milosevic might accept it and that Russia would not veto it.

The alliance dismissed Yugoslavia's response to a Russian initiative to end the bombing campaign. Special Russian en-voy Viktor Chernomyrdin had said Belgrade would accept a UN-controlled international presence in Kosovo, but Yugoslav Deputy Foreign Minister Nebojsa Vujovic said Milosevic would only allow an unarmed force in Kosovo - something Western leaders have rejected.

Milosevic "has to be prepared to allow a significant in-ternational NATO-led force in," Pentagon spokesman Kenneth Bacon said. "The fact that he's prepared to allow foreign troops in does not say nearly enough. He has to be prepared to take his

troops out and stop the killing." More than 600,000 refugees have flooded out of Kosovo since airstrikes began.

This file photo dated February 6 shows Indonesian Military Chief Wiranto gesturing during a press conference at the Defence Ministry in Jakarta. Indonesian Golkar Party Deputy Chairman Marzuki Darusman named Wiranto Saturday as a possible candidate for Indonesia's next President or Vice President.

- AFP photo

Indonesian elections

Military chief likely to be President or VP

SINGAPORE, Apr 24: Indonesia's military chief General Wiranto is likely to become the strife-torn country's next president or vice-president following June elections, a senior ruling party official said Saturday, reports AP.

"In fact people are looking at a formula of 'Wiranto plus' - either Wiranto as vice-president, or as president plus a non-Javanese as vice-president," said Marzuki Darusman, deputy chairman of Indonesia's ruling Golkar party.

Java is Indonesia's denselypopulated main island. Javanese migration to other islands, inhabited by other ethnic groups, has long been a source of friction in the sprawling archipelago.

A scenario with non-Javanese current President BJ 'Habibie as president, and Javanese Wiranto as vice-president "would be the first variant" likely to occur, Marzuki said.

It is widely expected that Indonesia's next government will be a coalition involving opposition parties, after rioting and protests last May ended former President Suharto's 32 years of authoritarian rule.

"Based on initial views and polling, it would seem to be the case that ... Wiranto does in fact enjoy the widest support across the board," Marzuki said.

Truck plunges into ravine in

Mexico: 46 killed SAN CRISTOBAL DE LAS CASAS, Mexico, Apr 24: A flatbed truck carrying 55 people, many of them children, plunged into a ravine in southernmost Mexico on Friday, killing at least 46 people, state

officials said, reports AP. The dead included 26 youths among them some infants state Attorney General Eduardo Montoya Lievano said by telephone from the state capital, Tuxtla Gutierrez. Nine others

were injured. They were returning from the county seat of Amatenango de la Frontera after receiving farm aid and vaccinating their small children, who mostly

died," Montoya said. Amatenango is along the border with Guatemala, about

160 km south of here. The three-ton flatbed truck ran off a gravel road at about 1:30 pm and plunged about 250

feet (75 meters) down a ravine. Montova said.

Flatbed trucks are commonly used as a form of transportation in rural Mexico.

Ex-PAEC chief dead

ISLAMABAD, Apr 24: Munir Ahmad Khan, former chairman of the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC), has died in Vienna after heart bypass surgery, officials said today, reports AFP.

Khan, who headed the PAEC for 19 years until 1991, died three days ago at the age of 73.

He played a significant role in the development of Pakistan's nuclear programme af-

ter Indian nuclear tests in 1974. Khan specialised in nuclear engineering at the International Institute of Science and Technology at Argonne, United States. He was one of the first Asian scientists appointed to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) after its inception in 1951.



Koreas open new phase

ministers through the sweetsolemn occasion of dealing with Milosevic's "deliberate policy of oppression, ethnic cleansing and violence" and commemorating the founding a half-century ago of one of the world's most successful and enlay the groundwork, reports AP.

during alliances "We meet to honour NATO's past, to chart its future, to reaffirm our mission in Kosovo, where NATO is defending our values and our vision of a Europe free, undivided and at

Toasting "NATO and its future" at a White House dinner with the other leaders Friday night, the president said the al liance is fighting "to protect the innocent families, the children and to stand for the values that we have stood for as an organisation for 50 years now."

peace," Clinton said.

Setting Kosovo aside, the leaders were moving today to approval of NATO's strategic concept, essentially the alliance's basic principles: The European Security and Defence Identity. The programme lets European countries freedom conduct operations in which the United States is not interested, but using NATO assets.

The programme includes a new Defence Capability Initiative, an attempt to head off a growing technology gap between US military forces and the rest

of the allies. The strategic concept outlines the threats of the future against which NATO will have to defend, among them regional and ethnic conflicts like Kosovo, terrorism, proliferation and weapons of mass destruction.

Also on the agenda is a programme setting out required steps for aspirant members, a sort of road map to joining NATO; the enhanced Partnership for peace programme. wherein non-member countries get involved in NATO activities which may or may not lead to membership; increased dialogue with Mediterranean countries; and creation of a new centre to deal with weapons of mass destruction.

of peace talks

GENEVA, Apr 24: North and South Korea opened a new phase in their peace talks Saturday, beginning what is supposed to be their first substantive negotiations with China and the United States after more than a year of meeting to

"We need a little bit of patience since it's a very complicated matter which has been in existence for almost half a century," said Qian Yong-nian, head of the Chinese delegation.

The four former combatants in the Korean War have said it is likely to take years to write a peace treaty to replace the temporary armistice that ended the 1950-53 conflict. It already has taken four

rounds, starting in December

1997, just to agree on how to

proceed. After the opening ses-

sion Saturday the delegates are

to decide how to put in place a permanent peace. The round is expected to conclude Tuesday. Despite the procedural agreement, there remained a key difference. North Korea continues to insist that the

talks include Pyongyang's de-

mand that the United States

to work in two committees

one to reduce tensions on the

Korean peninsula and the other

withdraw its 37,000 troops from South Korea. But Park Kun-Woo, head of the South Korean delegation, told reporters Saturday. "The only thing I can tell you for sure is that the role of the US troops on the Korean peninsula is not

on the agenda. Park did say, however, that "the disposition of all forces" could be discussed once "substantial progress" is made on the peace accord.

ISLAMABAD, Apr 24: Former prime minister Benazir Bhutto's disqualification from Pakistani politics was put of Saturday until May 17 to give her an opportunity to appeal her conviction on corruption charges to the Supreme Court.

reports AP. Benazir Bhutto's lawyers pleaded with the Chief Election Commissioner to postpone the disqualification of their embattled leader until her appeal could be heard. He agreed.

It is the job of the Chief Election Commissioner to formally disqualify any politician found guilty of a criminal offense.

But under Pakistani law a sentence is stayed until the appeal is decided. Benazir and her husband

Asif Ali Zardari, a senator in Pakistan's Upper House of Parliament, were found guilty last week of taking kickbacks from a Swiss company in exchange

for a contract. Benazir, who is in Britain, says she will appeal her conviction. The deadline to file an ap-

peal is May 17.

CEC awaits Benazir's appeal

"Her lawyers argued that if he disqualifies her now and we appeal, the order will be stayed by the Supreme Court so he should wait," explained her spokesman. Farhatullah Babar. The couple was sentenced to

five years in jail, fined 8.6 million dollars and disqualified from politics. Their combined property, estimated to be valued at 100 million dollars, also has been ordered confiscated. Zardari has been in jail

since his wife's government was abruptly dismissed from power in 1996 on charges of runaway corruption, political incompetence and sanctioning police hit squads in southern Karachi, her hometown.

Both Benazir and Zardari

face several other charges of corruption and abuse of power. Zardari was originally

jailed on charges of murder in connection with the shooting death in September 1996 of Benazir's estranged brother Murtaza, who was trying to topple his sister. Benazir's has accused Prime

Minister Nawaz Sharif's government of trying to destroy his political opposition. Benazir is leader of the opposition in Pakistan's National Assembly or lawmaking Lower House of Parliament. Pakistan's Law Minister

Khalid Anwar dismissed Benazir's allegations of bias on the part of the presiding judge and accused the former prime minister of slamming the judiciary whenever a case goes against her. The government already has

issued the warrant for her ar-

Myanmar junta blasts UN resolution on HR abuse

BANGKOK, Apr 24: Myanmar's junta today accused the United Nations of being a dupe of political activists by passing a resolution condemning the regime for widespread human rights abuses, reports AFP.

A UN Human Rights Commission resolution on Friday contained a long list of abuses. including summary executions, torture, abuse of women, systematic forced relocation and

widespread forced labour. It also said the numbers of arbitrary and politically motivated arrests and detentions without trial were increasing.

A spokesman for Yangon's military-run ruling body told AFP the UN researchers had been manipulated and the reso-

lution was "regretful." "It is quite regretful that the resolution has been passed based on politically motivated allegations from certain quarters which are deliberately neglecting and downplaying the positive developments," the spokesman said in a statement sent here.

He said the junta's "sincere

efforts" had made Myanmar, formerly known as Burma, "one of the most-peaceful and stable countries in the world today."

The UN resolution said Myanmar authorities had escalated persecution of their political opponents, chiefly Nobel Peace Prize winner and opposition party leader Aung San Suu

The resolution called for the immediate and unconditional release of political prisoners. whose detention the junta routinely denies.

It demanded the regime restore fundamental freedoms of expression, association, movement and assembly.

The Myanmar delegate to the UN said the resolution was "unacceptable" and packed with "outlandish speculation." "It is not a human rights-re-

lated document but a patchwork of imagined political "Once more the opportunity

grievances," the delegate said. to encourage the promotion of human rights in my country has been lost by futile and coun

terproductive endeavours.



United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan (C) announces an agreement between Indonesia's Foreign Minister Ali Alatas (L) and Portugal's Foreign Minister Jaime Gama (R) over the East Timor-issue Friday at UN headquarters in New York. The two foreign ministers and Annan agreed on an autonomy package for East Timor that is scheduled to be signed on May 5, at the UN in New York. - AFP photo

BRIEFLY

WW II bombs found in Canada: Residents were evacuated from their homes Friday night after two Second World War bombs were found in the Bedford Basin. AP reports from Bedford, Nova Scotia.

Construction workers on a pier spotted the bombs, believed

to weigh about 50 kilograms (110 pounds) apiece, during dredging work. "We're hoping they are duds," said Judy Pal, a spokesperson for Halifax regional police. "If it's 120 pounds, you're dealing with a fairly large explosion." policemen killed in China:

China, officials said yesterday, AFP reports from Beijing. The explosion occurred about 3:00 am Tuesday (2000 GMT Monday) in Yinchuan, the capital of the Muslim autonomous region of Ningxia, the China Police Daily said without giving

Four policemen have been killed in a bomb attack in northern

Penguins in Lankan zoo: Penguins are to be the latest attraction at the tropical Sri Lanka's National Zoological Gardens at Dehiwala, south suburb of the capital Colombo, Xinhua reports from Colombo. According to Zoo Director Senarath Gunasena, nine penguins, a gift from the UENO Zoo in Tokyo, will be imported within the next few months. Enclosures for the birds, now under construction, will cost 4 million rupees (58,000 US dollars)



Students wave Malaysian flags as Royal Guards on horses parade in the city centre during a farewell ceremony for King Tuanku Ja'afar Saturday in Kuala Lumpur. The ceremony, which marked the end of Ja'afar's five-year term as Malaysia's King, ended with Tuanku Ja'afar boarding the train back to his southern home state of Negri Sembilan. — AFP photo

A volunteer helps a victim in a hospital Saturday, following one of several hand grenade explosions which injured 15 people, including twelve Afghan teenagers, in suspected rival sectarian attacks in the violence-plagued city of Karachi. — AFP photo

Blast in Karachi mosque

KARACHI, Apr 24: Unidenti-fied men hurled a hand grenade at a Sunni Muslim mosque in the southern port city of Karachi Saturday, wounding at least 14 devotees, police said, reports AP.

The victims, including several children, were asleep in the mosque in a central neighbourhood of Karachi when the assailants tossed the grenade inside the building, they said. Two of the wounded were

said to be in critical condition. No group has claimed responsibility for the attack however it is believed to have been carried out by militant rival Shiite Muslims.

Radicals belonging to both sects have been battling each other in recent months in an escalating conflict that has left scores of people dead. While most of the violence

had been restricted to the eastern Punjab province, Karachi, the capital of southern Sindh province occasionally feels the brunt of the sectarian strife.

10 Tamil rebels killed in Lanka COLOMBO, Apr 24: Ten

Tamil guerillas were killed by government troops in fresh skirmishes in northern Sri Lanka, the Ministry of Defence said Saturday, reports AP. Soldiers attacked a group of

rebels Friday in Tadduvankoddi, about 275 kilometers (170 miles) north of the capital. Colombo, killing five of the guerillas, a ministry statement

In a separate confrontation four more rebels died.

Indonesia, Portugal reach agreement on East Timor The dispute over East Timor UNITED NATIONS, Apr 24: told a news conference. The foreign ministers of In-He hoped that Indonesia would "effectively carry out its donesia and Portugal completed an agreement on Friday that

paves the way for 800,000 people in East Timor to vote on their future, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan announced, reports Reuters. He said the pact would be signed on May 5 because the Indonesian government needed to approve sections of the accord

former Portuguese colony. "I am pleased to inform you that after a very productive and successful round of meetings in which a lot of ground was covered, we have an agreement between the Republic of Indonesia and the Republic of Portugal on the question of East Timor," he

"The United States is iso-

53-member UN body in Geneva

on Friday to quash all debate

on the US resolution critical of

China. The vote on the motion

was 22 to 17, with 14 absten-

European Union and other tra-

Sun noted that not even the

lution to end in failure."

tions.

on security and on how a vote

would be held in the disputed

responsibility for law and order and the protection of civilians" in East Timor where fighting has intensified since Indonesia, in a surprise policy switch, in January offered independence

to the territory. As issue is a wide-ranging autonomy package for East Timor that has been racked by sporadic violence since Indonesia invaded and occupied it in 1975 and annexed it a year later, a move not recognised by most of the world.

The United Nations is to put the autonomy plan to a direct vote in July or early August. diplomats said. If the plan is rejected Indonesia promised to reverse its annexation.

has earned Jakarta international notoriety for its army's harsh rule of 800,000 Timorese, some 200,000 of which have died in fighting, disease or starvation since 1975.

Annan, in explaining the delay until May, said there were two new documents presented to the delegations for the first time this week on "security arrangements for the peaceful implementation of the popular consultation in East Timor and the modalities for the consulta-

An AFP report from Lisbon adds: The former governor of East Timor, Mario Carascalao, who was an adviser to Indonesian President Yussuf Habibie, has fled to the Portuguese terri-tory of Macao, the Portuguese news agency Lusa reported.

US censure motion against China on HR abuse failed

pursue hegemonism and power

BEIJING. Apr 24: Beijing ditional US allies had co-sponthumbed its nose at Washington sored the US motion. Poland today after the UN Commission co-sponsored it at the last on Human Rights shelved a US minute. "The result again demonresolution criticising China's human rights record, reports strated that to interfere in other Reuter. countries' internal affairs and

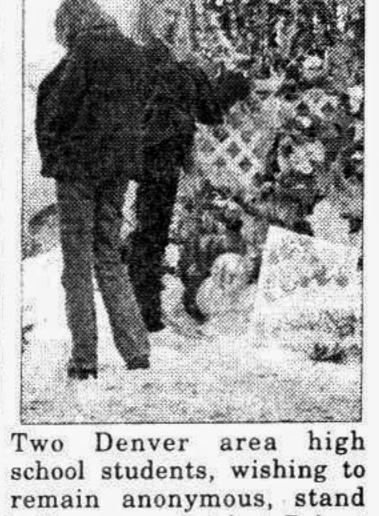
politics under the pretext of lated in this anti-China farce." Foreign Ministry spokesman human rights could not win Sun Yuxi told reporters. "It's popular support," Sun said. natural for the anti-China reso-"Confrontation is not the way out," he said. "The move Beijing won enough support for a "no action motion" in the was against the current trend in the international human rights

arena to advocate dialogue and oppose confrontation. China has escaped Western attempts to censure it at the UN body every year since 1990, the first session that followed the student killings at Beijing's Tiananmen Square in June

Sun defended China's human rights record, saying Beijing has always attached importance to human rights and made unswerving efforts to promote and improve the human rights situation. But the United States ig-

nored improvements in China's human rights record and again tabled an anti-Beijing resolution to defame China's international image due to "domestic political needs and partisan struggle", Sun said.

The United States, in a statement issued in Geneva by Assistant Secretary of State Harold Hongju Koh, said it was "deeply disappointed" with the



before a memorial at Robert F. Clement Park next to Columbine High School Saturday in Littleton. — AFP photo