

BRIEFLY

Delhi fire death toll 44: The death toll from a New Delhi market fire rose to 44 today and several other victims were in critical condition, the Press Trust of India said, AFP reports from New Delhi.

US sends back 79 Cubans: The United States returned to Cuba 79 people who attempted to reach Florida by sea in the largest repatriation of illegal immigrants from the communist-led nation in four years, officials said, AFP reports from Havana.

800 arrested in Chennai: Over 800 persons, many of them belonging to the Tamil Nadu Muslim Munnetra Kazhagam, had been taken into preventive custody since Monday in the wake of discovery of five explosive devices in various parts of the state, police said, AFP reports from Chennai.

Fresh violence flares up Kuki rebels gun down eight Naga villagers

IMPHAL, Jun 2: In a fresh outbreak of ethnic violence suspected Kuki militants gunned down eight Naga villagers and injured another at Thanjingpokpi area, about 25 kms east of here this morning, official sources said, reports PTI.

Tamil Tigers deny plot to assassinate Sonia Gandhi

COLOMBO, June 2: Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger rebels who have been blamed for the assassination of former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi Wednesday denied allegations that they planned to kill his widow, reports AFP.

200 dead in Nigerian oil region, say reports

LAGOS, June 2: Up to 200 people are feared dead in ongoing clashes in the oil-producing Niger delta region of southern Nigeria, press reports said Wednesday, reports AFP.

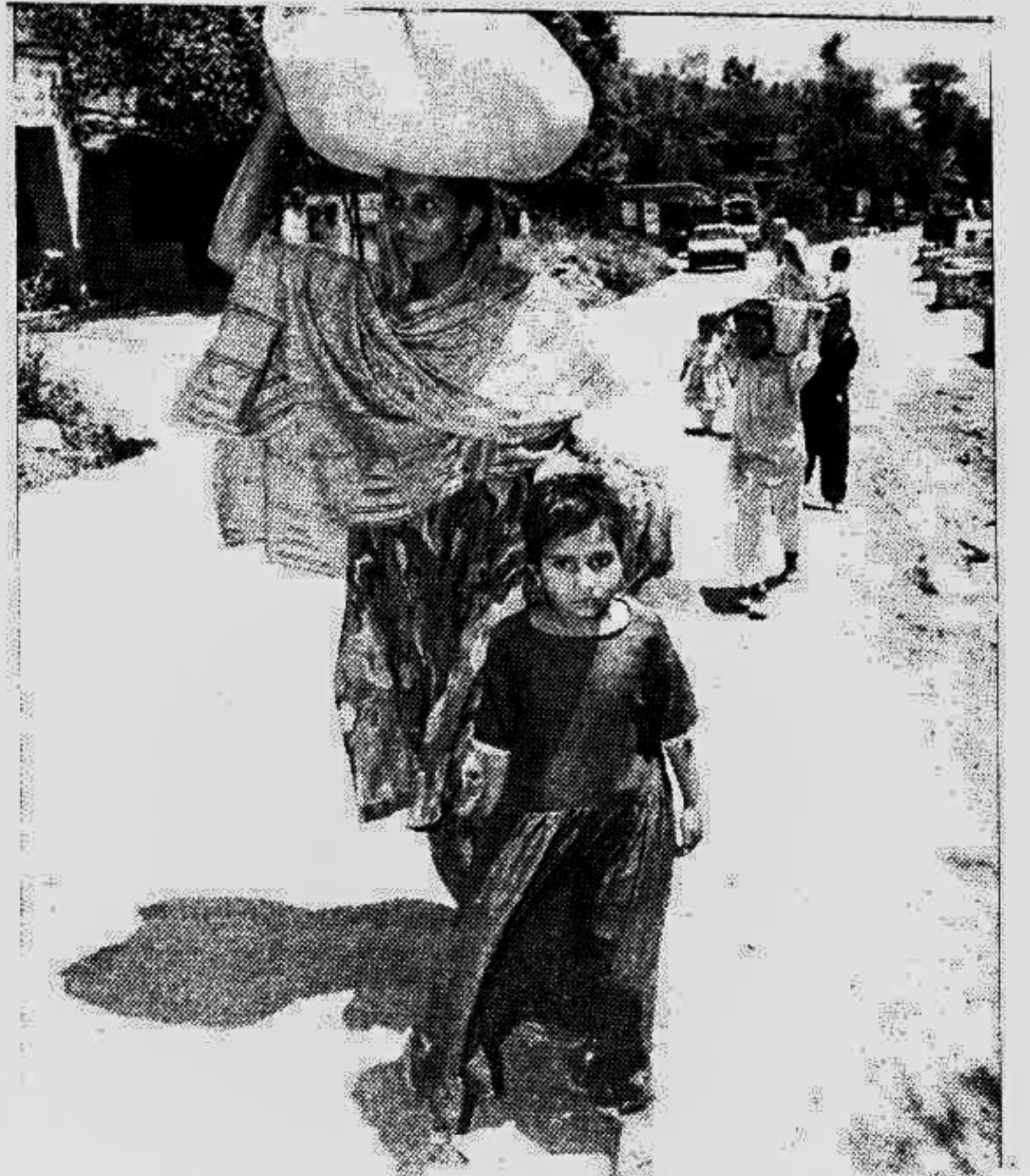
Clinton orders probe into video games' link to violence

WASHINGTON, June 2: President Bill Clinton, brandishing a cartoonish magazine ad for a video game "more fun than shooting your neighbour's cat," ordered a government investigation into whether — and how — the entertainment business markets violence to children, reports AP.

Heavy artillery fighting between India, Pakistan troops

SRINAGAR, India, June 2: Heavy artillery fighting raged between Indian and Pakistani troops in Kashmir today, as India kept up air strikes to oust Islamic guerrillas occupying key hills, officials said, reports AFP.

who New Delhi says include Pakistani soldiers. The first air strikes were the first since a separatist campaign began in Kashmir in 1989.



A mother with her children flees the village of Samahni, at Line of Control in Pakistan-held Kashmir on Tuesday as the fighting between Pakistan and Indian troops continues.



South Africans wait patiently in the queue at the polling station in Bellville, Cape Town, yesterday to vote in the country's second fully democratic general elections. President Nelson Mandela was among the first South Africans to vote in the country's second democratic elections.

2 killed as S Africans go to polls

JOHANNESBURG, June 2: Two people were killed and two wounded in separate incidents in black townships of the KwaZulu-Natal flashpoint of Richmond, police reported Wednesday as South Africans went to the polls, reports AFP.

Russian, EU envoys to meet Milosevic on peace plan

BELGRADE, June 2: Senior Russian and European Union envoys head for Belgrade on Wednesday to hear whether President Slobodan Milosevic accepts a Western peace plan for Kosovo amid Serb accusations that NATO is trying to torpedo the talks by intensifying airstrikes, reports AP.

China issues new warning ahead of Tiananmen anniversary

BEIJING, June 2: Two days ahead of the 10th anniversary of the Tiananmen massacre, China issued a new warning Wednesday against destabilisation by "hostile forces," reports AFP.



An Indonesian policeman stands by a burning flag of the United Development Party (PPP) as security forces intervened to break up a skirmish between supporters of rival political parties in Yogyakarta on Tuesday. Violence erupted when PPP supporters confronted Indonesian Democratic Party for Struggle (PDI-S) campaigners from parading through the streets of this central Java town on their allocated campaign day.

Sinn Fein wins deputy mayor's post

BELFAST, June 2: The IRA-linked Sinn Fein party won the deputy mayor's post in Belfast City Council for the first time in history Tuesday, reflecting the rising Catholic population in the Northern Ireland capital, reports AP.

Suharto files defamation suit against Time

JAKARTA, June 2: Former Indonesian president Suharto on Wednesday filed a criminal defamation suit against Time magazine for a report alleging he had stashed some nine billion dollars in a foreign bank, reports AFP.

ROK, DPRK to resume talks

SEOUL, June 2: South and North Korea have agreed in principle to resume high-level talks over fertilizer aid for the famine-stricken North and the return of families separated since the end of the Korean War in 1953, reports AFP.

US top buyer of Iraqi oil

UNITED NATIONS, June 2: The United States bought more Iraqi oil in the last six months under the UN humanitarian programme than all of Europe combined, the United Nations said, reports AP.