

## Pakistan frees Indian pilot

## India steps up air, ground attacks

DRAS, India, June 4: Indian air and ground offensives intensified against armed intruders in Kashmir Friday, as the prospects of high-level talks with Pakistan next week failed to arouse optimism about an early end to the Himalayan conflagration, reports AP.

In New Delhi, India weighed a suggestion by Pakistan Foreign Minister Sartaj Aziz visit the India capital Monday for talks to defuse the crisis between the two nuclear-armed neighbours.

The political atmosphere was further eased by the release of an Indian pilot Thursday whose fighter jet went down inside Pakistan a week earlier.

In Islamabad, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) handed over Indian fighter pilot K Nachiketa to New Delhi's diplomatic mission overnight after Pakistani authorities released him, the ICRC said today.

Diplomatic sources said Flight Lieutenant K Nachiketa, who was captured after his MiG fighter jet was shot down on May 27, was still at the Indian mission in Islamabad.

Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said he had ordered Nachiketa's release as a gesture of goodwill to ease border tensions with India in the disputed Kashmir region.

In Kashmir, there was no reflection of what Prime Minister

Nawaz Sharif called peace gestures from Pakistan.

Indian air force jets struck guerrilla positions for the 10th straight day, hitting targets on white-capped peaks overlooking an army brigade headquarters near Dras. The crackle of light machine guns could clearly be heard from peaks five kilometers (three miles) away



Pakistani foreign office spokesman Tariq Atlat (R) stops reporters from asking direct questions about Indian fighter pilot Flight Lieutenant K. Nachiketa (L), in Islamabad on Thursday.

where Indian ground forces were assaulting bunkers on higher ground.

The camp itself took heavy shelling overnight, that smashed barracks and left tin-sheet constructions peppered with shrapnel holes. Helicopters continued to land in the morning, although the helipad was damaged by shellfire.

A front-line army commander, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Indian artillery guns were moving forward to get clearer shots of the infiltrators' positions, then retreating behind shelter after a few rounds.

He indicated India's casualties were far higher than the official figure of 48 dead and 12 missing released by military spokesmen Thursday at a formal briefing in New Delhi.

Meanwhile, Kashmiri rebels accused India Friday of using napalm and cluster bombs against their fighters entrenched in the icy Himalayan peaks on India's side of the disputed Kashmir border.

Indian fighter jets, flying at high altitudes, were dropping cluster and napalm bombs, but were missing their targets, said a United Jihad Council spokesman Umar Javed.

"They are flying too high to hit accurately," he said. Javed also accused the Indian military of using chemical weapons in their campaign, which was into its 10th day Friday.

The United Jihad Council, representing 14 Kashmiri rebel groups, including the four main groups said to be fighting in the Kargil battle zone of Indian-held Kashmir.

There was no immediate independent confirmation of the United Jihad Council's claim.

## India to build advance heavy water reactor

PUNE, June 4: India would soon be building an advance heavy water reactor, the only one of its kind in the world, using thorium as nuclear fuel, director of Barc Dr Anil Kakodkar said yesterday, reports PTI.

Talking to newsmen at a National Defence Academy (NDA) at Khadakwasala here, he said the feasibility design of the reactor is complete and "within the next few years we should be in a position to construct it."

He said when constructed this reactor would be one of the most innovative one in the world in terms of safety as well as operator friendliness.

Kakodkar said utilisation of thorium is the ultimate answer to India's nuclear technology.

He said "now we are able to use thorium in thermal reactors in the laboratory stage where we are operating 30 KV of nuclear thermal reactor".

On the standard of India compared to the developed countries in terms of nuclear technology, Kakodkar said, "we have the capacity of robust system for thermonuclear device, sub-kilowatt device and standard fission device. So we can easily build a minimum credible nuclear deterrent," he added.

## Ocalan trial adjourned

IMRALLI, Turkey, June 4: The trial of Kurdish rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan was adjourned until Tuesday to give prosecutors time to prepare their final summing up of the charges, Anadolu news agency reported Friday, reports AFP.

The decision was announced by presiding judge, Mehmet Turgut Okayay, on the fifth day of the trial.

The case opened Monday in a specially-built courtroom on the prison island of Imralli.

Ocalan is on trial for his life on charges of treason, separatism and the murder of thousands of civilians in attacks by his Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) during its 15-year armed struggle for Kurdish self-rule in southeastern Anatolia.

## 12 killed in Indian train crash

HYDERABAD, June 4: At least 12 people were killed and 60 injured Friday when more than one dozen coaches of a speeding express train crashed out of the railroad tracks near the southern Indian city of Warangal, railroad officials said, reports AP.

The Godavari Express was headed from the coastal city of Vishakhapatnam to Secunderabad, about 750 kilometers away, when the accident occurred, the officials said. Secunderabad is adjacent to Hyderabad, capital of the southern Andhra Pradesh state.

Details were not immediately available and Indian Railways officials were rushing rescuers to the accident site, 100 kilometers (60 miles) south of Secunderabad. Most passengers in the cars were sleeping when the accident occurred.

## Polls begin in India's Goa state

PANAJI, India, June 4: India's western state of Goa began voting today to choose a provincial government, the first of nine states holding elections this year, reports Reuter.

"Polling is peaceful... People are coming to vote as the weather is fine," Goa's chief electoral officer K K Sharma told Reuters.

The election for 40 members to the Goa legislative assembly is the first test of popularity for political parties since Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee lost a confidence vote in April and parliament was dissolved.

India's general elections are due in September or October. Sharma said police and para-military forces were deployed across Goa with at least two guards outside each polling booth. The state has nearly one million voters.

Declared sensitive and citizens in three constituencies have been told to surrender their arms, he said.



An Indonesian soldier opens fire on a crowd yesterday. Anti-riot troops fired warning shots after a crowd began ripping up flags of Indonesia's ruling Golkar party. They aimed at the crowd once people started to throw rocks at the police.

## Troops open fire in Jakarta during polls campaign

JAKARTA, June 4: Anti-riot troops fired shots at a crowd ripping up flags of Indonesia's ruling Golkar party in Jakarta Friday, an AFP photographer said.

The state Radio Republic Indonesia said five people had been injured, but two hospitals contacted by AFP said they had not received any casualties.

Some 200 anti-riot troops opened fire in the air in front of a crowd of less than 1,000 people who had been ripping up party symbols along the roadside.

When the crowd started throwing rocks at the troops, they then fired towards the group, the AFP photographer said.

Police said one motorcycle was burned by the crowd, but declined to give further details.

A witness said another motorcycle and a car were damaged by mobs.

The shooting came on the last day of the largely peaceful 17-day campaign period before general elections Monday, the first since the fall of former president Suharto in May of last year amid widespread rioting.

Suharto was the patron of Golkar, whose members voted him back into power for seven consecutive terms. Golkar was one of only three official parties allowed under Suharto.

The incident occurred as a convoy of Golkar supporters was heading for a rally to be addressed by party chief and former state secretary Akbar Tanjung in northern Sumatra, and had to pass by the Senen commercial area, the radio said.

Crowds on the street in Senen began pelting the convoy with rocks and tore up the flags and symbols flying from the cars.

A witness said after the shooting the area was heavily patrolled by troops, and crowds were still milling about on the streets.

Jakarta police Major General Nugroho Jayusman was on site trying to calm the crowd and calling for them to disperse.

In another incident in central Jakarta outside the Sahid Jaya Hotel, supporters of Golkar and the Indonesian United Democracy Party (PUDI) scuffled, a hotel staff member said. But it was unknown who

started the trouble. One PUDI supporter was slightly injured on his hand and taken to the hotel medical centre for treatment.

In a third incident in the Bendungan Hilir area, south of the hotel, people pelted another passing Golkar convoy, but security forces stepped in swiftly to quell any trouble.

Golkar has kept a low-profile during the campaign period, and is seeking to distance itself from the tarnished legacy of Suharto's iron-fisted 32-year rule.

Its rallies and supporters have been attacked, heckled and harassed during the past 16 days of campaigns in several Indonesian towns, including in the capital.

Some 48 parties are contesting the polls, and some of the bigger ones have drawn thousands of supporters onto the streets.

On Thursday, campaigning by the Indonesian Democracy Party-Struggle (PDIP) party led by Megawati Sukarnoputri attracted hundreds of thousands of people in a boisterous show of support which ended without incident.

## NATO bombs Yugoslavia despite approval of peace plan

BELGRADE, June 4: NATO warplanes kept up air strikes over Yugoslavia Friday despite Belgrade's acceptance of a deal to stop the war in Kosovo, as Group of Eight experts completed plans for the next stage in the peace process, reports AFP.

The deal, drawn up by the seven leading industrialised countries and Russia, requires that a Serb troop withdrawal precede any pause in the 10-week-old NATO air campaign.

But Russian President Boris Yeltsin said Friday he saw no reason to continue the strikes, Interfax reported.

"There are no reasons to continue NATO's aggression against Yugoslavia," Yeltsin

was quoted as saying in a telephone conversation with German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, Germany is current chair of the European Union and hosting the two-day EU summit in Cologne.

US President Bill Clinton, however, insisted NATO would keep up pressure. "Until Serb forces begin a verifiable withdrawal from Kosovo, we will continue to pursue diplomacy, but we will also continue the military effort that has brought us to this point."

Under the peace plan, the Serb troop withdrawal would be followed by the deployment of a peacekeeping force, the return of Kosovo refugees and the establishment of an interim administration.

The Serbian parliament approved the deal Thursday.

On Friday, NATO planes pounded Belgrade's northwest suburb of Batanjica in an hour-long alert in the capital. Three missiles were dropped on the Batanjica area, where a military airfield is located and which has been a regular NATO target.

In Brussels, NATO confirmed it had kept up strikes on Serb forces in Kosovo over the past 24 hours but had mounted fewer attacks in the rest of Serbia.

In Kosovo, allied aircraft struck 21 pieces of artillery, 30 mortar positions, four tanks, 10 armoured personnel carriers, eight anti-aircraft artillery pieces and other military vehicles," said the NATO statement.

NATO planes, it said, flew a total of 610 missions in the past 24 hours and made 234 bombing runs, compared with 644 and 239 respectively in the preceding 24 hours.

The European Union's envoy on Kosovo, Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari, meanwhile said that once a verifiable Serb withdrawal from Kosovo begins, the air attacks could end "in days rather than weeks."

Diplomats in Brussels said Yugoslav military officials had already telephoned NATO's military headquarters at Mons, Belgium, to discuss implementation of the Kosovo peace plan.

## BRIEFLY

## Bid to attack US consulate:

Turkish police killed two members of a radical leftist group overnight in a shoot-out as the pair were preparing an attack on the United States' Istanbul consulate, state-run Anatolian news agency said today. Reuter reports from Istanbul.

It said two pistols and a shoulder-held anti-tank rocket launcher had been found on the pair who died in a clash with police in the Tepebasi area of the city, close to the US consulate. The agency gave no details of which of the many shadowy armed far-left groups operating in Turkey's big cities planned to carry out the attack.

## US fighter aircraft crashes:

A US Harrier AV-8B fighter aircraft crashed at the US Kadena air base in Okinawa, southern Japan, on Friday, but the pilot ejected safely, a spokesman at the base said, AFP reports from Tokyo.

The US Marine fighter crashed around 1.30 PM (0330 GMT) within the grounds of the base, and the pilot parachuted to safety, the spokesman said. "The accident is now under investigation," he said. The fighter burst into flames, but the fire was put under control 30 minutes later, according to the Kyodo News Agency.

## Queen Noor honoured:

Jordan's Queen Noor was honoured by UNICEF on Thursday for her work in ridding the world of landmines. Reuter reports from Boston.

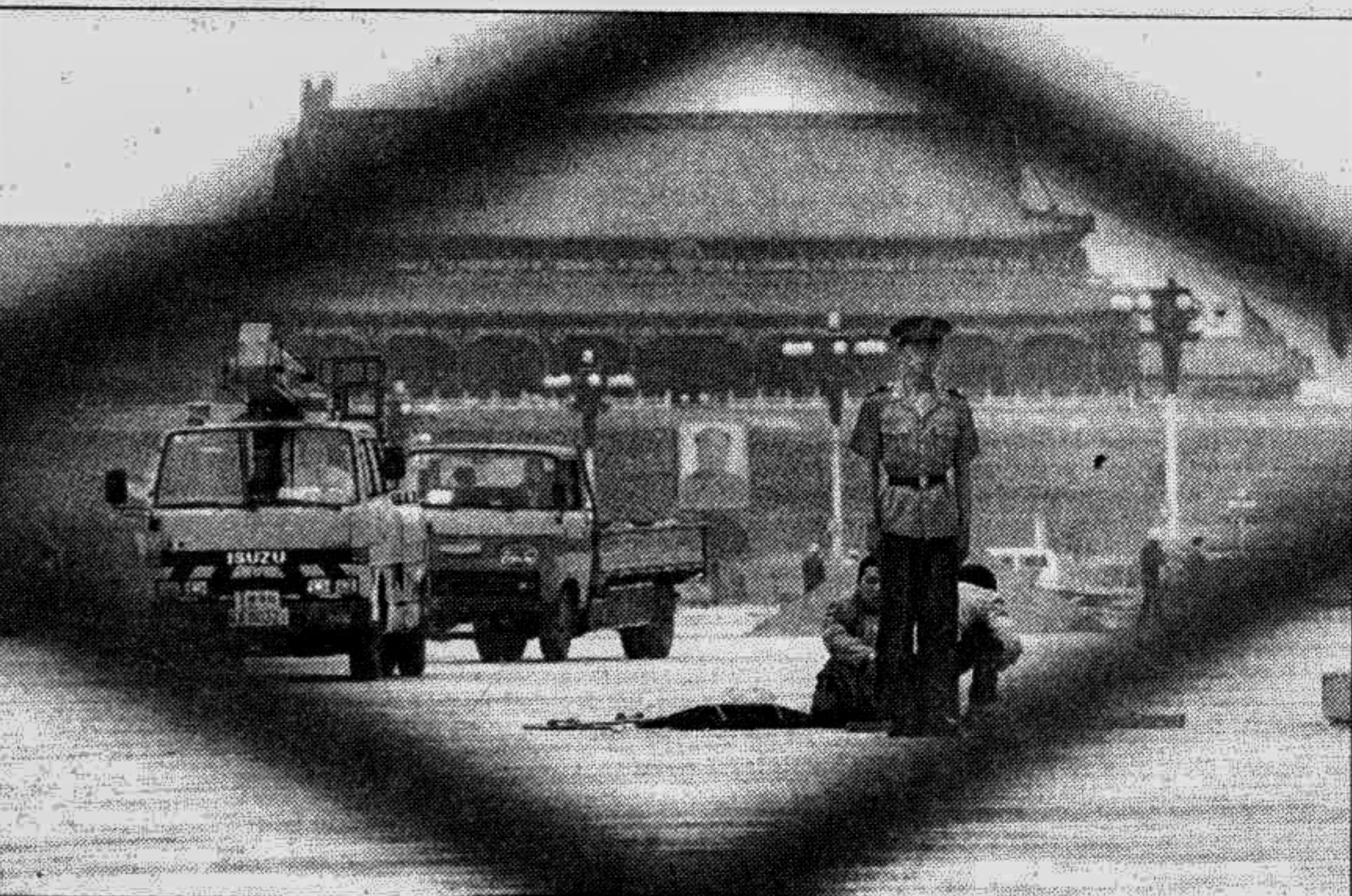
Like Britain's late Princess Diana, the American-born Queen Noor has become a patron of both the International Campaign to Ban Landmines and the US-based Landmine Survivors Network. Before the United Nations Children's Fund ceremony in Boston, Queen Noor told reporters that the Middle East has "perhaps half the landmines in place" in the world.

## Strong quake shakes Taiwan:

A strong earthquake rattled Taipei and other parts of northern Taiwan early Friday, but no injuries or damage were reported, the Central Weather Bureau said, AP reports from Taipei.

The epicenter of the earthquake with a magnitude of 5.8 was located in the Pacific Ocean, 123 kilometers southeast of Taipei, the bureau's Seismology Center reported. The quake shook buildings in Taipei for about a minute after it struck at 12.11 am (16.11 GMT Thursday).

## China clamps down on activists as world remembers Tiananmen massacre



A military policeman stands guard near a fence in the closed-off Tiananmen Square in Beijing yesterday, which is still under renovation.

BEIJING, June 4: Chinese authorities enforced tight security Friday for the 10th anniversary of the crackdown on pro-democracy protesters in Tiananmen Square, but could not prevent international attention from returning to the bloodshed, reports AFP.

Most of the square was closed off for repairs, and police observed passers-by with binoculars from the tops of surrounding buildings.

A few isolated attempts at protest appeared through the day to crack the veneer of normality, but were quickly suppressed.

A middle-aged man wearing a black armband rode a bicycle past the portrait of Mao Zedong on the north side of the square, unnoticed by security officers.

But a man handing out leaflets was pounced on quickly by dozens of police who chased him across the main boulevard running past the square, before sprinting him away in a car and confiscating his satchel.

Several foreign journalists were also detained briefly after a man unfolded an umbrella with slogans written on it in front of Mao's portrait.

An estimated 42 pro-democ-

racy activists were in detention or under house arrest in major Chinese cities, dissident sources said.

In a park in the eastern city of Hangzhou, a man with a beard and ponytail in his late thirties began speaking, addressing a crowd of 15 to 20 people before being taken away by uniformed and plainclothes police.

In Tiananmen, pneumatic drills and construction workers replaced the tanks and soldiers who occupied the vast square on June 4, 1989.

But the tightened security and fences which surround construction work on the square could not prevent the attention of people overseas from returning to the crackdown.

In the United States, dissident groups launched commemorative activities and published eyewitness accounts of the massacre.

Wang Dan, a former student leader during the protests now based in New York, said he had collected more than 100,000 signatures in a petition calling on China to overturn its official verdict.

China has repeatedly said its

description of the six weeks of peaceful student-led protests as "counter-revolutionary rebellion" is the correct one and will not change.

Around 1,000 signatures were received from mainland China via the Internet, said the statement from Wang, who was prevented from attending a two-day forum on the anniversary in Macau because Taiwan-based Eva Air cancelled his reservation, organisers said.

In Hong Kong, where more than one million people took to the streets in protest at the killings in 1989, thousands were expected at a candlelit vigil in the former British colony which returned to Chinese rule in 1997.

A Taiwan newspaper published a report saying 2,600 people died and 7,000 people were injured in the massacre, citing Chinese Red Cross figures obtained by the US government.

Beijing authorities have never released an official casualty toll.

The China Times quoted declassified US documents as saying that students saw 11 demonstrators crushed to death by tanks.

## Gunman kills four in US supermarket

LAS VEGAS, June 4: A man dressed in camouflage blasted away with a pump-action shotgun as he roamed through a supermarket before sunrise, killing four employees and critically wounding one, reports AP.

Police arrested the gunman in the parking lot Thursday after talking him out of killing himself.

Officers were alerted by a 911 call from inside the Albertsons supermarket as shots were being fired. They confronted a man with a goatee and shaved head who walked out the door with a shotgun.

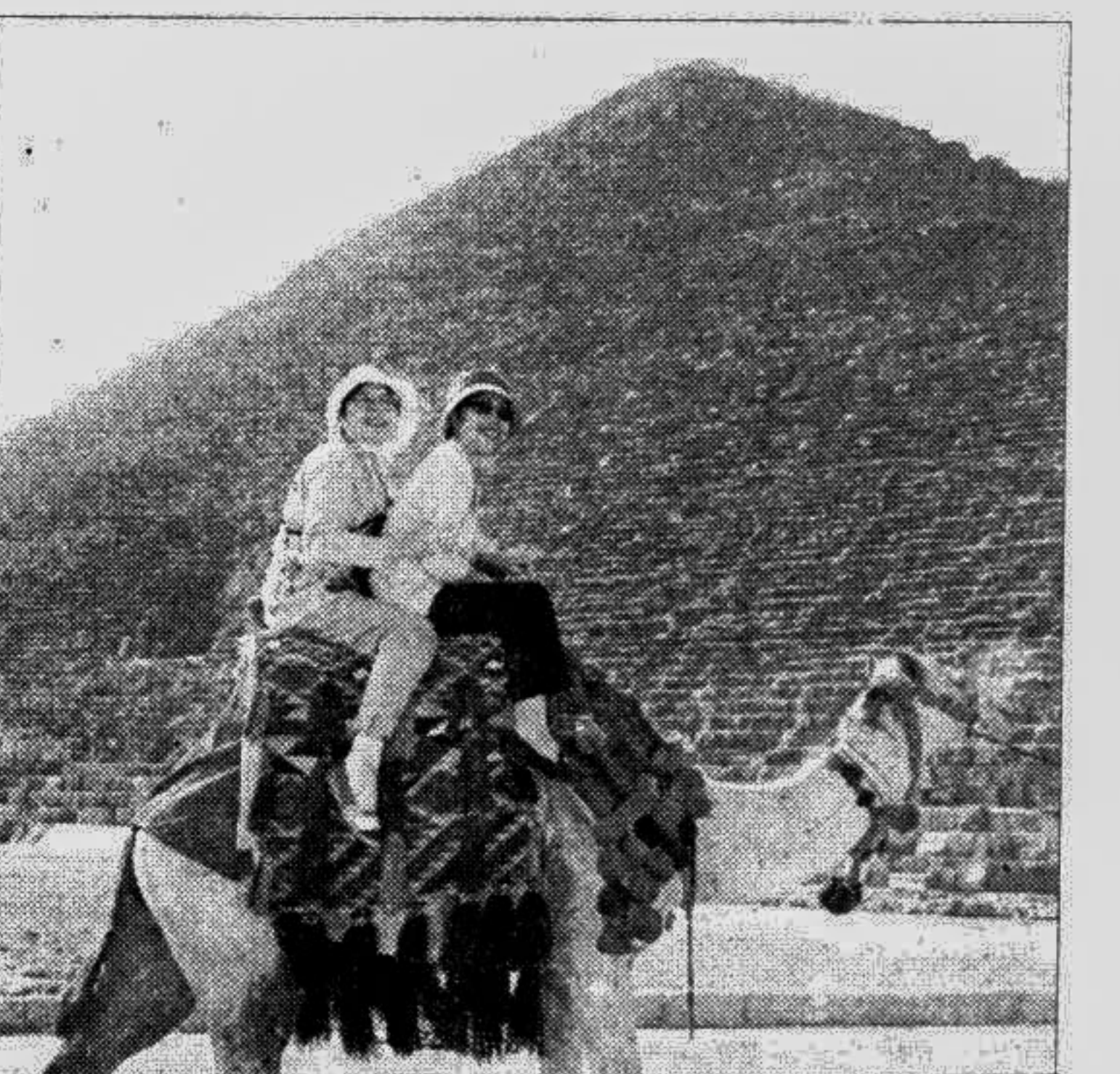
He placed the gun to his head and officers were able to talk him into surrendering. "Let

Rick Alba said. The victims were all shot at point-blank range. Officer Steve Meriwether said. Some were chased.

Zane Floyd, 23, who was honorably discharged from the Marines at Camp Pendleton, California, last July, was arrested for investigation of murder. He worked as a security guard and part-time as a bouncer at a bar.

Investigators were baffled as to what triggered the rampage, Alba said.

Police have not found any connection between Floyd and the victims — three men and a woman — and there was no indication he had any run-ins at the store.



Japanese tourists, riding a camel, pass on Wednesday in front of the Pyramid of Cheops, the largest of the famous trio on a desert plateau outside Cairo. The pyramid of Cheops reopened to tourists after more than a year of repair work and in the time for millennium celebrations.

— AFP photo