

# Int'l acclaim for E Timor vote

DILI, East Timor, Aug 31 : The reported deaths of three United Nations workers and a militia siege reignited tensions Tuesday after the international acclaim for East Timor's landmark autonomy vote, reports AFP.

New violence blamed on pro-Indonesian groups underlined fears that Monday's ballot will not herald a peaceful new beginning for East Timor after 24 years of often brutal Indonesian rule.

Former Australian deputy prime minister Tim Fischer said the killings took place during a militia siege of a UN office in Ermera district, where a local poll worker was stabbed to death after polls closed Monday.

"I was told by a UNAMET (United Nations Mission in East Timor) source that the three were killed just near Ermera," Fischer, who is head of the Australian government delegation for East Timor's vote, told AFP.

But a duty policeman in Ermera town denied anyone there

had been any deaths since Monday's murder of a UNAMET poll worker, who was set upon by a mob accusing him of bias after polls had closed.

"It is not true, the only UN local staffer killed was in Aatsabe yesterday," said the policeman. An estimated 140 people, including UN staff, were blockaded by militiamen at their compound in the Ermera town of Gleno, 60 km southwest of the territory's capital Dili.

The bad news is there is a continuing standoff. Some progress has been made. The UN has had some access this afternoon. It continues to unfold and points to the tension that has sadly returned to East Timor," Fischer told Australia's ABC radio.

An independent source told AFP that Indonesian police present appeared powerless to defuse the situation.

Following the murder of the UNAMET assistant at Aatsabe, the first UN worker to die in East Timor, the latest deaths threatened to overshadow praise of the overwhelming

turnout. Ballot boxes were flown by helicopters to Dili for central collation. The final results are expected around next Tuesday.

East Timor, invaded by Indonesia in 1975, is widely expected to reject autonomy and take its first strides toward independence.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan paid tribute to the Indonesian police in East Timor despite the poll worker's death.

The United States, Australia and other nations urged all sides to accept the result of the vote, which went ahead after months of violence and intimidation largely blamed on pro-Indonesian militias.

Dili remained tense after the vote, with Aitarak militiamen patrolling Comoro airport and residents heading back to safety in the hills surrounding the capital after heading down to vote.

Aitarak commander Eurico Guterres said his members were there to block any East Timorese leaders from fleeing. The militia leader added that

## Fresh militia attacks, intimidation

he would attend a planned meeting of 10 pro-Indonesian and 10 pro-independence leaders on Tuesday, organised by the United Nations to discuss disarmament and reconciliation.

Fresh militia intimidation targeting local United Nations staff was reported Tuesday, after a poll worker was murdered, as fearful East Timorese headed back to safety in the hills.

A pro-Indonesian militia attack on two student activists underlined fears that Monday's landmark autonomy ballot does not herald a peaceful new beginning for East Timor after 24 years of often brutal Indonesian rule.

**Vote was fair : Indonesian FM**

Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas said Tuesday that East Timor's UN-organised self-determination vote had been conducted fairly.

"I am very encouraged and

pleased to say that (the vote) constitutes indeed a free and peaceful, and therefore fair execution, of the consultation," Alatas told journalists after meeting President B.J. Habibie.

**98.6 pc turnout : UN**

Meanwhile, there was a "massive" 98.6 percent turnout for East Timor's self-determination vote, the United Nations announced Tuesday.

Carina Perelli, the head of the UN electoral advisory body which ran Monday's vote on whether the territory wanted to remain under Indonesian rule, said 432,287 people cast ballots.

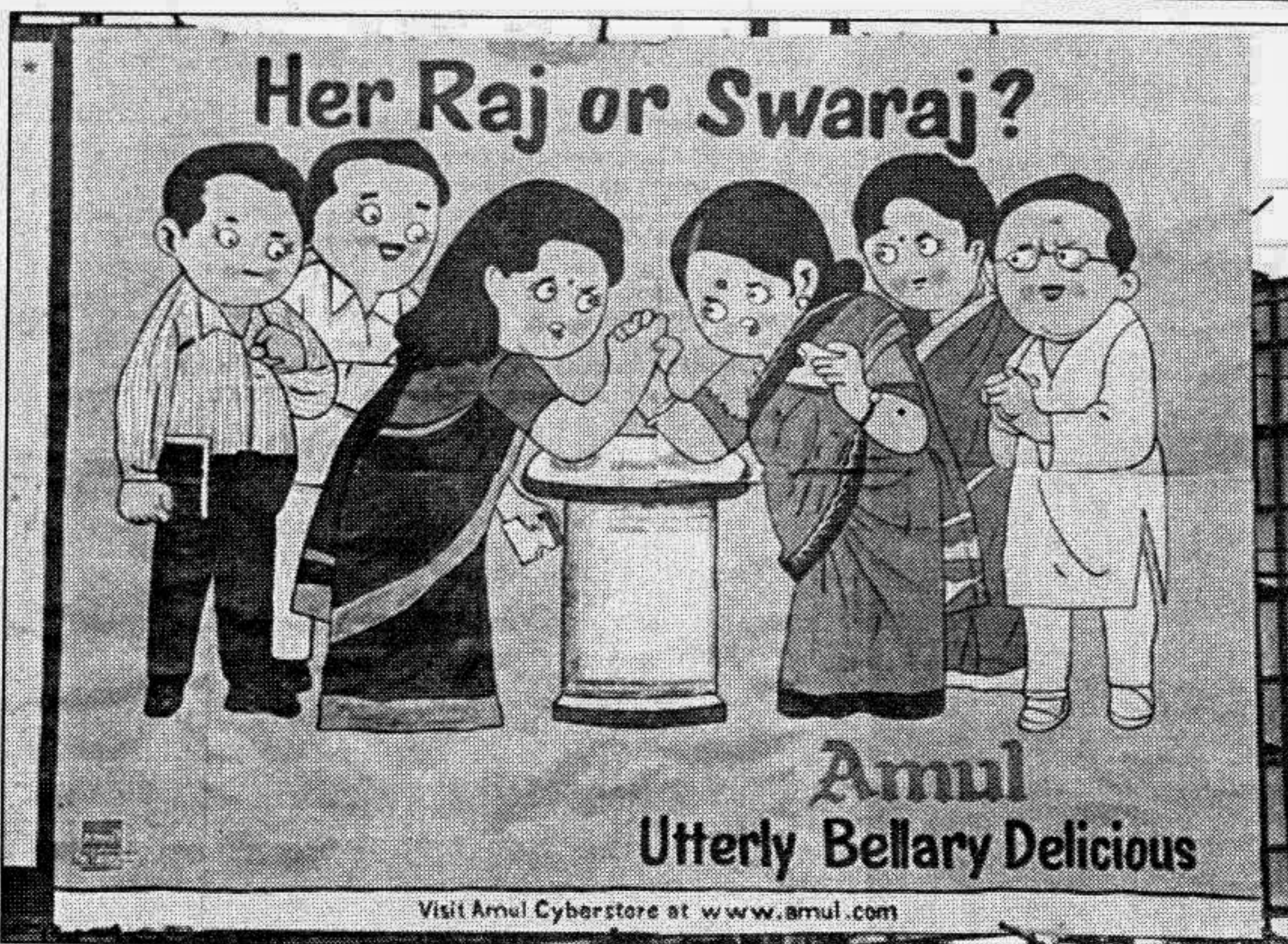
**Indonesia reports 4 Australian TV crew**

Indonesian authorities on Tuesday deported four Australian journalists from East Timor, accusing them of inciting violence during the territory's autonomy ballot, a military official said.



Two Indonesian policemen stand next to a van filled with ballot boxes Tuesday at a Dili museum where the boxes are gathered for ballot counting following the territory's historic referendum. The UN announced that a massive 98.6 per cent of East Timorese cast their votes in a UN-held self-determination polls with the results expected to be announced within a week.

— AFP photo



An Indian hoarding shows Congress (I) Sonia Gandhi and her rival Sushma Swaraj of BJP (R) in a show of strength, displayed on the Eastern Express Highway Tuesday in central Bombay. Both are contesting for the Bellary constituency seat, south India in the upcoming general elections.

## 'UN should hold referendum in Kashmir following E Timor vote'

ISLAMABAD, Aug 31 : The United Nations should implement its resolutions for a referendum in Kashmir following the historic vote in East Timor, a Kashmiri politician said in a statement published Tuesday, reports AFP.

If the UN can hold a ballot in East Timor there is no reason for it to ignore its own decisions on Kashmir, said Sultan Mahmood, head of the state government in Pakistani Kashmir.

"The world body should give up a double standard and implement its own 1948-49 resolutions for a plebiscite in Kashmir," he said in the statement in the Jang daily.

Pakistan and India, which holds two-thirds of Kashmir, have been locked in a dispute over the ownership of the Himalayan territory since the partition of the sub-continent in 1947.

The row has caused two of the three wars between the two neighbours and they recently came dangerously close to another war over the territory.

Mahmood said South Asia would remain embroiled in tension until the Kashmir issue was resolved in accordance with the wishes of its people.

## Grass was his only option

TOKYO, Aug 31 : A 52-year-old Japanese hiker survived for 13 days while lost on a mountain by eating grass, police said Tuesday, reports AFP.

Masanori Motomiya, who started climbing Mount Kogashi in eastern Japan on August 16, was found by a passerby on Sunday, a police spokesman said.

The local man heard somebody groaning under a cliff when he was preparing for take-off on a paraglider, the spokesman said. "It is unusual... he lived on stream water and grass for that length of time."

Motomiya had only one pre-packaged rice and meat meal with him when he started climbing the 580-meter (1,900-foot) mountain, police said.

## Pakistan must cease backing terrorism for talks: India

NEW DELHI, Aug 31 : Indian Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh said Tuesday that Pakistan must stop backing "terrorism" if it wanted to resume stalled talks with New Delhi, reports AFP.

Singh told reporters that a resumption of dialogue with Pakistan "is made difficult by its aid and abetment of terrorism and continued hostility" towards India.

"For reasonable and meaningful talks to take place, Pakistan has to stop encouraging cross-border terrorism" in the disputed Himalayan state of Kashmir, he said.

Singh, however, said India's Hindu nationalist-led coalition government was making efforts to find "a meeting ground" with Islamabad.

"We are making constant efforts for that," he said. New Delhi and Islamabad almost went to war during the May-July border clashes in Kashmir after hundreds of Islamic guerrillas from Pakistan

intruded into Indian Kashmir and occupied key hills along the frontier.

Since then, relations between them have deteriorated sharply. India and Pakistan dispute the ownership of Kashmir and have waged two of their three wars during the past 50 years over the Himalayan state.

Earlier this month, India shot down a Pakistani naval patrol plane with 16 crew on board when it allegedly entered Indian airspace, further straining relations.

On Tuesday Singh justified the bringing down of the plane. "It was a combat aircraft," he said. "It was on a military mission. It was violating India's airspace and territorial integrity."

Singh, whose coalition is expected to win elections that start Sunday, also accused Afghanistan's ruling Taliban of promoting terrorism in the sub-continent.

He said developments in

Afghanistan affected "India, its law and order and harmony" and blamed Kabul's rulers for the spread of small arms and narcotics in South Asia.

"What India is experiencing is the Afghanistan disorder syndrome. Developments in Afghanistan, we take with utmost seriousness."

Singh also said previous Indian governments had not "paid timely and effective attention" to Afghanistan.

India had enjoyed close ties with the earlier pro-Soviet communist government of Najibullah in Kabul and now recognises the ousted regime of Burhanuddin Rabbani. Pakistan is one of only three countries to recognise the Taliban.

Singh refused to say if India, which conducted a series of nuclear tests in May 1998, would sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). New Delhi has previously opposed the treaty, saying it was biased in favour of the major nuclear powers.

## Mammoth security operation underway for Indian polls

NEW DELHI, Aug 31 : India has begun moving its paramilitary brigades for the upcoming general elections, vowing to plug any possible security breach during the world's biggest democratic exercise, reports AFP.

Like the election itself which begins Sunday, the security logistics are daunting, even though the five days of actual polling have been staggered over a month so as not to stretch resources.

Some 250,000 paramilitary troops will reinforce more than one million state police personnel at 800,000 polling stations in 26 states and seven federal territories.

The paramilitary brigades are already being deployed, amid vows by Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's govern-

ment to maintain law and order at all costs.

Special emphasis will be placed on Kashmir and the northeastern states, where separatist groups have called for a boycott of the elections and threatened to disrupt polling.

There are also fears that Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) units will seek to foment unrest in more volatile states.

"Full security will be provided to all states for the smooth conduct of the polls in view of the ISI threat," promised Home Minister Lal Krishna Advani.

Chief Election Commissioner M.S. Gill said the policy of staggering the five polling days over a month would facilitate the "roll-over" of security personnel from region to re-



A visitor to Kensington Palace reads the messages attached to small bouquets of flowers fixed to the railings Tuesday at the former home of Princess Diana on the 2nd anniversary of her death in a Paris car crash.

— AFP photo

## Fresh fighting kills 12 in Lanka

COLOMBO, Aug 31 : Tamil Tiger guerrillas exploded a powerful landmine in northern Sri Lanka Tuesday and killed four policemen as security forces shot dead eight rebels elsewhere, officials said, reports AFP.

The separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam guerrillas set off the blast at Cheddikulam in the Vavuniya district as the victims travelled in a jeep, officials said.

They said a sub inspector was among the four people killed. Six others were wounded, three of whom were civilians being constructed a bridge where the device was detonated.

The Defence Ministry said in a statement that troops had killed eight Tiger guerrillas in three separate confrontations in the north on Monday.

## China orders clear skies for 50th anniversary celebration

BEIJING, August 31 : China's Communist Party has ordered a crackdown on air pollution in a bid to ensure Beijing's smoggy skies are clear for 50th anniversary celebrations on October 1, reports AFP.

"About 25 large enterprises in Beijing that produce a lot of pollution every day... have been ordered to reduce production and stop using equipment burning fuel and coal from September 21," the China Daily newspaper quoted an official circular as saying.

They included the notoriously dirty Capital Iron and Steel Corp (Shougang), to the west of the city.

The move was being made to "ensure a successful celebration" of the anniversary of the proclamation of the People's Republic of China by Chairman Mao Zedong.

## N.Korea demands US troop withdrawal from South

SEOUL, Aug 31 : North Korea on Tuesday said the withdrawal of the 37,000 US troops from South Korea was a key precondition for improving ties with Washington, reports AFP.

The call came a week before North Korea was to meet US officials in Berlin for talks focussing on the Stalinist state's suspected plans to launch a new missile, but aimed at improving ties between the Cold War enemies.

"If the United States truly wants improved DPRK (North Korea)-US relations, it should pull its forces out of South Korea," the North's official Rodong Simnun newspaper said, according to the Korean Central News Agency.

It also said that Washington should "give up the moves for stifling the DPRK and lift economic sanctions against it."

Analysts here predicted that negotiators from both sides would discuss possible US lifting of sanctions on North Korea in return for its giving up missile threats at the talks in Berlin September 7-11.

But the North's renewed call for a US troop withdrawal prompted fears it could make a stumbling block to progress in the talks.

Despite Pyongyang's repeated demands, Washington and its ally Seoul have flatly rejected any troop withdrawal until a peace treaty is signed.

Rodong Simnun hinted that the communist regime would stick to its decades-old demand for the pullout of US troops during the talks.

"The DPRK's principled stand towards the DPRK-US relations remains unchanged," it said.

## Strong aftershock in quake-hit town Turkey moves to punish corrupt builders

ANKARA, Aug 31 : The Turkish government has issued a circular instructing prosecutors to take speedy legal action against suspected corrupt contractors of buildings that collapsed in the August 17 earthquake, the crisis centre here said reports AFP.

The Justice Ministry circular asked for evidence of shoddy construction to be gathered before it disappears in rubble-clearing work and for urgent investigations to be launched against builders who may have been at fault.

The crisis centre said the tremor completely destroyed 17,199 buildings and heavily damaged 25,651 others; most were multi-storeyed residences.

It also said, without giving details, that the cabinet had drafted a decree setting new rules for the resolution of legal disputes arising from the earthquake.

A powerful aftershock hit Turkey's earthquake-stricken Marmara region on Tuesday, the Kandilli seismological institute here reported.

The tremor, which registered 5.2 on the open-ended Richter scale, was epicentred in Izmit, the town worst hit in the devastating earthquake of August 17, it said.

The aftershock, at 11:11 a.m. (0811 GMT), could be felt as far away as Istanbul, some 100 kilometres (63 miles) west of Izmit.

## Jiang insists on China's right to use force to reunite Taiwan

SYDNEY, Aug 31 : Chinese President Jiang Zemin has insisted on China's right to use force to reunite with Taiwan in an interview with two Australian editors published here Tuesday, reports AFP.

Speaking in Beijing on the eve of departure for his first visit to Australia, Jiang said China's preferred policy was reunification by peaceful means, but warned this needed the support of a military option to be effective.

"It is the shared aspiration of the entire 1.2 billion Chinese people to settle the question of Taiwan at an early date," he told The Australian's editor-in-chief David Armstrong and international editor Paul Kelly in Beijing.

"If China were to undertake not to use force, the peaceful reunification of China would be

come hollow words."

Jiang begins an official visit to Australia on September 6 amid rising concerns here that the China-Taiwan issue could at the very least unsettle a harmonious relationship between Beijing and Canberra.

His warning came as Australia received another reminder Tuesday of what it regards as the nightmare scenario -- being dragged into war over Taiwan between its closest ally, the United States, and friendly trading partner, China.

The Australian Financial Review (AFR) reported that Richard Armitage, a top adviser to leading Republican presidential candidate George Bush Junior, had warned Australia it must stand ready to give military support to the United States if it goes to war with China.



Young dancers show off their costumes and face make-up during the parade at the Notting Hill Carnival in London Monday. A million revelers flocked to the fashionable neighbourhood for the annual party which organisers claim is the largest street festival in the world.

— AFP photo

## Hamas lashes out at arrest of its members in Jordan

GAZA CITY, Aug 31 : The hardline Palestinian Islamist group Hamas on Tuesday lashed out at the arrest of a dozen of its members and the issue of warrants for four of its leaders.

"We condemn these measures taken in Jordan," one of the movement's leaders, Smael Abu Shanab, told AFP.

Hamas sees behind this repression an American manoeuvre ahead of the visit of (US Secretary of State) Madeleine Albright, due to start her Middle East tour on Thursday, he said.

"Hamas, whose calling is to defend the Arab nation against foreign dangers, calls on the Jordanian authorities to release our officials so as not to play into the hands of the Zionists," he said in reference to Israel.

Jordanian police on Monday

detained a dozen members of the organisation on suspicion of carrying out illegal activities in Jordan, as well as issuing arrest warrants for four Hamas leaders.

A judicial source in Jordan said the offices were being run in the guise of business premises without a licence.

They were named as Ibrahim Ghosheh, the spokesman for Hamas in Amman, Musa Abu Marzuk, head of the movement's political bureau, Khaled Mehaal, who was targeted by an assassination bid in Amman in 1997, and Mohammad Nazzal, another representative of Hamas in Jordan.

A judicial source in Amman confirmed the identities.

The four are residents of Jordan but are in Iran at present, sources close to Hamas said.

## Hackers give access to 40 m Hotmail accounts

LONDON, Aug 31 : Hackers on Monday gave free access to some 40 million Hotmail electronic mail accounts via an Internet site, The Times reported Tuesday, says AFP.

Microsoft, which operates Hotmail, one of the most popular free e-mail services, was forced to temporarily shut down the service after the web site gave access to any Hotmail account without the use of a password.

The site also allowed bogus messages to be sent in another person's name.

The report said that the original rogue site, based in Sweden, was shut down by its host, but not before it had been copied to sites in Britain and the United States, spreading the problem.

## Russian resumes offensive in Dagestan

MOSCOW, Aug 31 : Russian troops resumed their offensive against Islamic rebels in the troubled southern republic of Dagestan on Tuesday, as the death toll in the latest fighting continued to rise, reports said, reports AFP.

Two soldiers died and two more were injured when rebels blasted their armoured vehicle early Tuesday, the private NTV television station reported, citing local interior ministry officials.

The deaths take to five the number of Russian servicemen killed in the Russian operation, which began Sunday. Some 31 servicemen have been wounded, the television station reported.

According to Russian officials, interior ministry troops backed by helicopter gunships and artillery are battling some 500 well-armed Islamic rebels in the Karamakhy and Charanbakhly areas south of the capital Makhachkala.

## BRIEFLY

**2 die in Russian flood:** Two people were killed and several were missing following a heavy rainstorm and flooding in and around the Pacific Ocean port city of Nakhodka, authorities said Tuesday. AP reports from Vladivostok, Russia.

A woman died when rushing water threw her into a bridge pillar while she was crossing the Partizanskaya River in a rubber boat Monday, said Vitaly Chernenko, a spokesman for the regional headquarters of Emergencies and Civil Defence.

**Turkey quake toll now 14,200:** The toll in the massive earthquake that flattened northwestern Turkey on August 17 stood at 14,202 dead and 25,254 wounded as of 8:00 am (0500 GMT) yesterday the government crisis centre in Ankara says, AFP reports from Ankara.

**Liz Taylor released from hospital:** Elizabeth Taylor has been released from a hospital where she was treated for a back injury following a fall, AP reports from Los Angeles.

The 67-year-old actress went home from Cedars-Sinai Medical Center on Sunday, spokesman Warren Cowan said Monday. Miss Taylor was recovering well from a compression fracture of a vertebra and undergoing physical therapy at home, Cowan said. Her recovery was expected to take several weeks.