

# Pakistan refuses to sign CTBT under pressure from donors

ISLAMABAD, Sept 20: Pakistani Finance Minister Ishaq Dar has ruled out signing the nuclear test ban treaty under economic pressure, insisting the country's future cannot be mortgaged for a few million dollars, an official report said Monday, reports AFP.

"Pakistan will not sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) under any economic pressure," he said amid reports of a delay in funding from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

"Political issues should not be linked to economic matters," the official AFP news agency quoted the minister as saying.

He said Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's government would not take any step which could harm national interests.

"The country's defence cannot be put at stake only for a couple of million dollars," he said.

"We are ready to offer any sacrifice for the defence and prosperity of the country."

The IMF approved a 5.5 billion dollar bailout package, including the rescheduling of 3.5 billion dollars in debt repayments, when Pakistan's economy came under pressure late last year from international sanctions.

Aid packages were earlier suspended by the IMF, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank after Pakistan conducted nuclear blasts in May 1998 in response to similar detonations by its arch rival India.

The lending agencies agreed to restore the stalled assistance after the United States relaxed sanctions, averting the danger of Pakistan being declared a defaulter.

However the second tranche of 280 million dollars expected earlier this month has not been

released amid IMF calls for structural reforms and criticism from local traders over the imposition of a general sales tax.

Urdu language daily Jang quoted Dar as opposing any long role by the international lenders.

He said the IMF and the World Bank had no "mandate" to resolve political problems.

Newspapers also linked the alleged delay in the disbursement of the IMF funds to reports that Pakistan may renounce its pledge to sign the CTBT in September.

Pakistan has said it must wait to see if the remaining US sanctions are lifted before its can sign the treaty.

Economists say the IMF funding is essential for the economic survival of the country which is facing a shortage of foreign exchange reserves and a balance of payments problem.

# Peacekeepers land in Dili

DILI, East Timor, Sept 20: Peacekeepers piled out of transport planes Monday into the burned-out ruins of this city and began their mission to bring help to frightened refugees and face off anti-independence militias, reports AFP.

But the remnants of the militia gangs that unleashed a campaign of terror after an August 30 vote for independence put up no resistance as the international troops started patrolling the streets on foot and in armoured personnel carriers.

In the only reported encounter of the day, burly New Zealand soldiers stopped an armed man as he rode through the capital on a motorbike and confiscated his home-made rifle without any fuss.

A militia withdrawal appeared to have been completed by the time the International Force for East Timor (Interfet) arrived -- virtually none were sighted in the capital Monday.

However, hundreds of the refugees the pro-Jakarta gangs had chased from their homes remained, sheltering in flimsy shacks set up among gutted buildings and along the harbour in areas strewn with piles of garbage.

Barefoot and haggard children wandered along the bay, as Indonesian naval vessels prepared to ship them and their families to Kupang in neighbouring West Timor.

Indonesian military authorities said Sunday they wanted the squalid camps cleared from the points where the foreign troops would land but after the arrival Monday they had only succeeded in emptying the airport terminal.

When the first peacekeepers landed in an air convoy at first light and secured the building, the terminal stank of excrement and urine, a sign of the appalling conditions the refugees had endured.

Along the road to the airport, now guarded by Interfet troops, all houses appeared to be empty, except for one residence where seven frightened people, refugees from the southern town of Dare, were sheltering.

As Indonesian soldiers passed by, they quickly hid in the bushes behind the hot sale along with their precious bag of rice.

"I am still afraid," one man among them said. Some Indonesian soldiers were caught openly collaborating with the militias during their two-week rampage of murder and destruction.

After the international troops secured the airport, they fanned out around Dili, with a large pack of journalists, photographers and camera crews in tow.

Apart from that activity, the only people seen wandering the streets were the refugees, some of an estimated 10,000 in the capital.

Up to 190,000 others are believed to have fled into the jungles and mountains. Around 200,000 have also fled to Indonesian West Timor.

Despite efforts to move them out, on Monday there were still at least a thousand displaced people around the bay, where the lack of sanitation facilities had also created a sickening stench.

People there looked thin and tired.

They made shelters out of whatever they could scavenge -- cardboard, plastic and the rubble of buildings laid waste when the militia went on the rampage, enraged by the vote to break from Indonesia.

Nevertheless the Roman Catholic Bishop of Dili, Nobel Laureate Carlos Ximenes Belo, said the despatch of the peacekeepers had brought new hope to the population.

"I dream of seeing mothers with their children in their arms, children playing and the schools open," he said in his Sunday homily in Lisbon.



Australian soldiers arrive at Dili Airport Monday at the start of the deployment of an Australia-led multinational peacekeeping force to restore order in the territory. The troops, with weapons at the ready and in full battle dress, fanned out to secure the airport and surrounding area. — AFP photo

Indonesian government imposed martial law on September 7.

Home Affairs Minister Syarwan Hamid said earlier Monday that the East Timor government was practically "paralysed" with only a deputy governor remaining in place.

"Maybe in another one or two days we will get a report, and therefore ... the martial law status will not drag on for too long," Wiranto said.

He gave no date, but added that with the arrival of the International Force for East Timor (Interfet) the laws in use will be the UN laws that "would not be compatible" with the martial law.

**Military wants 48-hr deadline for UN force**

A 48-hour deadline to reestablish order in East Timor, slapped on the Indonesian armed forces by the UN, should also be imposed on the UN-sanctioned international force now deployed there, a general said Monday.

The 48 hours imposed on

TNI (the Indonesian Armed Forces) in the previous time also applies to the multinational forces," Indonesian military spokesman Major General Sudrajat (Eds: one name) told journalists at parliament.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan said earlier this month that the Indonesian military, who imposed martial law in East Timor on September 7, should restore law and order in the territory within 48 hours otherwise Jakarta should accept the deployment of an international force.

"When it comes to maintaining security, we should not play around with a deadline," Sudrajat said, speaking in English.

**3 lakh people displaced**

Reuters adds: Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer said today the number of displaced people in East Timor was close to 300,000.

"I think both in East Timor

and West Timor the number must be somewhere between 200,000 — which would probably be too low — and 300,000 which may be closer to the mark," Downer told the Australian parliament. "We will get more information on that, more readily once the international force is established," Downer said.

"We really have no numbers on the number of people who have died. There are some who say between 10,000 and 20,000, there are others who say the numbers are in hundreds."

"I could only say to the house that I don't know, but I think we could assume that the numbers would be pretty high."

About 2,000 troops were due in Dili by the end of today to begin restoring order after pro-Jakarta militias, aided by elements of the Indonesian military, went on a killing and burning spree after last month's overwhelming vote for independence.

# 'Yeltsin to step down on Oct 19'

MOSCOW, Sept 20: Boris Yeltsin will resign as Russian president next month, a top lawmaker wrote in a newspaper article Monday that further fuelled speculation of early elections despite furious Kremlin denials, reports AFP.

In a front page article in the liberal daily Sevodnya, Alexander Shokhin predicted that Yeltsin would step down on October 19 in order to prevent his political rivals from bidding to succeed him in the Kremlin.

According to Shokhin, a Yeltsin resignation two months ahead of December 19 parliamentary polls would force leading anti-Kremlin contenders to choose between running for the presidency or parliament.

"In this case, almost all the real candidates will not be able to participate in the presidential elections," Shokhin wrote in Sevodnya.

"If (presidential) elections take place one month after the

parliamentary vote, none of them will be able to register in time" to participate in the polls, he pointed out.

Among those who would be wrong-footed by such a manoeuvre are Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov, his ally and ex-premier Yevgeny Primakov, Communist Party boss Gennady Zyuganov, and Grigory Yavlinsky, leader of the liberal Yabloko party.

They all plan to contest the December legislative elections that they hope to use as a launch-pad for their presidential election campaign in the summer of 2000.

Moscow for days has been abuzz with rumours that the Yeltsin entourage is seeking to spike a string of corruption probes by ensuring the election of a favourable candidate.

Yeltsin's already low standing slipped further when a string of bombs went off in the Russian capital, killing nearly 300 people in attacks that have

been linked to terrorist groups based in the rebel republic of Chechnya.

**Duma speaker calls on Yeltsin to retire**

Communist parliament speaker Gennady Seleznyov called Monday on President Boris Yeltsin to step down amid mounting speculation that the Kremlin chief was about to quit office early.

"Today the president has one choice -- to voluntarily cede his authority," Interfax quoted the State Duma lower house of parliament speaker as saying.

Influential centrist lawmaker Alexander Shokhin in a front-page article in the liberal Sevodnya daily wrote Monday that Yeltsin, first elected president in 1991, was likely to resign on October 19 as part of a complicated scheme to hand-pick his successor.

Presidential elections are not due until summer 2000.

lifted in a few days'

Martial law imposed on East Timor almost two weeks ago could be lifted now, but it will remain in place for a few more days, Indonesian military chief General Wiranto said Monday.

"From the security point of view, it (the martial law) can already be lifted, but we are still waiting for the final report about the provincial government," Wiranto told a parliamentary hearing.

With the lifting of martial law, authority would be returned to the provincial government, he added. The In-

take full note of this message before things get out of hand and provoke a tidal wave."

However, there was some rallying of the Arab position Monday when the Arab League warned it will ask its members to "reconsider" their relations with the Disney corporation over the planned exhibit.

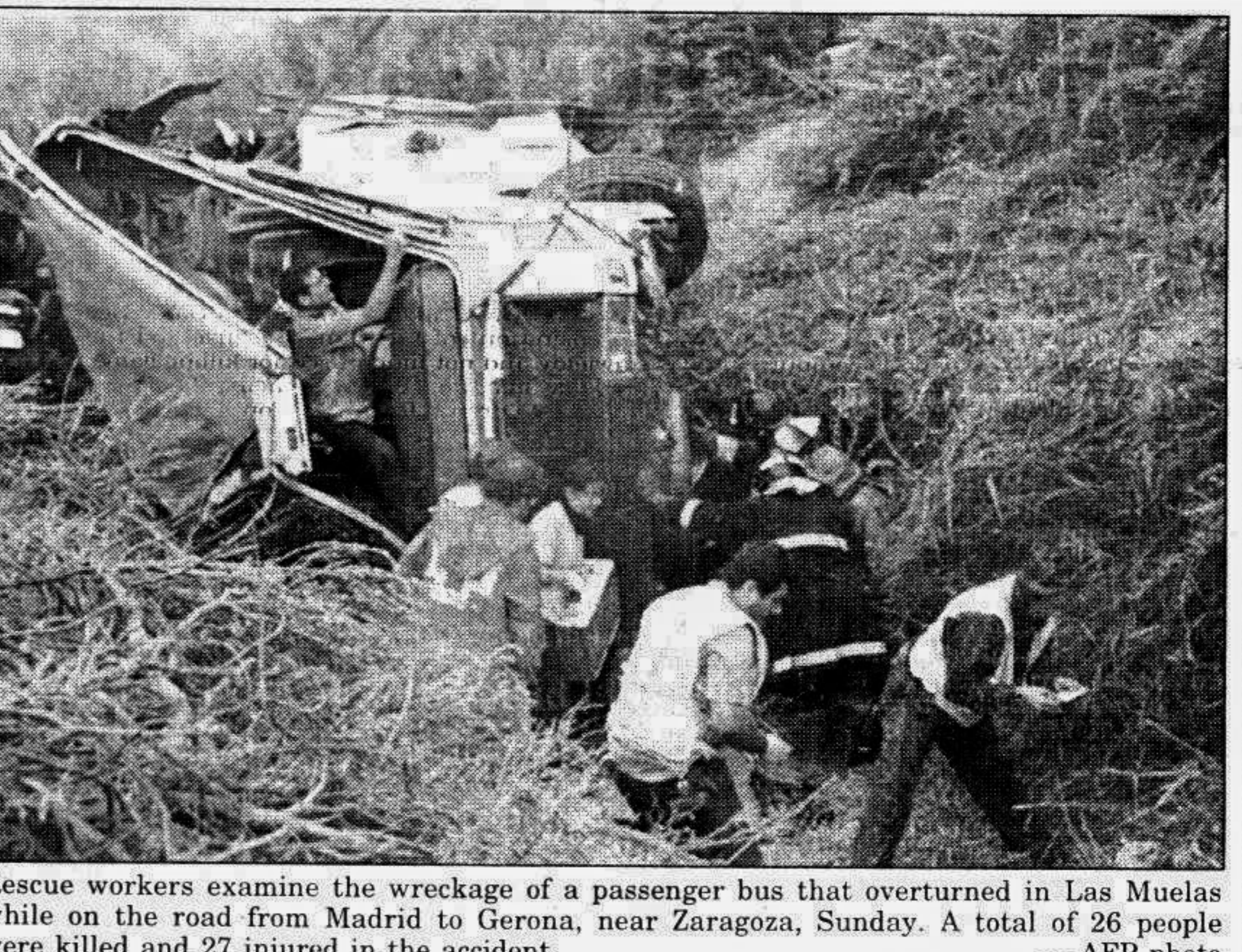
League secretary general Esmat Abdel Meguid said.

"I will ask Arab foreign ministers who are meeting in New York next Friday, during a meeting of the UN general assembly, to reconsider their relations with Disney," he said.

"The American firm has not changed its position concerning the Israeli exhibit. Israel is trying to dupe the Arabs and we will not accept that," he said.

The Jewish state's ambassador to Washington said Sunday that Israel had won the battle against Arab "blackmail" over the Israeli exhibit set to open October 1, at the Disney World theme park in the US state of Florida.

He insisted no changes would be made to the planned exhibition.



Rescue workers examine the wreckage of a passenger bus that overturned in Las Muelas while on the road from Madrid to Girona, near Zaragoza, Sunday. A total of 26 people were killed and 27 injured in the accident. — AFP photo

# 'Mickey Mouse routs Arabs'

DUBAI, Sept 20: Walt Disney has "defeated" the Arab world by refusing to climb down over a controversial exhibit at Disney World that portrays Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, a Gulf daily said Monday, reports AFP.

"Disney inflicts defeat on Arabs," headlined the daily Al-Jazeera, owned by the government of Abu Dhabi, capital of the United Arab Emirates.

"The major Arab and Muslim countries chose to remain silent in the face of the verbal tricks of the company," the newspaper said. "No Arab capital has announced sanctions," against Walt Disney, it noted.

Al-Jazeera of Saudi Arabia, where the press reflects official thinking, said: "The welcome the Israeli foreign minister gave to Disney's position shows there is intent to damage the status of Jerusalem."

"Let Walt Disney, and through them Israel, know that damaging the Arab identity of Jerusalem is a red line and crossing it will be paid for very dearly," the paper said.

Al-Jazeera urged Disney "to

NEW DELHI, Sept 20: Kashmiri separatists hope to persuade foreign leaders at the upcoming UN General Assembly of the parity between their struggle and that of pro-independence forces in East Timor.

"There are striking similarities," said Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, an executive council member of the All Party Hurriyat Conference -- an umbrella group of separatist parties in Kashmir which wants a referendum on self-determination like the one recently held in East Timor.

Farooq, who intends to leave for New York on Wednesday, told reporters in New Delhi that the East Timor vote had set the "trend ahead" for other independence struggles, including Kashmir.

At the UN General Assembly, Farooq said he hoped to meet with US State Department offi-

# Kashmiri group to push for Timor like referendum at UNGA

als and give them "updated versions" of the situation in Kashmir.

"Our aim at the UN is not to battle India, but to put the reality of Kashmir before the world," he said.

New Delhi has dismissed any link between East Timor and Kashmir as "absurd."

Although he has a valid passport, Farooq has in the past been prevented from leaving the country, as have other senior leaders of the Hurriyat Conference.

Farooq said the separatist case had been boosted by India's ongoing general elections, which he argued had been reduced to a "farce and a tragedy" in Kashmir by a separatist poll boycott.

"The general success of the boycott was an expression of the illegitimacy of the whole electoral exercise," he added.

The boycott, backed by

armed militants, limited voter turnout to 12 and 27 percent in two of Kashmir's six parliamentary constituencies, although it was higher in Buddhist and Hindu-majority areas.

Farooq accused the Indian security forces of "herding" Muslim voters to the polling booths at gunpoint, and threatening retribution against any registered voter who could not display the smear of indelible ink that showed they had cast their ballot.

A senior leader of the ruling National Conference party in Kashmir was quoted as saying Monday that there was nothing wrong with forcing Kashmiris to vote.

Peerzada Ghulam Ahmad Shah, who is also a state minister, said the militant disruption of the elections had been orchestrated and abetted by the Pakistan intelligence services.

the future of the vast majority of the (KLA) membership indeed perhaps Kosovo's future as a whole."

Early Monday, NATO and the United Nations granted the KLA an extra 48 hours to fulfil the conditions of its agreed demilitarisation.

Those conditions include not only disarming, which the guerrilla band claims to have done, but also remaining almost entirely weaponless after its transition to a new civilian security force dubbed the "Kosovo Corps."

But the talks stalled on the crucial issue of what arms the new civilian security corps may carry.

# Saddam rejects any UN move to keep sanctions in place

BAGHDAD, Sept 20: Iraq will reject any Security Council move which falls short of a total lifting of sanctions, an official spokesman warned Monday ahead of fresh talks between the major powers at the United Nations, reports AFP.

"Iraq is not interested in any meeting in which it does not play an active role and which does not address its legitimate demands ... for a total lifting of the embargo," he said.

"To be of interest to Iraq, any proposed (UN) resolution must be based on international law,"

the spokesman said after a meeting of the Iraqi leadership chaired by President Saddam Hussein.

Iraq also renewed its call for the United Nations to condemn the almost daily US and British air strikes on its territory and charged that the sanctions were only being kept in place under pressure from Washington.

Baghdad has been under UN sanctions since its 1990 invasion of Kuwait. The embargo is linked to Iraq's disarmament.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Said al-Sahhaf travelled

to New York on Sunday to argue Iraq's case at the UN General Assembly for a lifting of the sanctions which Baghdad says have cost more than one million lives.

Foreign ministers of the five Security Council permanent members, meanwhile, are to meet for talks on a possible suspension of the embargo on the sidelines of the General Assembly.

Baghdad insists it has satisfied the Security Council's conditions for a lifting of sanctions.

# US spy sat to help Taiwan intercept Chinese missile

TAIPEI, Sept 20: US spy satellites could be used to help Taiwan intercept Chinese missiles in the event of a mainland attack on the nationalist island, the United Daily News reported on Monday, says AFP.

Military sources told the paper that granting Taiwan access to US satellite intelligence was one of the key issues to be discussed by a mission of US defence officials currently in Taipei.

The delegation has been tasked with assessing the island's air defence capacity and drawing up recommendations for upgrading it, the News said.

The paper said American

satellites were able to trace the flames of Chinese missiles immediately after they are launched.

If Taiwan had immediate access to this intelligence it would gain 15 minutes in preparing for a missile attack, it added.

The US officials were reportedly due to begin working-level meetings with the Taiwanese military on Monday.

The defence ministry refused to confirm that a US mission was in Taipei or to comment on the reported subject of its visit.

"We have no comment on the report," a spokesman said.



Raisa Gorbachev dies after a lengthy struggle with leukaemia

MUENSTER, Germany, Sept 20: Raisa Gorbachev, wife of former Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev, died here Monday after a lengthy struggle with leukaemia, her doctor Thomas Buechner said, reports AFP.

She made the announcement at the Westfaelische Wilhelm Universitaet clinic where she had been undergoing treatment.

The news was reported at about the same time in Moscow by the Interfax news agency, citing the Gorbachev Foundation in Moscow.

The Foundation's spokesman, Vladimir Polyakov, said, "This happened around five in the morning Moscow time (0100 GMT)."

"Gorbachev is in Germany right now. We just found out about it, and will have more information in a few minutes," he said.

Gorbachev, 67, had been in a critical condition. Doctors had hoped to carry out a bone marrow transplant, but she had been too sick to undergo the operation after last week experiencing a sudden drop in blood pressure, a high fever and breathing problems.

# KLA disarmament deadline extended for 48-hr more

PRISTINA, Yugoslavia, Sept 20: The commander of Kosovo peacekeepers warned ethnic Albanian rebels Monday that their failure to accept weapons restrictions as part of their transformation into a new civilian force risked Kosovo's future, reports AFP.

Lieutenant-General Michael Jackson issued the warning after negotiations on transforming Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) guerrillas into members of a civilian force missed a midnight deadline because the rebels refused to accept the restrictions.

Jackson urged KLA negotiators to "see that their failure to accept the weapons regime required is in danger of unsettling

Children in military dress armed with toy guns gesture for Kashmiri freedom fighters during an anti-government rally organised by Pakistan's largest religious-political party Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) in the industrial city of Faisalabad Sunday. — AFP photo

## BRIEFLY

**Two activists of CDP held in China:** Two leading members of the China Democracy Party (CDP) in eastern Zhejiang province have been formally arrested and face prison terms of more than 10 years, a Hong Kong-based rights group reported Monday, says AFP from Beijing.

Mao Qingxiang, a co-founder of the CDP's Hangzhou city branch, was formally arrested Monday morning on charges of subversion of state power, the Information Centre of Human Rights and Democratic Movement in China said in a statement.

Mao, 50, had edited a pro-democracy magazine in the late 1970s and was jailed for two years for his involvement in the 1978-79 Democracy Wall movement.

**Quake hits southern Taiwan:** An earthquake measuring 4.4 on the Richter Scale rocked southern Taiwan yesterday, but no casualties or damage were immediately reported, seismologists said, AFP reports from Taipei.

The tremor hit at 10:35 am with its epicenter 21.2 kilometres (13.14 miles) southwest of Mt. Ali in southern Taiwan, experts said.

It originated 5.2 kilometres (3.22 miles) under the earth's surface.

**Thai queen mother dies:** The mother of Thailand's Queen Sirikit has died at the age of 89, a royal statement said yesterday, AFP reports from Bangkok.

Mom Luang (honoric) Bua Kitayakara died on Sunday after suffering from an unspecified serious illness since earlier this year, the Royal Household Bureau said.

## BJP candidate abducted in Assam

GUWAHATI, India, Sept 20: Separatist guerrillas have abducted an election candidate of the ruling Hindu nationalist BJP party in the northeastern Indian state of Assam, officials said Monday, reports AFP.

Pannalal Oswal, who is contesting general elections in Dhubri in western Assam, was abducted late Sunday en route from an election meeting.

"The BJP candidate's vehicle was intercepted by two armed militants on the national highway and taken forcefully off the road to a remote area. Later, three party workers travelling with Oswal were released," Gyatri Baruah, the district magistrate of Dhubri told AFP.

"The candidate was campaigning without his personal security guards despite being provided security cover by the administration," said Baruah.

Assam goes to the polls on October 3 -- the fifth and final stage of nationwide elections that began September 5.

A monkey tears up a hoarding featuring Indian opposition leader Sonia Gandhi alongside a local Congress (I) Party candidate in Bulandshahr Sunday. — AFP photo

Children in military dress armed with toy guns gesture for Kashmiri freedom fighters during an anti-government rally organised by Pakistan's largest religious-political party Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) in the industrial city of Faisalabad Sunday. — AFP photo