US won't declare

Pakistan a

terrorist state

US has said that it will not accede to India's demand to declare Pakistan a terrorist state for its alleged role in the

hijacking of the Indian airlines plane but urged all concerned states to take action to ensure

that the hijackers are arrested

that they condemn these acts of

terrorism and that they will

meet their obligation to

apprehend the hijackers and

bring them to justice, State

Department spokesman James

Rubin told reporters yesterday

ir Shepherdstown, the venue of

urging that any and all states

involved, take action to ensure

that hijackers are captured and

prosecuted. Rubin said.

Otherwise, they should

extradite hijackers to a place

where they can be apprehended

the countries in the region,'

Rubin said. "We think they must

all nations of their

international obligations

associated with the convention

Rubin's statement came

shortly after Indian Prime

Minister A B Vajpayee's

demand in Pune that

Washington declare Pakistan a

terrorist state as there is

sufficient evidence to establish

its complicity in the hijacking.

Broccoli cuts

cancer risk

lots of broccoli, or even

coleslaw, may help protect men

from prostate cancer, but

consuming tomato products

probably will not, researchers

said on Tuesday, reports

Fred Hutchinson Cancer

Research Centre in Seattle

found that just three daily

servings of vegetables cut a

man's risk of prostate cancer

relative potency, vegetables

from the cruciferous family,

"And when we compared

A study conducted at the

LOS ANGELES, Jan 5: Eating

"We continue to work with

and prosecuted.

on hijacking."

Reuters.

nearly in half.

The 'IS, he said, is strongly

...e .. Asia peace talks.

The Pakistanis have told US

and prosecuted, reports PTI.

WASHINGTON, Jan 5: The

Bomb blast

in Pakistan

injures 27

people were injured when a

powerful bomb exploded in a

shopping market in Hyderabad,

southern Pakistan, on Wednes-

day, police and residents said,

The bomb, thought to be

connected to a timer, exploded outside a shop in Lunda market

in the city, which is 160 km

standers and volunteers along

with large numbers of police

rushed to the site to help the

critical condition, residents

along with children, were shop-

ping for clothes at the time.

Several small shops were dam-

lackets soaked with blood were

lying on the floor amid screams

and shouts of wailing women

and children," said one resi-

Deputy Inspector General Saud

Mirza told reporters at the site

a foreign hand seems to be in-

volved in the incident," he said.

not explain who the foreign

Hyderabad police chief

This is sheer terrorism and

The police chief however did

But in the past Pakistani of-

Security has been tightened

ficials have blamed the secret

service of arch-rival India for

in Hyderabad since late

dent. Mohammad Ali.

he blamed terrorists.

hand might be.

terrorist acts.

Some of the injured were in

Most of the victims, women

"Colourful sweaters and

victims, a resident said.

Hundreds of residents, by-

reports AFI'.

northeast of here.

KARACHI. Jan 5: At least '27

Plane hijackers are not in Pakistan: Musharraf

Freed militants seen in Karachi, Muzaffarabad

ISLAMABAD, Jan 4: Pakistani military ruler General Pervez Musharraf said Tuesday the hijackers of an Indian airliner were not in Pakistan and accused India of conducting a smear campaign.

"The hijackers are not in Pakistan. The Indian propaganda is baseless," state-run television quoted the general as

"Its very sad," Musharraf said, referring to Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's accusations that Pakistan was involved in the hijacking.

The eight-day hijack drama, which began when five men seized the airliner during a Christmas Eve flight from Nepal to New Delhi on December 24. ended on Friday at Kandahar airport in southern

Afghanistan. India released three pro-Kashmir militants in exchange for 160 hostages and the hi-

jackers disappeared from Kandahar. The swap has sparked criticism in India.

Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee on Tuesday said New Delhi had "enough evidence" of Pakistan's involvement in the hijacking of an In-

"We have enough evidence of Pakistan's involvement in the hijacking of the Indian Airlines aircraft and we will disclose it at the appropriate time." Vajpayee told reporters.

"We will try to get hijackers from there (Pakistan) for trial."

Vajpavee said. Musharraf said Pakistan had played a positive role. "We tried to assist on humanitarian ground to resolve the issue as amicably as possible."

Meanwhile, two of the freed militants have since been seen. one in Karachi, in southern Pakistan, and a second in Pakistan-controlled Kashmir.

Department officials.

One of the Kashmiri militants, a Pakistani scholar named Maulana Masood Azhar. has been seen in Karachi, a source in a Muslim guerilla

fighting group said Wednesday. Maulana Masood Azhar, who emerged as a central figure in the hijacking saga, has returned to Pakistan and spent hours with his friends at a Islamic seminary in Karachi, the source at the Harkat-ul Jihad-el Islami told AFP.

The group is one of several Muslim groups fighting in Indian-administered Kashmir and was once part of the Harkat-ul Ansar group.

"When I was told by my friends that Maulana sahib is back, that was the biggest happiness of my life," the source

"It is a great feeling to have him back. He deserved to be back as he did not commit any

US President Bill Clinton (C), Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak (L) and Syrian Foreign

Minister Faruq al-Shara meet during the second day of peace talks between Israel and

Syria in Shepherdstown, West Virginia, on Tuesday. In the hour-long trilateral meeting,

Barak and al-Shara reaffirmed their commitment to the talks, according to State

crime and is a Pakistani citi-

His father said he was still

waiting for Azhar to make con-"He has not contacted his family so far," said Allah Bakhsh Sabir from his home in

Bahawalpur, in central Pak-"Azhar has been released after six years detention in Indian jail and you can imagine my

"He is a Pakistani and he has every right to return home," he

A second of the Kashmiri militants, Mushtaq Ahmad Zargar, arrived in Muzaffarabad, in Pakistan-controlled 'Kashmir, late Tuesday, witnesses said.

He was given a warm welcome by members of his ! be brought to justice to remind guerilla group, Al-Umar Mujahideen, and welcome banners were put up across the town.



Police cover the remains of a male victim, killed in the suicide bomb attack yesterday outside the Prime Minister's office in the Sri Lankan capital Colombo. - AFP photo



India planning to manufacture anti-ballistic missile system

PUNE. Jan 5: Principal Scientific Advisor to the government APJ Abdul Kalam vesterday said India was planning to manufacture an anti-ballistic missile system in near future to counter the incoming enemy missile attacks, reports PTI.

India is planning to produce a strong missile defense system to ward off enemy missile strikes, he said delivering a lecture at the 87th Indian Science Congress. He did not

claborate on the subject. At the same time, India is, also thinking to develop a supersonic cruise missile to carry out surprise attack on enemy targets and Unmanned Air Vehicle (UAV).

Israel frees 22 Palestinian prisoners

JERUSALEM, Jan 5: Israel granted early release today to 22 Palestinians jailed for common crimes in a gesture to mark the end Ramadan, reports Reuters.

The release of the 22, who included two men convicted of murder, was not connected with the freeing in recent months under an interim peace accord of more than 380 Palestinian political activists jailed for security-related offences

"It has nothing to do with any peace agreements between us and the Israelis," disham Abdel-Razek, the Paustinian minister responsible for prisoner affairs, told Reuters.



Santana's coming back

BEVERLY HILLS, California, Jan 5: Carlos Santana, whose career caught fire when he gave a scorching performance at Woodstock in 1969, received 10 Grammy nominations Tuesday for his commercial comeback album, "Supernatural," reports

The 52-year-old guitarist, who previously had received just five nominations overall, led all nominees for the 42nd

annual Grammys. "Supernatural," Santana's best-selling collaboration with such stars as Eric Clapton and Lauryn Hill, was nominated for

best album and rock album. Santana was also nominated for record of the year for "Smooth," which featured Rob Thomas of matchbox 20 and was Santana's first No. 1 single. "Smooth" and Santana's "Love of My Life" with Dave Matthews

accounted for two of the five nominees for pop vocal collaboration. "I've heard that the war the music rules apply, only 17 to 27 years old is cool. Well, surprise," Santana said. "You know, there's a reason why teen-agers listen to '60s music. the Doors, Jimi Hendrix, Bob Marley, Santana: They need to

pass through us to get to their thing." In pop music categories, the group TLC was second with six nominations for the album

"FanMail." "I was really shocked." TLC member Chilli said. "I can't wait to call my group members because they have no idea."

Syria, Israel start talks

SHERPHERDSTOWN, W Va. mony in 1996. Syrian officials Jan 5: Syrian and Israeli nego-A senior Syrian official said tiators started detailed peace talks on Tuesday after US Prestwo committees, one to discuss ident Bill Clinton resolved a the border after an Israeli dispute over how to begin and withdrawal from the Golan brought off a meeting between Heights and one on how to Syrian and Israeli leaders, re- share out the water resources in the area, kicked off the deports Reuters. The hour-long session be- tailed phase of the open-ended

tween Clinton, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Syria A spokesman for the Israeli Foreign Minister Farouq aldelegation declined to say which committees were the first Shara put to rest the agenda hitch that marred the resumpto meet. US officials, who are tion on Monday of the talks. mediating in the talks, were not held in the West Virginia counavailable to comment.

Israeli officials had said The US president, trying to committees on security arbreak the ice after more than rangements and normal rela-50 years of conflict, then hosted tions would meet first and disan informal social gathering at cussions would follow later in the secluded hotel venue in the the week on water and borders. town of Shepherdstown, with Syria, on the other hand,

six members from each of the has insisted for years that progress on these other issues As expected, committees on depends on Israel agreeing to elements of a future peace withdraw to the border as it stood before the war of 1967. State Department

agreement between the old foes later sat down together for the spokesman James Rubin said most substantial negotiations since talks broke down in acrithe meeting between Clinton. Barak and Shara was "quite productive". "It was a comprehensive and rigorous discussionof where we are and where we

- AFP photo

need to get to." he added. White House spokesman Joe Lockhart said it signalled that the parties were "getting down to business.

Clinton failed on Monday to bring Barak and Shara together because of the agenda dispute. Under a procedural deal hammered out by the United States. the working committees are to meet through the week for parallel discussions of the main is-

"They have a work plan and an organisational structure, Rubin told reporters.

The US spokesman on Tuesday again played down expectations that the talks would reach their immediate target, a "core' agreement on the four main is-

In remarks earlier to reporters in Washington, Clinton said: "I think they're both very serious. I think they both want an agreement."

like broccoli and cabbage, reduced the risk even further, Dr. Alan Kristal, a coinvestigator of the study, said in an interview. The results called into question earlier research

extolling the prostate cancerfighting benefits of lycopene, a carotenoid found most abundantly in cooked tomatoes. "Every men's magazine in

the country says eat more spaghetti sauce to cut your prostate cancer risk, but we found no relation at all," Kristal said.

The handful of studies that have shown protective effects of lycopene were flawed because they did not control for total vegetable consumption, he suggested

Scientists believe vegetables protect against cancer because they contain a wide variety of phytochemicals, which are essentially toxins produced to protect the plants. When consumed, the phytochemicals trigger the activity of enzymes that can detoxify cancerpromoting compounds in the

The new study looked at the associations of total fruit and vegetable consumption in 1,230 Seattle-area men between the ages of 40 and 64. Half of the men in the study had been diagnosed with prostate cancer while the other half were

randomly selected The results, which will be published in Wednesday's Journal of the National Cancer Institute, showed that men who ate three or more servings of vegetables a day had a 48 per cent lower risk of prostate cancer, compared with men who ate fewer than one serving

Toll rises to 11 in Norwegian train crash

OSLO, Jan 5: The toll in the head-on train crash near Lillehammer rose to 11 on Wednesday as rescuers pulled out four more charred bodies from the wreckage, Norwegian public

Eighteen people were seriously injured and another 22 passengers were missing feared dead after the crash midday Tuesday at Aasta station.

Wednesday were trapped in carriages which turned over on impact, said Vidar Pedersen. who is directing the emergency

Officials with the NSB national railway service said a mainline train travelling between Trondheim and Oslo at top speed hit a local train in a remote station at Aasta, 120 km north of Oslo, on Tuesday afternoon.

"Everything seemed normal until I was suddenly thrown forwards. Passengers and baggage were thrown upside down and our coach caught fire," passenger Robert Ulrikson told the NRK radio station. In all, 100 people -- 96 pas-

sengers and four rail employees Skjefstad said.

people were taken to hospital in Elverum suffering from burns. At least one person was airlifted to Bergen

member of the international turned home or been put up in community or not," the report nearby hotels.

Others, in a state of shock,

this was impossible to confirm under the bombs.

Interfax, reporting official statistics, said the Russian side lost eight men over the past day. And ITAR-TASS, without sourcing its information, said 150 Chechens had been killed.

fugees who have fled the fighting, interviewed on the Chechen-Ingush border, said that Chechen forces were in control of Alkhan-Kala.

The village just southwest of Grozny serves as an important entrance into the capital. Aslamber Batsayev, 27, said

Russians were shelling the village's outskirts, situated 12 km from the centre of Grozny.

Moscow has claimed several times to have control over the village. Batsayev's testimony -he fled along with others from Alkhan-Kala overnight -- was

November, when a similar blast on a bus in the city killed two and injured another 10. Pinochet

undergoes medical tests

LONDON, Jan 5: Former Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet arrived in hospital Wednesday in London for independent medical tests to help determine whether he is fit for extradition to Spain on torture charges, reports AFP.

A spokesman for Northwick Park Hospital in Harrow, northwest London, said the 84year-old general arrived under police escort at 8:45 a.m. (1445 BST), and would spend the day

A British court has ordered Pinochet to be extradited to Spain on charges of torture during the last years of his 1973-1990 dictatorship. He has lodged an appeal against the

ruling. His allies hope these tests will provide an escape route from extradition, after 15 fruitless months trying to persuade courts in Britain that he should not be handed over to

Madrid. They have long insisted that he is too frail to stand trial and, backed by the Chilean government, want him returned to Chile on compassionate

grounds. Britain however is under pressure from human rights groups and many in the ruling Labour party not to take the

diplomatically easy way out but to press ahead with his extradi-

Ivory Coast junta leader names transitional cabinet

ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast, Jan 5: Ivory Coast's first junta leader named himself president and defense minister Tuesday in an interim coalition government that will run the country until democracy is restored, reports AP. Within hours of the an-

nouncement, however, a jead ing opposition party said it was withdrawing its members from the 21-member Cabinet.

Former army chief Gen. Robert Guei, who seized power in a Dec. 24 coup. appointed military officers to the key ministries of defense, security. the interior and sports.

The remaining positions were distributed among political parties - including that of ousted President Henri Konan Bedie - and independents.

Opposition leader Laurent Gbagbo said his Ivorian Popular Front (FP!) party was pulling out its members because the rival Rally of the Republi-

Dramane Ouattara received more posts. Ouattara's party was given three Cabinet posts compared to the FPI's five, but Gbagbo claimed as many as 10 Cabinet

cans (RDR) party of Alassane

skipper in the America's Cup yacht race in 1977. He was considered a media maverick when he founded the global all-news television channel Cable News Network on a shoestring in 1980 from studios in Atlanta, far from the New Yorkbased television news industry. members were RDR supporters.

- AFP photo

N Korea demands compensation to improve ties with Japan

TOKYO, Jan 5: North Korea. fresh from setting up diplo-matic relations with Italy. Wednesday demanded war-time compensation and an apology from Japan as a condition for improved ties, reports AFP.

three delegations

"If the relations between the DPRK (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) and Japan are to be improved, Japan must sincerely apologise and compensate for the immeasurable misery, pain and disaster imposed by it upon the Korean people in the past and drop its hostile policy towards the

DPRK," said an official North

Korean media report. "The improvement of relations between the DPRK and Japan would be unthinkable without this action," said the daily Rodong Sinmun in a report carried by the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA).

Japan, which was a harsh colonial ruler of Korea from 1910-45, is seeking to set up diplomatic relations with North Korea.

North Korea also turned up In Beijing, Pyongyang's am-

the heat on the United States.

stopped at Ashmore Reef, 600 km north of the Australian mainland. Customs Minister Amanda Vanstone said Wednesday. AFP reports from Perth, Australia. The motorised Indonesian boat had a crew of six and was carrying 97 adult male passengers, nine women and 11 children, she said. It was discovered by Customs Coastwatch and has been formally detained by the Navy patrol boat HMAS Wol-

Boat with 117 immigrants held: A

boat carrying 117 suspected illegal immigrants has been

Prison riot in Venezuela kills 6: A gang fight at a prison in northwest Venezuela on Tuesday killed six inmates and injured 27, officials said. AP reports from

The uprising broke out at the Tocuyito prison in Carabobo state 140 kilometers (80 miles) southwest of Caracas. Gen. Vassily Kotosky Flores, the vice Interior Minister, said he did not immediately have details on what provoked the fight. He said some leaders of the conflict would be transferred to a different prison in Venezuela's eastern rain forests to try to avoid more bloodshed.

Taliban release 90 captives: Afghanistan's ruling Taliban militia released 90 prisoners from the capital's main jail in honour of the imminent Muslim Eid al-Fitr festivals, an official report said, reports AFP.

The prisoners were released Tuesday from Kabul's infamous Pulicharkhi jail under a decree from the supreme Taliban leader Mulla Mohammad Omar, the official Shariat Weekly said. "Of the 90 released prisoners, 45 were prisoners of war and the rest were military prisoners," the paper said.

bassador to Beijing Chu Chang-Jun told a press conference that North Korea would not send a delegation to the United States because it was still an enemy. "The government of the

United States must withdraw its troops from South Korea, stop its interference in the af fairs of Korea and stop threatening North Korea," Chu said. "Then we will not regard the US as an enemy.

The North Korean demands were issued a day after Italy said it had become the first member of the Group of Seven industrialised nations to set up diplomatic ties with the Stalin-Japan's government had to

pay compensation and apolo-gise to "keep pace with the domestic and foreign pressure for the improvement of relations between the DPRK and Japan,' said the KCNA report, monitored here.

Last month Japan's government lifted all remaining North Korea sanctions, including a food aid ban, which were imposed after Pyongyang testfired a medium-range missile over Japan in August 1998.

Exploratory talks were held between Japan and North Korea in Beijing from December 21-22 towards setting up diplomatic ties and a fresh meeting was due within months. But the North Korean report

said Japan's "liquidation of its

past crimes is not simply confined to the apology and compensation. "The point is whether Japan is willing to repent of its crimewoven past and turn over a new leaf or not and whether it will be qualified to be a full-fledged

added. "Any attempt to cover up its past crimes and go out for overseas aggression will only lead Japan to its ruin.

radio NRK reported, says AFP.

The bodies pulled out

-- were on board the two trains. Eighteen seriously injured

At least 45 people who were only slightly injured have re-

may have wandered away from the scene without notifying officials, complicating matters. the police spokesman said.

Russians move closer to centre of Grozny Russlan fighters had been taken GROZNY, Russia, Jan 5: Rusprisoner by the Chechens. But

sian forces fought their way closer to the centre of Grozny from the north on Wednesday as soldiers reported for the first time that Chechens were breaking the federal circle around their capital on the south, re-

ports AFP. In Moscow, Defence Minister Igor Sergeyev said after a top government meeting held by acting President Vladimir Putin that the "anti-terrorist' operation was going just according to plan.

But while speaking of progress in Grozny's north. soldiers stationed on the south said the fighting was difficult and deadly "This is the most dangerous zone," one officer stationed on

Grozny's southwestern Chernorechive district said. He said losses on both sides were heavy. Soldiers also spoke

65th birthday.

the third marriage for both.

and "Coming Home" in 1978.

said in a statement.

of rumours that several dozen

confirmed by other witnesses. Off the Record



reception honouring baseball legend Hank Aaron on his

Turner, Fonda separating

Oscar-winning actress Jane Fonda, whose union seemed made in

media heaven, said Tuesday they are separating because they need

small, private ceremony at Turner's north Florida ranch. It was

our marriage we find ourselves at a juncture where we must each

take some personal time for ourselves. Therefore, we have

mutually decided to spend some time apart." Turner and Fonda

public eye. They met then Soviet President Gorbachev at the

Kremlin in October 1990. In 1991 they were criticised by American

Indian groups when they were seen on television cheering on the

stance, was previously married to movie director Roger Vadim and

Tom Hayden, a 1960s dissident who later served in the California

state assembly. She won Oscars as best actress for "Klute" in 1971

Turner, a longtime environmentalist who owns hundreds of

thousands of acres of ranchland in the US west, was the winning

Fonda, a liberal activist who took a strident anti-Vietnam War

Atlanta Braves baseball team with the ritual "tomahawk chop."

Turner, 61, and Fonda, 62, married on December 21, 1991 in a

While we continue to be committed to the long-term success of

As a couple, Turner and Fonda seldom strayed long from the

personal time but will stay married, reports Reuters.

"We ask that you respect this decision," they said.

ATLANTA: Maverick CNN broadcast mogul Ted Turner and