

## The World

# Indian Army accused of failing to evict Pakistani forces from Kargil

Islamabad rejects reports

NEW DELHI, Aug 31: The Indian Army was facing mounting criticism Thursday over allegations that up to six frontier peaks in northern Kashmir remained under Pakistani occupation following last year's Kargil border conflict, reports AFP.

The controversy, which erupted after newspapers reported that a strategic peak, Point 5353, was still being held by the Pakistani army, snow-balled Wednesday when a parliamentary claim that five other Indian peaks were also in Islamabad's control.

The army has not yet reacted to the allegations. India celebrated its first "Victory Day" in July to commemorate the end of the 10-week conflict in Kashmir's Kargil region, which saw Indian troops push back Pakistan-backed militia from key mountain posts on the Indian side of the border.

The mass incursion over the Line of Control (LoC) dividing Indian- and Pakistan-administered Kashmir caught India un-

aware and triggered a vicious battle -- fought mainly in severe, high altitude conditions -- that claimed more than 1,000 lives on both sides.

The conflict caused grave concern within the international community, coming as it did one year after India and Pakistan conducted tit-for-tat nuclear tests.

On Wednesday, Ram Kumar Anand, a member of the Indian parliament and a prominent lawyer, said five other peaks apart from Point 5353, Point Attab-1, Point Saddle Bridge, Point Bunker Ridge, Shangruti and Dhaulanag -- were still in Pakistani hands.

Anand, who is defending an army colonel transferred for incompetence at the start of last year's conflict, said several top army officials had bungled during the crisis but got away scot-free.

The army chief General Ved Prakash Malik was in Poland, the corps commander Lieutenant General Krishan Pal was playing golf in the Kashmir summer capital Srinagar and

the Director General of Military Intelligence lieutenant general Ravi Sawhney, with an intelligence fund of 1.1 billion rupees (25.977 dollars), was not doing his job," he said.

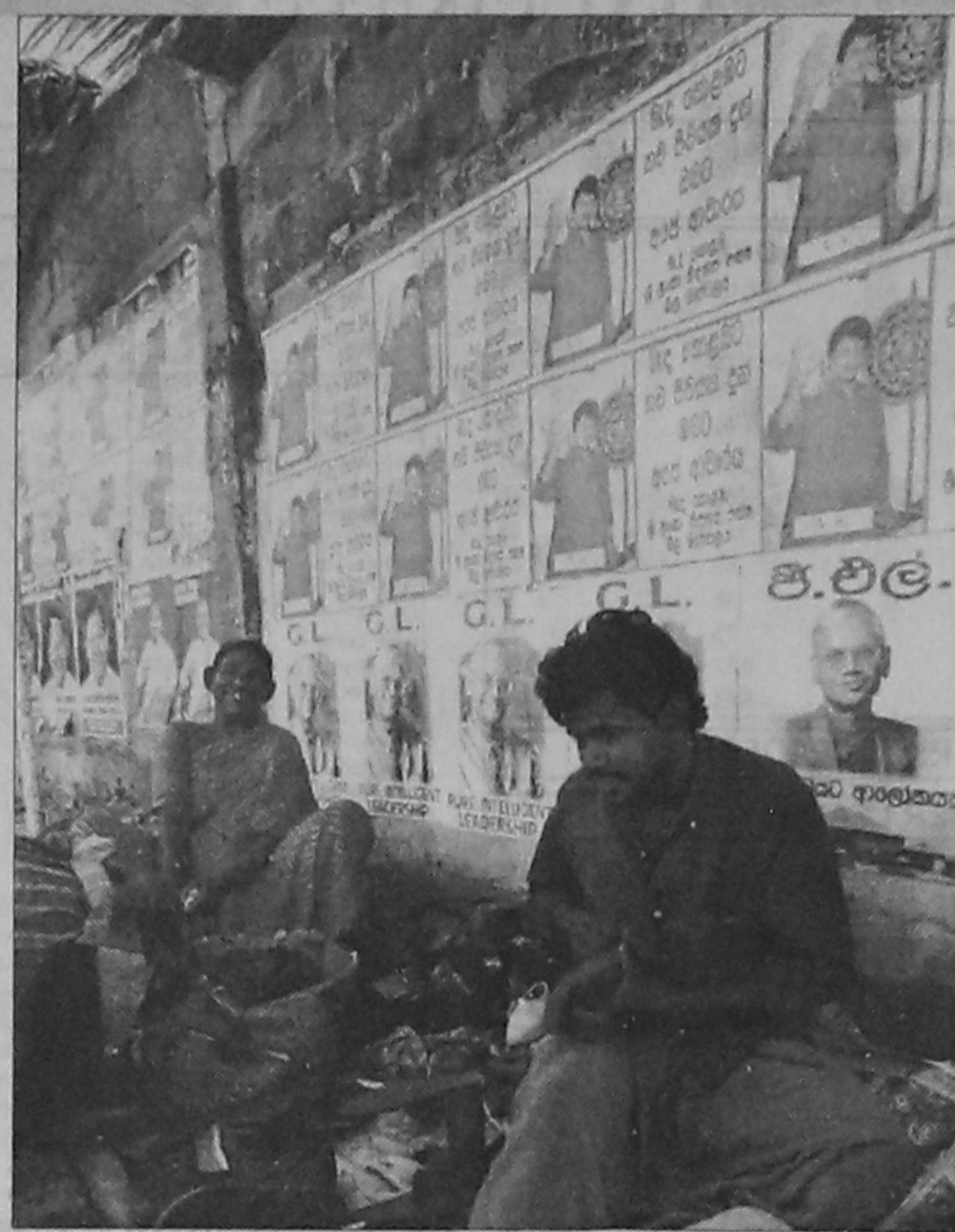
Anand said Point 5353 was of great strategic importance as the Pakistani army got a clear view of a crucial Indian military helipad as well as the arterial highway linking Srinagar to Kashmir's Ladakh region.

"The Indian army could see 40 kilometres (25 miles) inside Pakistani territory when they held that peak," he said.

Meanwhile, Pakistan today rejected reports from India that its troops were occupying some border peaks in Kargil region on the Indian side of the disputed Kashmir state.

"Pakistan is on its side of the Line of Control (LoC)," foreign office spokesman Riaz Mohammad Khan said referring to the unofficial border in the divided Himalayan state.

"We respect the LoC which is a temporary line pending the settlement of the Kashmir dispute," Khan added.



A Sri Lankan cobbler mends a shoe on the pavements of the capital Colombo yesterday in front of a wall plastered with election posters. At least three people have been killed in election-related violence and Buddhist monks have appealed to all political parties to act with restraint and prevent further clashes. — AFP photo

# Suharto fails to show up pleading ill health

Trial postponed for two weeks

JAKARTA, Aug 31: Judges today postponed the corruption trial of former Indonesian president Suharto for two weeks after he failed to show up pleading ill health, reports AFP.

"The session cannot be continued today and will be postponed... It will be continued in two weeks, to be precise, on Thursday, 14 September 2000 at 10:00 am Western Indonesian Time (9:00 BST)," Judge Lalu Meryun said.

The defendant's chair had stood empty as Judge Meryun, who heads the five-member judge panel, banged the gavel to mark the trial's opening.

As soon as anti-Suharto demonstrators outside the court heard the announcement of the delay, they began yelling and trying to push through the iron fence around the venue, the agriculture ministry in South Jakarta, an AFP reporter said.

"This is a farce, a soap opera," yelled one student leader.

"Reform! Revolution!" others yelled as rain began pouring down.

Suharto faces charges of stealing 571 million dollars

from the state by funneling money from huge tax-free charity foundations he ran during his 32-year rule into the businesses of family and friends.

Jakarta share prices closed the morning session lower in thin trade with market players concerned about possible unrest after Suharto's failure to turn up, dealers said.

The market composite index was down 4,505 points, or 1.0 percent, at 464,556.

The rupiah was at 8,350/8,380 to the dollar, compared to the day's opening rate of 8,275-8,295 but with dealers attributing the fall to a comment by the central bank governor rather than the trial-related issues.

Suharto's lawyers had argued when the court opened at 10:00 am (0300 GMT) that the health of the 79-year-old former dictator prevented him from showing up at the opening session of his trial.

Meryun asked the defence lawyers to produce at the next session the team of doctors who had decided, after a medical examination, that Suharto was unfit to stand trial.

A state-appointed team who

had examined Suharto earlier this year, will also be summoned to appear, he said.

But Meryun said their explanation to the court must be in plain language understandable to all.

"Twenty-three doctors have conducted a medical examination and came to the conclusion that our client is in an ailing state and therefore our client cannot take part in the trial," one of the defence lawyers, Juan Felix Tampubolon told the court.

He was reading from a letter from the team of doctors containing their verdict on Suharto's health.

In the letter, the doctors cited three previous strokes and the threat of a possible impending recurrence, as well as a string of other ailments, including hypertension, diabetes, kidney problems and an irregular heart beat.

Suharto defence lawyer Muhammad Assegaf told journalists after the session that the former head of state will not show up at the next session either.

# Muslim ally agrees to contest polls with Lankan ruling party

COLOMBO, Aug 31: An estranged Muslim ally of the Sri Lanka government resolved its differences today and agreed to contest the October parliamentary elections with the ruling party, officials said, reports AFP.

The Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) held lengthy talks till early Thursday with President Chandrika Kumaratunga to agree on their electoral arrangements for the October 10 elections, party officials said.

SLMC leader and Ports Minister M. H. M. Ashraff quit the cabinet last week in protest after a scathing attack against him launched by cabinet colleague and fellow Muslim Transport Minister A. H. M. Fowzie.

Following their latest talks SLMC officials said they would go back to their original position of contesting four out of the 22 electoral districts on their own and the balance together

with Kumaratunga's People's Alliance.

However, the SLMC will run as the National Unity Alliance (NUA), giving it a more secular identity, but use the Muslim Congress symbol of the tree in the four districts they will contest on their own.

Ashraff went to Mecca in a huff last week after quitting, returning Tuesday. Party sources said the government had assured him there would be a disciplinary hearing against Fowzie.

Earlier, Ashraff had insisted on Fowzie's sacking even before entering talks with the government.

The SLMC, which won seven seats at the August 1994 elections, provided crucial support which allowed Kumaratunga to form a government even though it only had a one-seat majority.

The SLMC has had an uneasy relationship with other Muslim leaders within Kumaratunga's PA.

# Wickremesinghe was aware of plans to assassinate me, says Chandrika

COLOMBO, Aug 31: Sri Lanka President Chandrika Kumaratunga has claimed her main opposition leader, Ranil Wickremesinghe, was aware of plans to assassinate her, the state-run Daily News reported today, says AFP.

President Kumaratunga while addressing a meeting of party supporters in the southern town of Wellawaya, said a member of the opposition United National Party (UNP) was also involved in the "conspiracy".

"I challenge Wickremesinghe to deny it publicly and clear his name if the allegation is false," Kumaratunga was quoted as saying.

Kumaratunga said the unnamed opposition member had been in "constant talks with the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) to commit this crime."

# Typhoon kills 4 in China

BEIJING, Aug 31: Typhoon Prapiroon caused at least four deaths as it brushed by China's east coast, despite massive efforts to minimise the damage, local media reported today, says AFP.

Four women, who were on their way home after catching clams in eastern Zhejiang province's Cangnan county, were swept into the sea and drowned on Wednesday, the sohu.com web site said.

A small cargo boat got caught in the typhoon off the city of Jiaxing, also in Zhejiang, and sank to the bottom of the sea, while its crew of three was rescued, according to the Shanghai Daily.

Prapiroon - Thai for "God of Rain" - also hit Shanghai on Wednesday, causing a heavy downpour and strong winds, although preliminary reports suggested no casualties had been sustained in China's largest city.

# Schroeder shows respect to racist murder victim

DESSAU, Germany, Aug 31: German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder laid a wreath today in memory of a black African from Mozambique whose racist killers were convicted and jailed the previous day, reports AFP.

He laid the wreath at the memorial site in the city park of the east German town of Dessau, where a 24-year-old neo-Nazi and two 16-year-old skinheads knocked down Alberto Adriano and repeatedly kicked his head.

A court in Halle gave the 24-year-old a life sentence and ordered the other two, considered minors, detained for nine years for the murder.

The chancellor, who is touring eastern Germany in connection with the region's neo-Nazi violence against foreigners, said Wednesday the sentences were "appropriate retribution for an atrocious crime".

# British press marks 3rd anniversary of Di's death

LONDON, Aug 31: Sections of the British press marked the third anniversary of Princess Diana's death on Thursday with fulsome tributes but the momentous date was ignored in most newspapers, reports AFP.

The staunchly royalist Daily Mail led the eulogies with a two-page tribute to the late Princess of Wales and a side-swipe at businessman Mohammed Al Fayed, the father of Diana's lover, Dodi.

Al Fayed on Wednesday said he planned to sue the United States government to force it to disclose documents relating to the death of the couple. The Central Intelligence Agency later denied it had a file on Diana.

In an editorial, the Daily Mail exhorted the British public not to forget Diana, who was killed aged 36 when the car she was in crashed in a Paris underpass three years ago.

"It has become fashionable -- among the chattering classes at least -- to 'disparage her and the effect she had on us," the newspaper opined. "But Diana's beauty... will live on and never be forgotten."

She certainly inspired love and affection, and sometimes disapproval, but nobody can deny that she was one of the most intriguing and beautiful women of the late 20th century. She deserves to be remembered."

The newspaper was scathing about Al Fayed's law suit, saying he was attempting to "prove his discredited conspiracy theories."

But in an indication that Diana's legacy is perhaps not as durable as many thought at the time of her death, tributes in most of the other newspapers were conspicuous by their absence.

Even the royalist Daily Telegraph and Sun newspapers ignored the anniversary, while most newspapers mentioned it only in connection with Al Fayed's lawsuit.

The left-wing Daily Mirror pointedly focused on the fate of Trevor Rees-Jones, Diana's bodyguard who was seriously injured in the car crash.

# Malaysia celebrates National Day

Opposition demands 'real democracy'

SHAH ALAM, Malaysia, Aug 31: Tens of thousands staged colourful National Day parades across Malaysia Thursday as Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad warned them of what he called foreign threats to sovereignty, reports AFP.

In the capital Kuala Lumpur a small group of opposition supporters, shouting "Reformasi!" (Reform), gathered to demand "real democracy" for the country which achieved independence from Britain 43 years ago.

Malaysia's king, Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah Mahathir, ministers and diplomats joined thousands of spectators for the main parade,

held this year in the town of Shah Alam west of the capital.

Senior opposition leaders including Fadzil Noor, president of the Parti Islam Se-Malaysia, were also present to watch the parade and an air force flypast.

Similar parades were held throughout the country. Mahathir, in a foreword to a souvenir publication, said Malaysia was acknowledged as a model country which combined rapid economic growth and social and economic stability.

He called for tolerance in the multiracial nation and urged Malaysians to be alert to internal and external threats.



US President Bill Clinton (L) and Colombian President Andres Pastrana walk among cultural street scenes late Wednesday in downtown Cartagena, Colombia. Clinton visited Colombia with US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, US Attorney General Janet Reno, US Drug Enforcement Czar General Barry McCaffrey, and leading members of the US Congress, to support "Plan Colombia", Colombia's anti-drug campaign. — AFP photo

# Clinton pledges support for Pastrana's anti-drug drive

CARTAGENA, Colombia, Aug 31: President Andres Pastrana said he was "extraordinarily pleased" with his meeting with US President Bill Clinton, saying it boosted their "strategic alliance" against drug trafficking and for democracy, reports AFP.

"We got total support from the United States for Colombia's government and people, there's a bipartisan policy in fighting drug trafficking; we touched on the key issue of trade and President Clinton, I think, came away with a real image of Colombia, which is very important," Pastrana told reporters late Wednesday after Clinton returned to Washington.

During his brief, 10-hour visit here, Clinton pledged US support for Pastrana's anti-drug campaign and reassured

his audience that Colombia would not turn into another Vietnam for the United States.

"We are not going to get into a shooting war," Clinton declared.

"This is not Vietnam, neither is it Yankee imperialism," he added.

Clinton's visit marked the launching of Plan Colombia, an ambitious 7.5-billion-dollar package of economic and security measures designed to jumpstart the country's economy, curb drug trafficking and end decades of leftist insurgency.

"I believe this will work because I think that this president and this government are willing to take the risks necessary to make it work," Clinton said after meeting Pastrana.

The United States has earmarked 1.3 billion dollars to back Plan Colombia. Part of the

money will be used to purchase 60 US combat helicopters and train Colombian troops involved in the campaign against drug cartels.

"Our program is anti-drug and pro-peace," assured Clinton, saying that in his talks with Pastrana he had reaffirmed US support for his peace process with Colombian rebels. Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez has warned that US military aid to Colombia "could result in the escalation of the conflict and Vietnamization of the entire area."

Clinton made clear he believed such comparisons were unjustified.

There won't be American involvement in a shooting war, because they don't want it and because we don't want it," he told a news conference.

# 2 Pakistanis held for massacre of Sikhs in Kashmir

SRINAGAR, India, Aug 31: Indian police in Kashmir said today they had arrested two Pakistani Muslim militants for their alleged role in the massacre of 36 Sikhs in a village on March 21, reports AFP.

Police Inspector P.S. Gill said the two Pakistanis, identified as Abu Mohammad and Abu Saharia, were members of the Pakistan-based hardline Lashkar-e-Taiba militant group, which has also been blamed for massacring 35 Hindu pilgrims on August 1.

The Chatsinghpura village massacre, which marked the first major act of violence against Sikhs in Kashmir since the Muslim insurgency here began in 1989, took place on the eve of US President Bill Clinton's five-day visit to India.

# 'Taliban lose ground in Baghlan'

KABUL, Aug 31: Afghan opposition groups today claimed they had captured hilltops overlooking the key district of Nahrin in northern Baghlan province in fighting with the ruling Taliban militia, reports AFP.

Forces loyal to opposition military supremo Ahmad Shah Masood captured 18 Taliban posts atop Yaka Archa mountain overlooking the twin old and new towns of Nahrin in a pre-dawn attack, they said.

# Sierra Leone rebels free 5 British captives

FREETOWN, August 31: A renegade militia group in Sierra Leone on Wednesday released five of the 11 British soldiers it was holding captive, British officials said, holding out hope that the remaining six would also be liberated soon.

Five of the British soldiers being held have been released and are now in UK (United Kingdom) hands, they are safe and well," a British military spokesman in Freetown, Lieutenant Commander Tony Cramp, told AFP.

"We are delighted at this major development and clearly this augurs well for the release of the remaining detainees."

He would not say what, if any, conditions had been attached to the release.

He said much of the credit for the breakthrough goes to "the combined efforts of UNAMSIL (the UN force in Sierra Leone) and Jorbatt (the Jordanian UNAMSIL contingent)."

In London, a spokesman for the Foreign Office confirmed the release of the five.

"They are in British hands," the spokesman said. "We are hopeful the others will be released soon. Negotiations will continue tomorrow for the release of the remaining detainees."

# Koreas agree on family reunions, rail links

SEOUL, Aug 31: South and North Korea have agreed on more family reunions and further economic cooperation, including railway links, during a new round of talks in Pyongyang, pool reports said today, says AFP.

But the two sides have yet to agree on steps to reduce decades of military tension on Thursday, the last day of three-day talks, they said.

"Both sides are still waging a tug-of-war over a few issues yet to be settled," said a Seoul official quoted by pool reports from Pyongyang.

Some 100 people each from

both North and South Korea will visit each other's capitals on two occasions this year to meet their relatives separated by the 1950-53 Korean War, the reports said.

The two Koreas had allowed family reunions earlier this month.

Unification Minister Park Jae-Kyu, the South's chief delegate to the rapprochement talks, Wednesday proposed regular military talks and a military hotline with North Korea.

But the North's delegation, led by cabinet adviser Jon Kim-Jin, was reluctant to strike a deal over military issues.

# World leaders to discuss UN role in 21st century

UNITED NATIONS, Aug 31: More than 150 world leaders are expected next week to consider adapting the 55-year-old United Nations to fight new scourges of global warming and AIDS as well as poverty and war, reports AFP.

Diplomats said their heads of state and government would focus on themes set out in April in a report by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, who said:

"We must learn how to govern better, and we must learn better how to govern together."

The UN launched a publicity campaign in New York this month recalling the goals

which Annan wants the three-day summit to endorse for 2015:

- to halve from 20 to 10 percent the proportion of the world's population without access to safe drinking water;
- to halve the proportion of people living on less than one dollar a day, currently 22 percent;
- to ensure that all children complete primary education;
- to halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Calling for "a new ethic of global stewardship," Annan also urged all states to ratify the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, which

commits industrial nations to cut greenhouse gas emissions over the coming 12 years by an average of five percent below 1990 levels.

The protocol is one of 25 legal instruments which national leaders will be invited to sign in front of television cameras on the sidelines of the Millennium Summit, which starts on September 6.

The UN deputy secretary general, Louise Frechette, told reporters the summit "will raise the level of commitment" of world leaders.



Flag bearers of the Malaysian flag march during the National Day parade in Shah Alam, just outside Kuala Lumpur yesterday. Malaysia celebrates its 43rd National Day with a march-past of floats, traditional costumes, and various other attractions. — AFP photo

# BRIEFLY

**Quake jolts Taiwan:** An earthquake measuring 4.3 on the Richter scale hit southern Taiwan Thursday, but there were no reports of casualties or damage, seismologists said, AFP reports from Taipei.

The quake struck at 11:06 am (9:06 BST), with its epicentre 1.9 km northwest of southern Chiayi city. It originated 10.7 kilometers below the earth's surface.

On June 11, a quake with a magnitude of 6.7 hit central Taiwan, killing two people and injuring 36.

**3 Iraqis hurt in air raids:** Three Iraqis, including a child, were wounded on Wednesday in attacks by US and British warplanes on a village in the southern province of Muthanna, the press quoted a military spokesman as saying, AFP reports from Baghdad.

The planes, one of which was hit by anti-aircraft fire, attacked civilian installation in the village, damaging a number of houses, the reports said Thursday. The planes returned to their bases in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, the reports said.