

Israel, Palestinians will go back to peace table: Powell

US secy of state kicks off ME trip

AFP, Cairo
US Secretary of State Colin Powell said Saturday he was certain that Israel and the Palestinians would return to the peace table but declined to predict when talks might resume or what form they might take.

finding a "better way" to contain Iraq.
Powell said he intended to listen to Arab concerns about US and UN policy toward Iraq, particularly as it relates to improving the sanctions regime, but would not be distracted by any protest of last week's attacks on Baghdad.



US President George W. Bush (2nd-L) and his wife Laura (L) welcome British Prime Minister Tony Blair (R) and his wife Cherie (2nd-R) on Friday to the presidential retreat Camp David in Maryland. Blair and his wife were scheduled to remain overnight at the compound with the Bushes.

Bush backs European rapid reaction force

AFP, Camp David
US President George W. Bush, speaking at a joint press conference with British Prime Minister Tony Blair here Friday, expressed support for a European rapid reaction force as long as it did not undermine NATO.

More than snail's pace

AP, London
A postcard that took more than a century to travel from Australia to Scotland will be returned to the sender's relatives, Royal Mail officials said Friday.

Chaotic evacuation of refugees from Borneo fighting begins

AFP, Sampit
A chaotic evacuation began Saturday of some 24,000 refugees from this Borneo river town fleeing newly a week of bloody clashes between Dayak tribesmen and Madurese settlers.

GMT).
He said the chaos subsided once the refugees had boarded the trucks and were escorted by army soldiers, rifles at the ready in case of attacks by Dayak tribesmen, for the one-km drive to Sampit port.

Taliban execute 2 women for adultery, flog 12 others

AFP, Kabul
Afghanistan's ultra-orthodox Taliban regime publicly executed two women and flogged a dozen others convicted of adultery in the southern city of Kandahar, the official Radio Shariat said Saturday.

Russia, China agree to build anti-missile defence system

AFP, Seoul
Russia and China have already agreed to build anti-missile defence networks to cope with the controversial national missile defence system (NMD) of the United States, according to a Pyongyang daily.

"Russia has declared that it would not sit by should the United States push ahead with its plans for the NMD," the paper said in an editorial titled "grave activities destroying peace."

Kuwait renews defence pact with US

AFP, Kuwait City
A defence pact between the United States and Kuwait signed after the 1991 Gulf War has been renewed for another 10 years, the Kuwaiti defence minister said in a report published on Saturday.



A Dayaknese, while holding a spear, passes a Madurese's burning house in Patai sub-district, Kotawaringin Timur, some 160 km from Central Kalimantan's main city, Palangkaraya on Friday. The death toll from seventh days of brutal ethnic clashes in Indonesian Borneo Island in Sampit rose to at least 143 as the clashes spread as Dayak tribesmen took control of the city.

Chandrika talks SAARC, civil war with Indian leaders

AFP, New Delhi
Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga Friday held talks with Indian leaders here on the two-decade-old civil war in her country and efforts to revive the SAARC regional forum.

Iraq, UN to resume talks after two-year hiatus

AFP, Baghdad
Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammad Said al-Sahhaf, who will meet Annan Monday for two days in New York, has expressed no optimism about the talks, predicting only that they "will be long."

12 Muslim rebels, 1 soldier killed in Southern Philippines

AFP, Zamboanga
About 12 Muslim extremist kidnapers and one infantry man were killed in clashes on the southern Philippine island of Jolo, where the guerrillas are still holding an American and a Filipino hostage, the military said Saturday.

Equatorial Guinea's govt resigns

AFP, Malabo
Equatorial Guinea's President Teodoro Obiang Nguema accepted the resignation of the government of Prime Minister Angel Serafin Seriche Dougan late Friday amid a "constitutional crisis", the president's office said.