

Milosevic claims 'heroic defence' against NATO

AFP, The Hague
Slobodan Milosevic told his war crimes trial Thursday that his country had mounted a "heroic defence" against NATO "aggression" in the 1999 war on Yugoslavia.

Kidnapped US reporter is dead, Omar tells court

AFP, Karachi
British-born Islamic militant Sheikh Omar on Thursday told a Pakistani court that abducted US journalist Daniel Pearl was dead and admitted responsibility for the kidnapping.

Nation of Islam opens 5-day convention in Los Angeles

AFP, Los Angeles
Laid tight security, the Nation of Islam, led by Louis Farrakhan, inaugurated its five-day world convention here on Wednesday.

US country music legend Jennings dies

AFP, Nashville
US country music singer Waylon Jennings, who fatefully missed the 1959 flight that killed his friend and mentor Buddy Holly, has died at the age of 64, a spokesman said Wednesday.

Koreas may resume talks in March

AFP, Seoul
North and South Korea will resume dialogue next month, with the agenda likely to include fertiliser aid for the communist North, press reports said Thursday.

Attack on US base in Kandahar Search on for attackers

AFP, Washington
A US base in Kandahar, Afghanistan, housing al-Qaida and Taliban detainees came under attack Wednesday, as a suspected member of Osama bin Laden's terror network was killed in a confrontation with police.

Bush keeps options wide open on Iraq US preparing mission to oust Saddam

REUTERS, Washington
US President George W Bush, speaking as his administration considered ways to oust Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, said yesterday he reserved all his options to act would not disclose them at this time.

Israeli tanks play cat and mouse with Palestinians

AFP, Gaza City
Israeli tanks played cat and mouse with Palestinian militants Thursday, leaving and re-entering Gaza Strip towns, as Yasser Arafat, showing signs strain after 10 weeks of Israeli siege, told Washington he takes responsibility for an arms smuggling scandal.

Millions vote in Indian state polls

AFP, Lucknow
India's most populous state, Uttar Pradesh, went to the polls Thursday amid tight security and concerns for the central government that a bad result could undermine the stability of the multi-party coalition in New Delhi.

had been contracted to patrol the area outside the base perimeter and were released. Three other people were seen leaving the scene in a vehicle but it was unclear whether they were assailants, the spokesman said.

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Subdued Valentine's in Asia

AFP, Hong Kong
Hearts and flowers took a back seat to handcuffs, angry protests and text messages on Thursday as Asia celebrated a volatile Valentine's Day.

Number of Nobel Peace Prize nominees soar

AFP, Oslo
One hundred and fifty one people have been nominated for the 2002 Nobel Peace Prize, a substantial increase from the 136 candidates put up last year, the Norwegian Nobel Committee in Oslo announced Wednesday.



US President George W. Bush (L) escorts Pakistan's President Pervez Musharraf (R) after holding their joint press conference in the Grand Foyer of the White House on Wednesday. Bush and Musharraf earlier met in the Oval Office.

Musharraf gets pat on his back from Bush

Blames go to India for stalemate in talks
In a joint news conference, conducted beneath a presidential seal in the White House's marble foyer, Bush also addressed possible threats from Iraq and said he was considering all options to keep Saddam Hussein in check.

Russians close to backing UN sanctions against Iraq

AFP, London
US Secretary of State Colin Powell believes he is within a whisker of winning Russian support for UN "smart sanctions" against Iraq, a British daily reported Thursday.



An Indonesian man holds his shoes as he tries to escape from his flooded village in Jakarta on Thursday. Thousands of people were forced to flee their homes for the second time in a month as the floods returned Thursday to many parts of the Indonesian capital, officials said.



Samata Party leader and former Manipur chief minister Radhabindo Kojiam (L) has his finger marked with ink by a polling officer before casting his vote in the Manipur state elections on Thursday in Imphal, capital of India's northeast Manipur state.



A young Thai couple poses for a romantic Valentine's Day photo in the middle of a heart made of pink and white balloons in a downtown shopping centre in Bangkok on Thursday. Popular teen hangouts in Bangkok will be under close watch on Valentine's Day by police and teachers to keep youngsters from prematurely losing their virginity.