Temple collapse kills six

NEW DELHI — A Hindu temple under construction in Gujarat collapsed yesterday and up to eight people were buried under the rubble, feared dead. Twenty others were injured. Six to eight people were trapped when the roof of the Ramcharita Manas Temple collapsed at Ratanpari, 15 kms from Rajkot. About 30 labourers were working on the site when the roof collapsed, District Administrator S. Jagdeeshan said. Thirteen people were taken to hospital in Rajkot, and seven others were released after treatment. - PTI

Ciller's New Year

ANKARA — Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller will celebrate the New Year in Diyarbakir, capital of southeast Turkey where Kurdish separatists are fighting a bloody nine-year-old revolt. "The prime minister and her husband will be in Diyarbakir for New Year's eve," an aide from her office said. Ciller wished to spend the evening with security forces fighting the separatist guerillas and the people of the region who support them, it said. - Reuter

New Year in Manila

MANILA — Manila police were ordered onto the streets of the Philippine capital yesterday to try to curb the rash of deaths and mainings that greets each New Year. Police themselves were warned against firing their guns to welcome in the New Year, when Filipinos compete to make the loudest possible noise in this city of eight million people. "We will exercise maximum tolerance in implementing the ban on the use of large firecrackers, but for those caught firing guns on New Year's eve there shall be no mercy," said National Police Chief General Umberto Rodriguez. Last year at least 16 people died at New Year and scores more were badly injured by falling bullets and the fireworks which turn Manila's streets into a virtual battleground. -

Opium seizure in Vietnam

HANOI — Police seized 129 kilograms of opium in northwestern Vietnam and arrested six people on trafficking charges, including an employee of a state bank, an official newspaper reported. The Dec. 15 seizure was the largest opium seizure in recent years in Lai Chau province, which borders China, the Nhan Dan (The People) daily reported. Prime Minister Vo Van Kiet told the national assembly this week that drug addiction and other social problems were spreading causing great worry to "every family." Some government officials are using their positions to get involved in smuggling, he said. -

Major's claim on recession

LONDON - Prime Minister John Major said on Saturday that Britain was leading Europe out of recession and could look forward to strong growth and low inflation in 1994. "It is time for us to be more confident as a country and to put the pessimists in their box," he said in a New Year essage to activists in his Conservative Party.

Major added: "The plain fact is that we are

leading Europe out of recession and we must build on the advantages that gives us." Painting an upbeat picture as Britain emerges from its longest recession in half a century, he said: 'After a difficult period for many people, we now have a tremendous opportunity before us. We are seeing stronger-than-expected growth combined with lower-than-expected inflation." Inflation has been tamed to a current annual rate of 2.5 per cent but Britons face a host of new taxes over the next few years as the government has pledged to eliminate a £50 billion budget deficit by the year

> 1994 - Year of **Oman's Heritage**

India-Pakistan talks today

ISLAMABAD — India and Pakistan begin 1994 with fresh talks on Kashmir. But neither side appears willing to budge.

When Indian Foreign Secretary J.N. Dixit arrives January 1 for meetings with his Pakistani counterpart, Shaharyar Khan, the atmosphere will

be far from friendly. Both nations have accused each other of spying, sabotage and dis-

information campaigns since the talks were announced in November. "I do not expect talks to yield any results," said A.P. Venkateswaran, a former foreign secretary of India and now a political analyst.

Pakistan's Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, who returned to power in October, says she wants relations to improve between the two, but her government made clear it doesn't plan to make any concessions on Kash-"There is nothing for Pakistan to offer," Munir Akram, a spokesman

for Pakistan's foreign ministry, said when asked what Pakistan would pro-(See also page 5)

Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao yes-

terday rejected Finance Minister

Manmohan Singh's resignation

ending the week-long uncertainty

over his continuance in the min-

An official spokesman said Dr.

Singh's resignation has not been

accepted by Rao in the light of

parliamentary discussion on the

(JPC) report and taking into ac-

Dr. Singh offered to quit the

count all other factors.

to be completed.

Rao rejects Singh's resignation NEW DELHI — Indian Prime cabinet on December 23 after a 322-page JPC report criticised his ministry over multi-billion securities scandal and had left it to the

prime minister to take a decision. A large number of top businessmen, economists, com- deputies led by Ajit Singh into the mentators and senior deputies of ruling Congress-I Party on Thursthe Congress-I urged Rao not to accept the resignation as it would be a blow to the on-going reforms the prime minister had rejected

Joint Parliamentary Committee Soon after rejecting Dr. Singh's resignation, Narasimha Rao had a Rao wrote to Dr. Singh that 45-minute meeting with President Shankar Dayal Sharma to apprise there was enormous agenda before the government which needs

him of his decision and other latest political developments. Besides the resignation offer of

Dr. Singh and the future of B. Shankaranand and Rameshwar Thakur, indicted by the JPC, another major development in Indian politics was the merger of 10 breakaway centrist Janata Dal

The first clear indication that resignation came on Thursday evening when he described Dr. Singh as "my finance minister" during his brief concluding remarks in the Lok Sabha on the JPC report debate. The formal rejection now ends the suspense over the matter. - PTI

NICOSIA - The leader of the over Professor Kazem Rajavi's as-

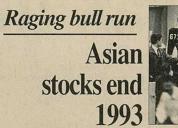
sassins to the Swiss judiciary.' He described the act as "an extraordinary concession to the Iranian regime." France has sent back to Iran the two Iranians sought by Switzerland for the murder of Kazem Rajavi, the elder brother of the Mujahidden Khalq leader, the French Prime Minister's of

France said earlier that it had rejected Switzerland's extradition request for Sharif Esfanhi-Mashen and Ahmed Taheri, who were arrested in Paris in November 1992 in connection

The office of Prime Minister Edouard Balladur said in a statement that they would not be extradited "for reasons linked to the national interest.'

days without charge and then released. Kazem Rajavi, Iran's first post-

ANCE TIMES OF OMAN



BUSINESS/Page 8



Basketball | Hornets snap

Weather

19 66 15 59

Bulls' winning

SPORTS/Page 11

dustry" in 1991 and 1992.

'YEAR OF OMAN'S HERITAGE' BEGINS

MUSCAT — As declared by His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said on the occasion of the 23rd National Day last November, Oman today begins the "Year of Oman's Heritage"

FEATURES/Page 7

Saturday ● January 1, 1994 ● 18 Rajab 1414

Bollywood

year of

The Year of Oman's Heritage" will witness various activities on the heritage front, including the setting up of an Institute of Art to provide increased opportunities for the Omani youth.

"Oman has not neglected its glorious heritage in its endeavours to build a modern state through science and technology. It has consistently combined this heritage with its modernisation.

'To this end, Oman has established its extensive modern infra-

Youth" came to an end yesterday, having achieved all the targets that were set for it, like more attention to the Omani youth from both the private and public sectors and the Omani youth contrib-

uting positively for the country's development Earlier, similar successes were achieved for the "Year of In-

Internal and external policy achievements last year

MUSCAT — The year 1993 was full of major achievements for the Sultanate of Oman in internal and external fields, which strengthened the country's position in these sectors. In external affairs, His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said met with a number of Arab and other leaders, who had visited the Sultanate during the year.

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shop

WORLD/Page 4

attack

AS DECLARED

BY H.M. ON

NATIONAL DAY

Four killed

Cape Town

Towards the end of the year, His Majesty participated in the GCC Summit in Riyadh, which resulted in a number of decisions aimed at unifying economic and commercial policies of the GCC states.

The Summit also appeared to reduce the oil production trend in world oil prices, if other non-Opec states also join n the effort and reduce their production. Omani Petroleum & Minerals Minister Said bin Ahmed Al Shanfari, is already touring the non-Opec states for the same purpose.

In the sphere of internal policies and development process, His Majesty's tour of the Dakhiliya region gave a great impetus to the developmental activities in the region. The same development tempo was maintained all over the Sultanate and the projects included in the Five Year Plan were mplemented despite the lower petroleum prices globally The Majlis A'Shura also continued its role during the

year as a necessary element in the political life of the coun-

It held a number of sessions, which highlighted the

The important national event of the year was the general

sults of which were published only last week. The census figures are expected to help in formulating the correct de-

(Chronology of Omani events: on Page 2)

Al Hayat hails Majlis A'Shura

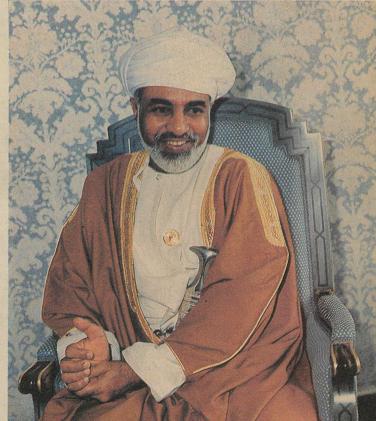
LONDON — The London-based newspaper Al-Hayat considers the dedication of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said towards the success of the Majlis A'Shura during 1993, "as one of the mot important events in the Gulf." Evaluating important Arab events in the year 1993, the newspaper also considers the 14th GCC Summit, recently held at Riyadh, with reflecting the solidarity of its six member countries towards the oil

price and the declaration of the Sultanate about its readiness to decrease its oil production from January 1 as among the prominent Gulf events and among the important Arab & international events.

Another notable event of 1993, as judged by the paper, was the formation of Majlis A'Shura in Saudi Arabia and the activities of the Bahrainis Majlis. Events of Kuwait, according to the newspaper, were the fixing of

its border by the Security Council, its defence agreement with Russia, following that with America and Britain. and the joint exercises of Kuwaiti forces with America, France, Russia. Britain and Italy.

UAE's declaration about the fixation of its regional waters and the dis cussion with Iran on the dispute of the three islands, were also considered by the paper as major events of the year



HIS MAJESTY SULTAN QABOOS BIN SAID

Shanfari to tour Mexico, Malaysia and Brunei



DUBAI — Oman's Oil Minister Said bin Ahmed al-Shanfari plans to visit Mexico, Brunei and Malaysia on a second tour of non-Opec oil producers, the Oman News Agency (ONA) re-

"(Shanfari) announced in a statement that he will carry out another tour to Mexico, Brunei and

Malaysia to pursue...joint action between (Oman) and non-Opec producers to study the is-

sue of falling oil prices," said the ONA. It did not say when Shanfari planned to start the

The minister was speaking to ONA in Muscat after returning from Moscow at

He has been trying to persuade them jointly to curb production in an attempt to strengthen oil prices brought down this year by factors in-cluding world recession and record crude proction by North Sea states Britain and Norway February futures for the world benchmark Brent blend of crude oil were trading around \$13.30 in

London yesterday, just above five-year lows. The 12-member Opec, which is dominated by Saudi Arabia and produces about 40 per cent of the world's crude oil, has said it will not reduce its output unless non-member producers also agree to make cuts.

Oman, a non-Opec producer which is acting as an intermediary between the organisation and other non-members, has already said it will cut

its output five percent from January.

The ONA reported earlier on Thursday that following Shanfari's visit to Moscow, Oman and Russia agreed to set up a joint action team to

discuss action on prices. But a Russian oil ministry spokesman told Reuters in Moscow, "I don't think it is in our interests (to reduce production or exports). On the

Russia currently produces about seven million barrels per day (bpd) of crude oil, but only 1.6 million bpd of this is sold abroad for hard

Shanfari's tour this week also took him to

small independents Egypt, Yemen and Syria. who said they were prepared to cut their output and to major North Sea producers Britain and Norway, who declined to make any pledges on curbing theirs. "It is hard for some of the industrial countries

to step out of their economic and other committhe end of a tour of Eu- ments...but they understand the unsatisfactory situation," Shanfari told ONA. -Reuter

Setback for Iranian opposition

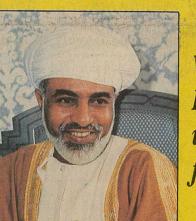
Iraqi-based Iranian opposition group Mujahideen Khalq has protested over a French decision to reject a Swiss request to extradite two Iranians sought for the 1990 murder of his elder brother. Massoud Rajavi "expressed his

fice said on Thursday.

with the killing of Kazem Rajavi.

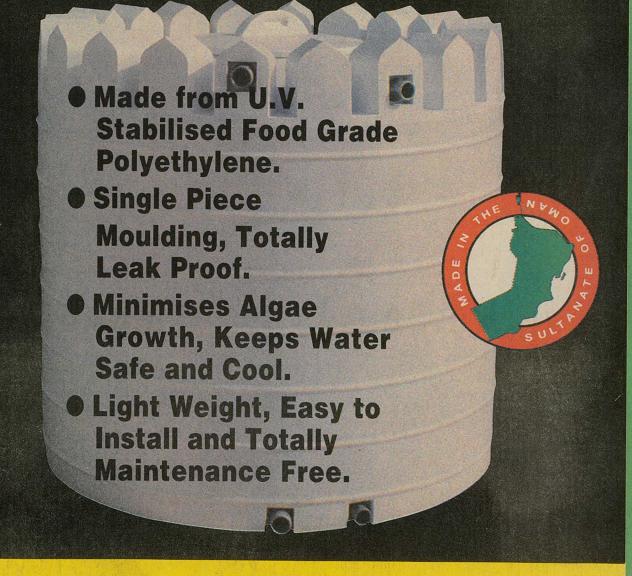
Rajavi, 56, a leading figure in the Mujahideen Khalq, was shot dead at his home in the Geneva suburb of Coppet on April 24, 1990. A spokesman for Balladur's office said Esfanhi-Mashen and Teheri were returned to Iran last Wednesday night. He declined to elaborate or give any further details. They were arrested in France following the detention in Tehran of a French national who was held for 19

revolutionary ambassador to the United Nations, resigned his post in 1980 and became a vocal opponent of the Islamic government in Tehran. - Reuter



We humbly thank His Majesty for bestowing us with the Best Factory Award for the year 1993

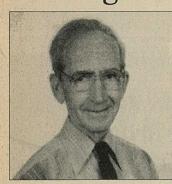






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New Year honour for Gallagher



GALLAGHER

MUSCAT — Mr. Michael Gallagher, curator at the Natural History Museum, has been made a Member of the British Empire (MBE) in the New Year's honours list announced in London, a press note from the British embassy said yesterday. Mr. Gallagher receives the award for his outstanding contribution to the knowledge of and conservation of wildlife in Oman. Through his work he has helped to boost interest of Omanis and expatriates alike in the natural history of Oman, and has awakened in them concern for its preservation as part of the country's heritage. He has written books on two aspects of the country's wildlife, "The Birds of Oman" and "Snakes of the Arabian Gulf and Oman"

Invited to Oman in late 1976, just after retiring from the British army, Mr. Gallagher took up the new post of assistant adviser (field studies) to the adviser for conservation in 1977. He had visited the Sultanate several times from 1969 and prior to that had spent time in the desert of North Africa and in Aden, followed by five years in Bahrain and the UAE.

He led a reconnaissance of the Jebel Akhdar in 1973, took part in the first Oman Flora and Fauna Survey in 1975, and led the second in 1977. His knowledge of Oman's environment led to his selection as "khabir" to set up the Natural History Museum for His Highness Sayyid Faisal bin Ali al-Said, Minister of Natural Heritage and Culture. Commencing in 1982, he laid the plans for the contractor who designed and built Phase 1 of the exhibition in 1985 and its extension - the Whale Hall - in 1992.

As Mr. Gallagher stresses, both the museum's public exhibitions and the scientific study collections behind the scenes are the result of teamwork. Many members of the public have donated specimens, offered photographs and related their experiences; friends have willingly provided experts advice in their fields of interest; the government, the Armed Services and other organisations have provided the opportunities to travel widely and the Omanis, by their friendly nature, have enabled research and plans to develop into the



Asr Maghrib

Tomorrov

Hurd to start Mideast tour

LONDON — British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd visits the frontline states in the Middle East peace process next week to reinforce the interest of the former colonial power in the evolution of a Palestinian state.

Aides said yesterday Hurd was determined to show that Britain, which once ruled Palestine under a mandate, remained committed to helping the peace process. 'We don't fool ourselves into

thinking we are centrestage in the peace process," said one official.
"But we think we can help move things forward constructively.

Hurd will not be carrying any secret messages between stops on his week-long tour, which takes in Lebanon, Israel, the occupied territories and Jordan, his advisers said. He will

also visit Malta. In the Middle East he will be talking to key players in the peace process and offering expanded British aide to support the emerging Palestinian state in the Gaza Strip and

Jericho area. It follows trips this year to Syria and the Gulf states. Britain is deeply aware that the new Palestinian entity needs much help in establishing the infrastructure of a semi-state within a state. — Reuter

Minister leaves

MUSCAT - Dr. Ahmed Abdulla Al Rab'ee., Minister of Higher Education of Kuwait and his delegation left Oman after their five-day official visit to the Sultanate, during which some important educational matters were discussed.

The Kuwaiti minister was seen off by Yahya bin Mahfoudh Al Mantheri, Minister of Education and Vice-Chancellor of Sultan Qaboos University, the Kuwaiti ambassador to the Sultanate and a number of officials at the ministry of education.

ISRAEL - SYRIA SECRET TALKS

Intellectuals in bid to break impasse

JERUSALEM- Israeli and Syr- ibility over the issues of an Israeli ian intellectuals met secretly in European capitals for several months and formulated proposals for resolving the conflict over the Golan Heights, a participant said yesterday.

While no government sponsored, the talks initiated by a private Washington-based group were apparently used by both countries as a sounding board to get stalled peace talks mov-

Israeli and Syrian peace talks, launched at the Madrid peace conference in 1991, were suspended in the wake of the September 13 Israel-PLO

They were expected to resume after a summit on January16 between U.S President Bill Clinton and Syria's President Hafez Assad.

Yossi Olmert, a member of Israel's negotiating team with Syria under the former right-wing Likud Party government, said the talks held between May and October in Switzerland, Germany, Turkey and Norway. At the last one, in Oslo, a work-

ng paper was developed over the Go-The Syrians showed more flexwithdrawal and the status of Jewish settlements than in formal peace talks with Israel held in Washington, Ol-

He would not elaborate on the proposals, calling them only "trial balloons, but very specific trial balloons because the questions discussed were the same as those by the decision-makers.'

Israel captured the Golan, a strategic plateau on its northeastern border, from Syria in the 1967 Middle East war and annexed it in 1981. Syria, Israel's strongest Arab foe, wants the land back as a condition for mak-

Two other Israelis at the talks were Amos Gilboa, a former military intelligence chief, and Zeev Schiff veteran military correspondent for the respected Haaretz daily. Neither could be reached at office or home Israeli reports identified one of

Aziz Shukri of the University of Damascus Law School. In Damascus, he could not be reached. Olmert said the talks were in-

the Syrian participants as Professor

dation, the Search for Common Ground. He said Israeli officials were briefed about the results. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's

spokesman Gad Ben-Ari said he was "not sure they (the talks) have any significance for the negotiations with the Syrians.

But another official speaking on condition of anonymity said Israel was trying to sound them (the Syrians) out on how serious they are about peace, what positions might come out of the Assad-Clinton sum-

With little progress being made in resolving differences with Palestinians, he said, Israel was looking for progress with Damascus.

Olmert said he doubted the talks would continue because of the public-

Whether or not the talks pro-duced results, Olmert said they were "a sign of changing circumstances in the Middle East and a sign of things to come, where people with similar professions will be able to speak to



Israel-Vatican accord

JERUSALEM — Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin and his Vatican counterpart Monsignor Claudio Celli signing an historic accord in Jerusalem to establish diplomatic relations and open the way for a Papal visit to the holy land next year

Goodbye 1993, Hello 1994

MUSCAT - As the year 1993 has just faded into history, giving way to a bright new year fillled with hopes and opportunities, it is appropriate to have a look at the maior events of the bygone year that helped boost Omani march to

- His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said approved the general budget for 1993 as per the Royal Decree No. 1/93.

According to Qais bin Abdul Munim al-Zawawi, Deputy Prime Minister for Financial and Economic Affairs, the budget thrust was on the increase in exports of nonpetroleum productes in harmony with the 4th Five Year Plan.

Jan 2 — His Majesty attended a horse race at Al-Adiyat, Seeb.

Jan 2 — His Majesty gave an audience to Yousuf Hajiyer, the Adviser of Azerbaijan president, who presented a written message to His Jan 2 — The health ministers of

the GCC countries visited His Majesty, after their 34th conference at

January 16 — His Majesty received King Hussein of Jordan who visited the country for three days.

Jan. 18 — Sultanate of Oman and the Republic of Yemen signed a historical border agreement at the headquarters of Arab League at Cairo in the presence of its General Secretary Dr. Esmat Abdul Maguid, who described it as a good example of solving Arab border disputes highlighting the principle of cooperation, and strengthening of the neighbouring relations among Arab

Jan. 18 — His Majesty presided over the Ministerial Council meeting in which he praised the results of co-ordination meetings between the Council and the Majlis A'Shura. His Majesty also praised the harmonious and cooperative relations of the Sultanate with other countries of the world.

Jan. 25 — His Majesty's "Meetthe-People" tour started from 'Al Amir' Palace at Seeb, to Ibra. His Majesty held an open parliament with the dignitaries of the region during which His Majesty spoke about strengthening of cooperation in the Majlis A'Shura and urged the

people to participate actively in the general census.

Jan. 30 — The Majlis A'Shura started its first ordinary meeting of 1993 with discussion on the recommendations of the economic committee for selling the stateowned utilities to the private sector. Feb. 17 — His Majesty attended

a Sultan's Armed Forces (SAF) ceremony and watched a military exercise of the Royal Guard of Oman. Feb. 22 — His Majesty reached

Salalah, concluding his annual "Meet-the-People" tour in the Wilayats of Sharqiya, Dakhliya and Al-Wosta. After the tour, Qais bin Abdul Munim al-Zawawi, Deputy Prime Minister for Economic and Majesty had ordered the setting up of a ministerial committee to study all the aspects of the border issues between the Sultanate and Yemen and frame policies and plans for the development of the border re-

held its second ordinary meeting

which was attended by Ahmed bin

Suwaidan al Balushi, Minister of

Posts, Telegraphs and Telephones,

and Salim bin Abdullah al-Ghazali,

Minister of Communications. The

economic committee of the Majlis

was assigned to conduct a study on

sources of finance for building

fered prayers of "Eid al-Fitr" at the

Wilayat of Sur and shared the hap-

piness of the inhabitants on the holy

occasion. His Majesty also wit-

nessed the Folk Arts of the Wilayat

sumed its discussions with various

ministers. Ahmed bin Suwaidan al-

Balushi, Minister of Posts, Tele-

graphs and Telephones, attended

the meeting and answered the ques-

Ghazali, Minister of Communica-

tions, appeared before the Majlis

April 4 — Salim bin Abdulla al-

A'Shura and answered questions tanate.

April 3 - Majlis A'Shura re-

March 22 - His Majesty of-

roads in the Sultanate.

tions from members.

April 4 — The Joint Higher UAE started its meeting. The Sultanate was represented by His Highness Sayyid Fahd bin Mahmood Al-Said, Deputy Prime Minister for Legal Affairs, while the UAE was represented by Shaikh Khalifa bin Zayed al Nahyan. The meeting was held at Al-Ain and various economic and commercial topics were dis-

April 6 — His Majesty received Ali Salim al-Baidh, Vice-President of Yemen Republic. Bilateral relations were discussed. It was decided to form a Joint Committee under the chairmanhip of the Financial Affairs, declared that His prespective Commerce Ministers to study economic cooperation between the two countries in different sectors and then follow it up. April 11 — His Highness Sayyid

Fahd bin Mahmood al-Said, Deputy Prime Minister for Legal Affairs, Feb. 28 — The Majlis A'Shura minister held talks on boosting re- per the directives of His Majesty

lations between the two countries.

April 12 — His Majesty at-

April 13 — His Majesty re-

tended a graduation ceremony of

Royal Air Force of Oman at Ghala

ceived the petroleum ministers of

Opec and non-Opec countries who

participated in the Petroleum

Conference hosted by the Sultanate

for increasing coordination between

May 2 — Oman and the UAE

signed an agreement to set up

Oman-Emirates Investments Com-

pany." The agreement was signed

by Maqbool bin Ali Sultan, Minister

of Commerce and Industry, for

Oman, and Said Ahmed Ghobash,

Minister of Economy and Com-

over a meeting of the Development

Council. Lebanese Prime Minister

Rafig al-Hariri left Oman after his

two-day visit during which he held

talks with senior officials of the Sul-

May 4 — His Majesty presided

the two organisations.

merce of the UAE.

May 9 - Egyptian President 3. To study the economic ad-Hosni Mubarak visited the Sultanate Committee of the Sultanate and the and His Majesty held official talks

> May 22 — His Majesty received messages from the President of Iran, Hashemi Rafsanjani; the President of Mauritania, Mua'wya Sayyid Ahmed al-Taba; and the Prime Minister of India, P.V. Narasimha Rao, which were presented to His Majesty by Dr. Ali Akbar Velayati, Foreign Minister of Iran; Mohammed Abdul Rahman Amin, Foreign Minister of Mauritania; and R.L. Bhatia, Minister of State for External Affairs of India, respectively. His Majesty discussed with them ways of boosting re-

May 23 — Shaikh Abdulla bin Ali al-Qattabi, President of Majlis A'Shura, declared that some of the Majlis recommendations had been presented to His Majesty.

May 26 — The land between and the visiting Ukrainian prime Oman and Yemen was opened as

and as a result of the agreement be-

tween the two countries signed in

June 6 — Ministry of Regional

Municipalities and Environment and

Protection of Nature, signed an

agreement for supervising the coast-

international companies of the Min-

istry of Petroleum and Minerals,

signed an agreement to set up Oman

over the Ministerial Council meet-

ing in Muscat and issued directives

to the ministers urging them to work

in all fields to improve the ca-

June 14 — His Maiesty received

June 14 — His Majesty presided

Natural Gas Company.

pabilities of the citizens.

June 9 — The Sultanate and six

October 1992.

al regions.

Major Omani events of 1993

vantages of the proposed projects between the two countries. After the negotiations a joint press release was issued which stressed the support of both governments for the projects of the two petroleum refineries in India and gas pipeline between the two countries. July 7 — His Majesty received a

message from the Chinese President which was delivered to him by the head of the State Council of China. The Chinese official also held talks with senior officials of the Sul-

July 26 — His Majesty attended the 6th graduation ceremony of the Staff and Command College. August 24 - His Majesty re-

ceived King Hussain of Jordan who visited the Sultanate, for talks on bilateral and regional issues. September 7 — His Majesty re-

ceived the Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat who gave His Majesty full details of the PLO-Israel accord. His Majesty stressed the support of the Sultanate for the accord. September 9 — His Majesty re-

ceived the German President Richard Von Weizacker, the first German President to visit the Sultanate. Nov. 18 — His Majesty de-

livered his historical speech on the occasion of 23rd National Day during which he declared 1994 as the "Year of Heritage".

Nov. 19 — His Majesty was conferred the Unesco award for exthe International Association for the cellence in the field of "Peace, Justice. Heritage and Environment." Dec. 20 — His Majesty attended

the 14th GCC Summit in Riyadh, which supported the PLO-Israel peace agreement, continuing efforts for launching a unified customs agreement and the readness of the GCC countries to participate in world efforts to coordinate oil production and prevent world oil prices from falling further. The summit also called on Iraq to implement the UN Security Council resolutions and called on Iran to end its occupation of the three UAE islands.

Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao. The two nations signed Dec. 26 — Said bin Ahmed Al three agreements: 1. To boost and Shanfari, Petroleum and Minerals exchange investment proposals in Minister, began a tour of non-Opec the fields of hydrocarbons and ferstates for talks on coordination on oil production and boost in world tilizers. 2. To cooperate in economic, commercial and technical fields.

Top marks for this Jeddah school

JEDDAH — To help needy Pakistani children get off the streets and into the classroom, Jeddah's first Islamic school, Madressa Tahfeezal Quran Al Mohawish Al Khairia, opened its doors eight months ago.

The school, located in the Al Saghr District, near the old airport, now serves 130 children who study Urdu, Arabic, English, math and the Qur'an for six and a half hours a day. Before the school opened, many of the children, who are between the ages of 4 and 12, were out on the streets, selling items such as soft drinks, or even begging. "Around 90 percent of the children here were found on the roadside," said

Rehmat Khan Faqir Muhammad, the engineer who was the catalyst for the project. "When I came to Jeddah I found some children selling Pepsi - for 10, 20 riyals a day," he said. "When I see this, I don't feel good." Muhammad followed some of these children home, to talk to their parents,

who said they couldn't afford to send their children to school. Muhammad knew he had to do something to help these kids, and, eventually, an idea came though - many Islamic schools exist in Pakistan, so why not try to make one

"When I see the children in the street, in a bad position, I want to repair it," he said. "Especially community people, my community people, but I don't have the resources. But God gives me. Muhammad talked with many people about a school and many generously

gave to the cause. Sheikh Abdullah Al Mohawish, who is a mutawwah, donated a building about a year ago. With the help of his son, Sultan, he also pays for maintenance costs, electricity and carpets. The advising committee of the school includes Sheikh Ahmad Saad Al-

gamdi, Sheikh Mahmoud Bahazack, Sheikh Hassan Suqur, Sheikh Ifthar Abassi, Sheikh Gulf Ahmad and Sheikh Zafar Ali Ahsan (principal of the Pakistan Embassy School). Others helping the school include Pakistan Consul General Rashid Saleem Khan, Education Consul Mahmoud-Ul-Haq Haqqani, businessman Amir Muhammad Khan and many other citizens. The consul general provided one of the school's five teachers and the

Pakistan Embassy School donated some supplies, Muhammed said. The children, who are very poor, pay no fees for their education and receive

books, transportation - and sometimes food, notebooks at no cost. "Everything is free," Muhammad said. "This is a completely Islamic

Appropriately enough, the school was originally a mosque. In the near future, partitions will be installed to make separate rooms and a second floor will

be added. "Inshallah, in the new year, after March, you can see 250 or 300 children here." Muhammad said. The teachers, who each specialised in a different subject, want to start an Islamic charity school for girls, too, said Omar Farouk, school administrator. Government permission is first required, added Farouk, who is also a teacher at

Teaching the children, who seem to be happy -and interested in learning and who remain quiet even when the teachers leave the room - is very re-

warding, Farouk said. "I feel they are happy and responsible children." he said. "They change clothing and dress and behaviour. Before they couldn't speak to others. Now they're learning to write. Now they say, 'we want to go to school."

In some schools, "they love the children just for money," Muhanimad said. 'Here they want to help the poor." Some Pakistani children are still on the streets, but when Muhammad or the

teachers see them, they try to help them. "In any place I see, in North Jeddah, in South Jeddah, we follow as before," Farouk said. They try to help not only the children but their parents as well, Muhammad

said. For example, they sometimes will work on their homes. "His house should also be repaired," he explained. "We don't want these children growing up the corrupt way," Muhammad said. "From the Islamic side

we want the general repair of their life." So far, there are classes for kindergarten, first and second grade, but the teachers hope to add a class each year, "until they go to university, Inshallah," Muhammad said. "I hope so."

Revamp PLO, Arafat urged AMMAN - Chief Palestinian ne- cord, the reformists support the his-

gotiator Haidar Abdul Shafi urged Yasser Arafat to reform the Palestine Liberation Organisation and end his single-handed approach to decision making. Abdul Shafi, who arrived here

Bank earlier in the day, said he would head a seven-man delegation of Palestinian reform advocates meeting with Arafat at the PLO headquarters in Tunis tomorrow. Speaking to the Associated Press, Abdul Shafi said: "There are serious challenges facing the Palestinian people and our objective is to overcome them together through dialogue and democratic methods".

"We hope that our meeting with the PLO in 1968, has been coming under increasing attack from critics who say he should change his autocratic rule and allow more democracy in the movement.

Unlike PLO factions and into wreck the Sept. 13 Israel-PLO ac-

toric agreement but criticise the way Arafat is handling negotiations with Israel. They say it is time Arafat accepts that the PLO is no longer a revolutionary liberation movement but in transition toward from the Israeli-occupied West a governing authority is Palestinian Khatib. autonomous areas designated under the September accord.

Taysir Arouri, a leading activist of the communist Palestine People's Party, said although the outcome of tomorrow's gathering with Arafat could not be predicted, it was the time that Arafat had responded positively to calls for the changes in the leadership style of

"His (Arafat's) acceptance to meet with the delegation indicates that the matter has been taken seriously," Arouri said. He expressed hope that the PLO chief would "look with an open mind," at a petition drawn up by reformists and dependent groups that have vowed signed by 116 Palestinian per-

signatories included several members of the Palestine National Council - the Palestinian parliament-inexile - and the two members of the Palestinian negotiating team with Israel, Samir Abdullah and Ghassan Advisers to the delegation Raja

Shehadeh, Ali Safarini and Anis Qasem and former PLO representative to Moscow Nabil Amr also signed the document, which was sent to Arafat in November. The four-page memo criticised

the PLO leadership's handling of the now-stalled negotiations with Israel on implementing the autonomy accord and demanded wider participation in the process. It accused the PLO of "not doing

enough to foster dialogue among the various Palestinian factions to address the opposition to the autonomy accord" and of "failing to present the accord in an objective, clear manner so that the people would know its implications. - AP



Ramallah violence

RAMALLAH, West Bank — A Palestinian sets tyres ablaze on a thoroughfare yesterday. Ramallah has a large number of Fatah supporters who oppose the autonomy agreement now under negotiation with Israel.

Cairo thwarts attacks

CAIRO — Egypt has thwarted a planned New Year's eve campaign of violence targeting government ministers and major economic centres, interior minister Hassan El-Alfi was reported as saying yesterday.

Ahram newspaper the attacks were aimed at assassinating 12 prominent people, including ministers and media figures, and blowing up eight economic centres.

The newspaper reported Alfi as saying security forces had seized 'maps and diagrams of the routes (taken by) the people whom the militant elements planned to assassinate". Alfi said one of the leaders of the planned campaign of violence had been Salah Mohammad Attiyah, who was killed in a raid by 2,000 police on a Nile island hideout on Wednesday.

Attiyah was also wanted in connection with the murder of a police brigadier and an intelligence officer earlier this year. The Gama'a has been waging a campaign of violence for two years to overthrow the government and turn Egypt into a strict Islamic state. — Reuter



Santa and the Sarajevo kids

On the last day of the year 1993 a Bosnian dressed as Santa Claus walks with some children through the so-called "Sniper alley" in Sarajevo.

We'll fight on: Bosnia

SARAJEVO — The commander of the Bosnian army said yesterday his men would fight on if the republic's political leaders did not get satisfaction at the negotiating table

The remarks by General Rasim Delic came within hours of a clear indication by Croatian President Franjo Tudiman that his country might intervene military in Bosnia to stem an offensive against ethnic Croats there.

Delic told Sarajevo radio in a New Year statement: "If the peace negotiations don't give results we have to be ready to give our people their freedom and peace, and most importantly a chance to get their homes back, with weapons.

In his end of year interview on state television Tudjman said: "We are doing everything possible to stop Croat-Bosnian hostilities (through

"But the Bosnians must either abandon their aggression or the world will have to understand the steps we will have to take to defend Croats

Leaders of the warring Serb, Bosnian and Croat factions are due to re-sume peace talks in Geneva in mid-

Direct military intervention in Bosnia could expose Croatia to a UN trade embargo similar to that which has crippled rump Yugoslavia for supporting Serbs in Bosnia.

The effects of the sanctions, imposed on Yugoslavia for its role in the war in neighbouring Bosnia, were driven home vesterday when Belgrade ground virtually to a halt under the effects of power cuts and trans-

A strike by coal miners in the Kolubara basin which supplies fuel for major thermo-electric power plants near Belgrade, resulted in drastic power cuts in the capital.

Although a tentative settlement was reported in the miners dispute, some areas in Belgrade were left without electricity for as much as 17 hours in the past 24 hours.

A strike by railroad workers settled earlier in the week was followed by another stoppage by engine drivers on Thursday.

Only international trains were running, but with major delays, and the strike stranded thousands of people at Belgrade's central railway station.

City trolley bus drivers protesting at low wages were prevented from taking their vehicles back to the depots by crowds of angry passengers who blockaded the streets.

'A total of 17 strikes are currently being staged in Belgrade," a local independent radio station reported.

The sudden pedestrian jam in central Belgrade was swelled by about 10,000 people, mostly pensioners, who queued for food handouts by a charity organisaton.

Meanwhile United Nations efforts to move relief aid to victims of war in Sarajevo and other areas of Bosnia begin 1994 in much worse shape than a year ago, a senior UN official said yesterday.

Tony land, head of the office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Sarajevo, gave a gloomy summary of UN aid operations in forward positions in areas

Bosnia over the past year. 'We find ourselves at the end of 1993 in a significantly worse condi-

tion with regard to the ability to supply Sarajevo than we were a year " he told a news conference.

'The reason for that is a year ago we still had relatively easy access from the Croatian coast by convoy and we were on average getting something like five or six convoys a week into Sarajevo along that route as well as being able to supply central Bosnia

'We find ourselves now in a situation where we are almost totally dependent on an airlift in Sarajevo in the middle of winter, and that is a very difficult situation to be in."

UN aircraft operate a hazardous daily airlift into Sarajevo from bases in Croatia and Italy, often braving fire from Serb gunners besieging the Land said the situation was even worse in central Bosnia and the Bosnian enclaves in the east of the re-

Sarajevo was getting about 56 per cent of people's minimum needs, while the enclaves of Zepa, Gorazde and Srebrenica were getting much less. Land said aid was positioned in Serbia and Croatia not far from where it was needed in Bosnia but convoys were being blocked for military and political reasons.

'We're a couple of hundred kilometres from Zvornik (on the Serbian-Bosnian border), we're a couple of hundred kilometres from the (Croatian) coast and people are hun-

"There's 86,000 tonnes of food in rounding Bosnia-Herzegovina, which we cannot move a couple of hundred kilometres to get it in. - Reuter

Sudan expels British envoy

KHARTOUM— The rift between Sudan and Britain deepened yesterday, with Sudanese officials saying they were expelling the British ambassador for his criticism of their nation. The statements followed an announcement late on Thursday by the Sudanese foreign ministry that Ambassador Peter Streams would be given two weeks to leave because his presence in Sudan "does not serve the interests of the two

The foreign office in London summoned the top Sudanese diplomat to

The order came in the midst of a controversial, four-day visit by the Rt. Rev. George Carey, Archbishop of Canterbury, to rebel-held southern Sudan. Carey entered southern Sudan from neighboring Kenya on Thursday after cancelling a planned visit to the Sudanese capital Khartoum, where he feared his activities would be restricted through imposition of an official agenda by Sudan's government. In a statement delivered yesterday to church contacts in the Kenyan capital Nairobi, Carey said he was saddened by Sudan's

The statement, addressed to Lambeth Palace in London and the British embassy in Nairobi, said his decision to avoid Khartoum was in no way influenced by the British government. "Before going on an overseas visit I always consult them and they are always helpful," said Carey, leader of 70 mil-lion Anglicans worldwide. "but the decision was mine alone." Sudanese officials made it clear they were dismayed at the Archbishop's travel

Mohamed Al-Amin Khalifa, speaker of Sudan's appointed national assembly, told a news conference that entering from a neighbouring country would be "unacceptable to the Sudanese



Peter Streams in his Guildford garden yesterday. - AFP photo

Ahmed Kamal-Eddin, a member of the parliament, told the BBC radio yesterday that the archbishop's trip was "the last straw in the series of things, both from the British embassy and from Lambeth Palace." He added: "the British ambassador's relationship with our government has never been cool and nice. He has always got a lot of views and opinions about what is going on in the Sudan and, with due respect, most of them were not done in a manner that would better the relationship between Sudan

for more typhoons

from typhoon Nell's devastating through the central Philippines this week has climbed to at least 126, and more typhoons may be on the way.

yesterday that the 126 confirmed deaths from Nell - the record 32nd typhoon to hit the Philippines in one year — raised the number of lives taken by typhoons in the archipelago to around 700 for 1993.

The Red Cross said more than 400 people died in December alone, after the typhoon season in the Philippines should have ended. About 35 people were still missing after Nell, the third typhoon to hit

people began to rebuild the tradi- one of the country's main coconut

MANILA — The death toll the countryside, weather fore-

They are watching an area of low pressure about 1,000 km east of the Philippines, which could develop into a storm. A second low. pressure area is further out, over

We are not sure which will develop first," said a forecaster at the government weather bureau. "We xpect one typhoon will come in the first week of January.

The first two typhoons in early December killed more than 300 As floodwaters subsided and people and cut a swathe through

Philippines braces

The Philippine Red Cross said

the country in December.

tional bamboo and thatch houses of growing areas. — Reuter

casters warned another storm could be on the way.

the pacific.

Nearly 700,000 people were af-

fected by typhoon Nell, which destroyed an estimated 15,000 houses and sparked widespread flooding.

Honour for Indians

transformed into an English feature film with Indian actors, won for its authoress Anita Desai and the renowned filmmaker Ismail Merchant the 'News India-Times Man And Woman Of The

The honour by the New York-based journal is generally given to outstanding figures among the Asian community in the United

The announcement was made by John Perry, editor of the weekly. He said the date of the gala function at which these two will be honoured would be announced later.

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ANITA DESAI



New Year

ushers in

death penalty

Philippines takes effect at midnight,

more than seven years after it was

abolished in the largely Roman

Catholic country by then-president

Approved by Congress and

signed by President Fidel Ramos

earlier this month, the law pre-

scribes death for 13 crimes con-

trafficking, kidnapping for ransom, murder and stealing of public funds of 50 million pesos (\$1.8 million)

The death penalty may also be

imposed for arson to buildings

where people are gathered, for brib-

ery if the victim is physically

harmed, and for rape if the victim is

But until a gas chamber is built,

condemned convicts are to be elec-

trocuted, the traditional method of

punishment in

Ramos backed the death penalty

to curb a resurgence of crime, such

as kidnapping for ransom, an of-fence that has plagued the

the law, saying it would work main-

ly against the poor, who cannot af-

Philippines in the last year.

Many legislators had

ford good lawyers. - Reuter

Executions are to be by gassing

a minor or the rapist has Aids.

Among them are treason, drug

Corazon Aquino.

sidered heinous.

Philippines

punishment in the

Ban on revelry

KARACHI — New Year revellers in southern Pakistan will be forced to hide their celebrations behind closed doors because of a ban by Karachi authorities and threats by fundamentalists. "No hotel or restaurant will be permitted to organise celebrations and people will be stopped from dancing on pavements and roads on New Year's eve," said a municipal official of the southern business capital, Karachi. The ban was ordered to avoid clashes between revellers and extremists and to ensure the safety of the general public, he said. Umer Sailya, chairman of the Pakistan Hotels and Restaurant Association, said he had received no government notice but hotels would still avoid celebrations. "Most hotels would still shut down before midnight to avoid any disturbance from the fundamentalist groups," he said.

The Jamaat-i-Islami Party would take all necessary action to prevent celebrations because of the fighting in Bosnia and "to check immorality", the party's Karachi information secretary, Mohammad Shamsi, said. — Reuter

SAD DEMISE

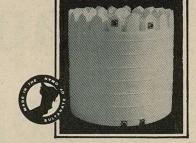
SMT. KAMLABEN SHAMALDAS MEHTA

mother of Bakul and Dilip Mehta passed away in Bombay on Thursday, 30th December 1993.

A Prayer Meeting will be held at Motishwar Temple, Muscat on Monday, 3rd January 1994.

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Year 1993' awards.



Tears well up as Pandits reminisce poignant tales

NEW DELHI - It was the most poignant reunion among brethren of an exiled community. Long lost relatives, old childhood friends, missing acquaintances hugging each other unashamed of their flowing tears. For the nearly 2,200 members of

the Kashmiri Pandit community, at the two-day world Kashmiri Pandit conference, it was homecoming of sorts in the national capital.

More than 3,50,000 Kashmiri Pan-

dits now scattered in far-flung, areas of the country, having suffered the tortuous banishment from their own homeland in Kashmir, four years was a long wait to suppress their emotions which culminated in this international conference. Living in pitiable conditions in

tents and other makeshift one-room pigeon holes in camps in Jammu and elsewhere, the conference became a platform to vent their feelings of suppression and torture. "More than the unending misery

caused by militancy in the state it is the apathy of the government to our situation and failure to cause." For lovely Raina, life is not the same since her father was shot dead

by militants three years ago. However, meeting old friends here has given her a renewed hoped to fight life once again and a renewed vigour to go back home.

So far more than 1,200 Kashmiri Hindus have been killed by militants in the valley and more than 16,000

ley, according to Panun Kashmir the group which has organised the meet-The two-day conference which

opened in the capital was attended by Kashmiris from US, Canada, UK, and Switzerland, and Zambia. The meet, organised by the chairman of Assembly of Tibetan Peoples Deputies, was organised by Panun

Kashmir, an umbrella organisation of Kashmiri Pandits. The opening day session gave an expression to the pain, anguish and trauma of the exiled Kashmiri Pandit refugees which was articulated through skits, songs and

The conference depicted the travails of the Kashmiri Pandit community and each song brought back nostalgic memories of a life spent in the valley of rishis, but whose peace now lies shattered with the booming

kaleshknovs. The artistes' session was attended by eminent Hindi writer and critic, Mr Nirmal Verma, art critic Keshav Malik, writers Hridev Kaul, Hari Krisha Kaul, Dr Shashi Shekhar Toshkhaini. All the writers emphasised on a need to preserve Kashmiri culture, language and literature at this critical

"Our cultural umblical cord has been severed and in this hour of alienation we have to maintain our .entity," emphasised writer Ratan Lal

Talking about the historical tragedies that have befallen the community, writer Shashi Shekhar Toshkhaini, said "we will once again rise from this crisis and come out strong-

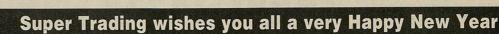
Mr. Agnishekhar, convener of Pa-nun Kashmir said a "Sarda Peeth", a university in exile would be set up to usher in a process of renaissance of Kashmiri Pandit literature, poetry, art and other traditions.

Everyone present in the hall had a fervent prayer and hope of re-turning to the home in Kashmir seemed not such a distant dream "though the government has continuously failed in solving the Kashmir problem," lamented most of the del-

The callous attitude of the government and continuous neglect of the Kashmiri Pandits needs to be highlighted, says Dr Ajay Tsrangoo of Panun Kashmir.

The Kashmir problem need not be solved militarily but a political solution is needed as soon as possible, added Dr Tsrangoo.

According to Dr Suresh Raina, a doctor settled in the US, the world has to be made aware of the tragedy that has befallen the community. In the US, "we are trying on an individual capacity to make the policy makers aware aware of the Kashmir problem, but the government of India has failed on all fronts.





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TO BE WON!!!

Baby born healthy sans **C-section**

whose mother fought attempts to force her to give birth by Caesarean section is healthy despite fears he would be brain-damaged or die, a

"I trusted God on the whole mat-ter," said the baby's father, Mike Bricci. "God does miracles."

The four-pound boy was born to Tabita Bricci on Wednesday night at Northwestern Memorial Hospital in vaginal delivery. The normal weight for a healthy full-term child is slightly more than seven pounds.

The baby was named Callian. Bricci said the name means "you did something good for me."

"This is one of those cases when you're very happy that you're proven wrong, and we are very, very happy that the child was born alive and apparently physically healthy," said Patrick Murphy, the Cook County public guardian who represented the foetus. But Murphy also said doctors

had told him it might take at least six months to determine whether the baby has normal brain function.

The Briccis fought all the way to the US supreme court against county officials who tried to force a C-section. The high court refused to consider the case immediately, but could take it up later.

Doctors had warned Mrs. Bricci that due to a problem with her placenta, here foetus was not getting enough oxygen and probably would be brain-damaged or born dead without a C-section. But the 22-year-old Pentecostal woman said she believed
God would deliver a healthy baby.
The infant is "apparently perfectly
healthy," northwestern spokesman
Daniel Parker said.

Dr. Marilynn Frederiksen, an obstetrician, said the baby has no serious problems. No medical tests can predict any brain damage yet, but doctors have no reason to suspect damage, she said.

"The only problem the baby's been having is maintaining its blood-sugar level," which is common in low birth weight babies, Frederiksen said. She disagreed with St. Joseph

doctors that a C-section was needed, though she and Bricci said the parents had agreed to one if necessary during labour. The couple also had agreed to have labour induced this week, if necessary. - AP

Interpol chief favours drugs decriminalisation

the international police agency, said in an interview published Thursday that the war on drugs is doomed to failure if it relies on police repression alone. Drugs should be decriminalised to help reduce consumption, Raymond Kendall was quoted as saying by the news weekly Le Nouvel Observateur. "I want to ring the alarm, summon political leaders and tell them: if we continue to fight drugs as we've been doing for the past 20 years, we will definitively lose the battle," Kendall said. "Perhaps, it already has been lost."

Drug traffickers net an estimated \$350 billion per year, and the drug problem is growing, Kendall was quoted as saying in the magazine's December 30 issue. He said a recent study showed

that police would have to seize up to 50 per cent of the drugs on the market to have an impact on drug use. The only way to break the mar-

ket is to drastically lower the demand," he said. Kendall has led Interpol, based in

Lyon, since 1985. Before that he was Scotland Yard's no. 2 man in the drug squad. In the early 1970s, Kendall headed Interpol's drug division. Like police repression, neither

crop substitution programmes in drug-producing countries nor chemical substitutes for drugs, like methadone, are adequate to combat the problem, Kendall said. Kendall espouses information blitzes against drugs like that used to successfully reduce tobacco consumption in a number of countries. He also espouses decriminalising drugs, from

Heavy rain in S. England

LONDON — Torrential rain and strong winds battered southern Eng-land, causing floods which inundated hundreds of homes and closed many

Seven feet (two metres) of water ripped through the fishing village of Polperro in the southwest county of Cornwall when the normally tranquil river Pol was turned into a raging

Cars were picked up and carried away by the force of the flooding. A number of houses and two bridges

were damaged. The fire brigade and other emergency services evacuated people

trapped on the upper floors of their

"Cars and motorbikes were bouncing around in the water," said

police sergeant Bryan Hancock. Local businesswoman Betty Nel-

son said: "Everywhere down by the river, the homes, restaurants and gift shops are flooded out. It is a scene of devastation, it really is bad.' A lifeboat and four coastguard

dinghies were deployed at Barnham in Sussex to rescue people from first floor windows as floods up to eight feet gushed through the area.

Police and the automobile as sociation warned motorists to watch out for floods across the southern counties of England. - Reuter

Row over 'designer babies' rages in Britain

LONDON — A row erupted in Britain yesterday over "designer babies" following reports that a black woman is to have a white woman's egg implanted in her to ensure the child is of mixed race.

It is the second time in a week that genetic manipulation has prompted protests from doctors, churchmen and politicians after a 59-year-old British woman gave birth to twins on Christmas day after artificial insemination at a

The latest case involves a man of mixed race and a black woman who are keen the child should resemble its father. The couple are being treated at a pioneering test-tube baby clinic at Bourn Hall, Cambridge. The woman, unable to produce eggs of her own because of a tumour, has

opted to have the eggs of a white donor fertilised by her husband's sperm. In a similar case in Italy, an African woman was implanted with a white woman's eggs and gave birth earlier this year to a white baby, newspapers reported. "The couple have been carefully counselled and have said they would like to achieve a pregnancy using a donor egg from a white woman fertilised by the husband because he has some white blood," Bourn clinic director Peter

"We don't have a problem with that and have more or less decided to go ahead though the final decision has not yet been taken," Brinsden told the Dai-

Dr Stuart Horner, chairman of the British Medical Association's ethical

committee, reacted with alarm. "The lid is now open on Pandora's box," he said. "The medical ethics committee is opposed to designer children," he added. Father Kieron Conry of the Catholic Media Centre said: "I am sure the Catholic church would be opposed to such interference with the natural pro-Dame Jill Knight, head of the British ruling Conservative Party's backbench health committee, was equally forceful in her condemnation. She said choosing the ethnic identity of children was "plain and unvarnished genetic engineering and as such must be unacceptable'

The birth of twins on December 25 to a wealthy London businesswoman aged 59, has already prompted widespread protests.

The woman, who was treated by Italian doctor Severino Antinori, was impregnated with eggs from a donor in her twenties which had been fertilised by

her husband's sperm. In Italy, Health Minister Maria Pia Garavaglia called yesterday for laws to curb artificial pregnancies after reports that a black woman had given birth in Rome to a white test-tube baby State radio said the mother did not want a mixed race child on the grounds

it would find it harder to grow up in a white-dominated society. 'A child isn't a consumer good," Italian radio quoted Garavaglia as saying

"We've now arrived at a point at which people are choosing the colour of children's skin and are having them at any old age."

It added to a furore over genetic practices that was sparked by "retirement pregnancies" -- older women who have been implanted with test-tube embryos

to allow them to have children beyond the age of menopause.

The mother, who was sterile, left Italy soon after the birth, *La Repubblica* newspaper said. Officials at the Umberto I hospital in Rome, where the procedure was reported to have been carried out, declined comment on the re-

Commentators likened Italy to a shop for "designer babies" and echoed Garavaglia's call for tighter controls

"Stop this supermarket for tailor-made children," La Repubblica, Italy's top-selling, daily, said. Italy is one of the few European countries where the practice of artificial fertilisation for post-menopausal women is not outlawed.

Italy began to consider moves to outlaw such procedures after work by controversial specialist Dr Severino Antinori with women aged 59 and 62. The 59-year-old, a British woman, gave birth to twins in London last Saturday after she was treated at Antinori's Rome clinic. The 62-year-old, Rosanna Della Corte, is three months pregnant, according to Antinori.

Romano Forleo, a gynaecologist and Christian Democrat senator has presented a bill to the senate to ban artificial fertilisation for post-menopausal

But with parliament expected to be dissolved in the next few weeks in preparation for general elections, it is probable the measure will not see the

Thieves strip shop bare

MELBOURNE — Thieves in Melbourne have stripped a lingerie shop of nearly all its underwear stock, worth Australian \$25,000 (US\$17,000), police said yesterday.

Push-up bras, body suits, Gstrings and lace underwear were among the lingerie stolen from the shop in Melbourne's St Kilda district.

"Every single piece of lingerie was taken, except a couple of pairs of pants and a bra that were stuck on the racks," a police spokeswoman said.

The shop had been in business for only a week. - Reuter

Four killed in Cape Town shop attack

Tutu, De Klerk condemn it

automatic rifles and handgrenades packed with nails killed four people and wounded five in a crowded Cape Town shop, the second such terror attack in the city in six months.

Police, offering a 200,000 rand (\$60,000) reward for information leading to the capture of the killers, set up roadblocks on all major roads out of the city.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility. Three of the victims were young women shot at close range as they huddled in a corner, witnesses said the fourth, a man cut down by gunfire as he tried to halt the carnage. President F.W. De Klerk said the attack appeared aimed at undermining South Africa's transition to majority rule. Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu, like de Klerk a Nobel peace prize laureate, described it as a dastardly act intended to divide South

Five heavily-armed gunmen burst into the packed Heidelberg Tavern, a trendy mightspot in the liberal ob-servatory suburb, just before mid-

night on Thursday. A grenade packed with nails was flung into the bar but failed to explode. Police said the toll could have been much higher had the grenade exploded. De Klerk, reacting with 'shock and horror' said in a statement, "There could be no justification for

John Mlambo, deputy president of the radical Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), whose armed wing has in the past claimed responsibility for similar attacks, told reporters the PAC did not know who was responsible for the 'regrettable' incident.

The tactics used in the observatory attack were similar to those

TEGUCIGALPA — The military

will open its secret files on political killings and disappearances in the

1980s and let judges question the of-

ficers blamed for them, a spokesman

ter the release of a report by a govern-ment human rights commission ac-

cusing Argentine military advisers

and right-wing Nicaraguan Contra

rebels of helping US-trained Hon-duran troops kill leftists in the 1980s. The decision by the military is un-

usual in a country where the armed

forces have long been powerful and

not held accountable for human rights

leftists were killed and at least an-

other 184 are missing from the tur-

bulent decade in this central Amer-

ican country.
"We will observe the will ex-

pressed by the executive and judicial

powers in this respect so that the truth

will be known by our people, simply

because the military has the re-

sponsibility to clarify the situation," army spokesman Col. Napoleon San-

Honduras is the first central Amer-

El Salvador passed an amnesty

ican country that appears willing to

uncover the role of its military in hu-

covering most of the violators during

the 12-year war that ended there in

1992. The Guatemalan military still

retains a measure of impunity, although some soldiers have been

brought to trial there recently. In Nic-

aragua, many of the violations by

both the right and left have not been

dealt with, partly because of the con-

tinued Sandinista role in the police

tos Aguilar said.

man rights violations.

and army leadership.

By many accounts, more than 300

The announcement came a day af-

POLITICAL KILLINGS

Honduras to

open secret files

worshippers in St. James's church in Cape Town in July. One of the more than 30 wounded later died. The gunmen are still at large.

Police blamed that attack on the Azanian People's Liberation army, the PAC's armed wing, which has been negotiating the suspension of its armed struggle against white rule with the South African military.

The PAC says it will only take its place in the multi-party transitional executive council helping to rule in the election run-up once the question of the armed struggle has been resolved to its satisfication. Tutu, whose daughter Mpho got

married yesterday described the attack as 'a blight on a season of peace and reconciliation. "I say yet again that we con-demnia completely and cotegorically

this dastardly act as we condemn all

violence that happens in other parts of the country," Tutu told reporters. Nelson Mandela's African National Congress, expected to win South Africa's first all-race election on April 27, said the attack 'must stand condemned by all who value

democracy, peace and freedom'. Law and Order Minister Hernus Kriel, describing the attack as barbaric, said, "the sheer blood lust which marked this attack represents the kind of depravity to which perpetrators are democratic process. "They must and they will be stopped.' Two of the five wounded were in a serious condition.

The gunmen arrived in an orange pick-up truck and fled in a stolen Opel car which police later found abandoned in Guguletu township, on the outskirts of Cape Town. - Reuter

"The military will hide nothing re-

garding the disappearances of people in Honduras," Santos Aguilar said.

"Thus the military is willing to open

its files to civilian authorities and put

at the disposal of the courts all of-

ficers who presumably were involved

Rigoberto Espinal Irias on Thursday

asked all Honduran judges to act

quickly to "take out of your desk

der of leftists in the 1980s, when

much of central America was en-

More than 14,000 US-backed

The 1,000-page report blamed

The battalion's first leader, current

much of the wrongdoing on in-telligence battalion 316, formed in

1984 by the then-head of the military,

military chief Gen. Luis Alonso Dis-

cua, left Honduras on Tuesday for a vacation in Miami. The independent

committee of relatives of the dis-

appeared announced at a news con-

ference on Thursday that it would ask

the legislature to suspend the general

pending an investigation into the disappearances. - AP

Gen. Gustavo Alvarez Martinez.

Acting supreme court president

in these questions."

gulfed in civil wars.

boring Nicaragua.

Contras demobilised.



SOUTH AFRICA - A wounded man receives first aid on the floor of the Heidelberg restaurant in Cape Town on Friday after unidentified gunmen burst into the crowded shop spraying patrons with assault rifles. - AFP photo

Russian reformers to get lesser jobs

MOSCOW - Ministers who pioneered bold economic reforms will be given lower-ranking jobs in Russia's new government, which will concentrate on investment and industrial output, Rossiiskiye Vesti newspaper said yesterday.

The prediction by *Rossiiskiye Vesti*, the official government newspaper, would indicate that ministers favouring slower reform have won out over radicals after Russian voters rebuffed reformers in parliamentary elections on December 12.

The newspaper, quoting 'com-petent sources', said President Boris Yeltsin was close to approving the composition of the new government. Industrialist Oleg Soskovets would become the most senior deputy

prime minister of three, and reformer Boris Fyodorov would be given a ministerial job. Fyodorov is now deputy prime minister, a job that carries a higher

rank than ministers.
Yegor Gaidar, the man who has masterminded reforms designed to transform Russia into a market economy, would stay in office as a deputy prime minister, but would report to "The leitmotif of next year's pol-

icies will be investment, stopping industrial decline and supporting agriculture," the newspaper wrote.

*Rossiiskiye Vesti's editor-in-chief,

Valery Kucher, said he was convinced the newspaper's information was correct. "We learnt all this from government sources. This information is true." Rossiiskiye Vesti said central bank chairman Viktor Gerashchenko would keep his job. Reformers say Gerashchenko has

failed to crack down on inflation, a

angrily denies, saying monopolist producers are driving inflation up.

Ultra-nationalists, communists and conservative agrarians all did better than expected in the December 12 elections and reformist parties will hold little more than a quarter of the seats in the new parliament. Gaidar and Fyodorov, a former in-ternational banker brought into the

government as finance minister and deputy prime minister at the end of last year, have been the driving forces behind Russia's economic reform Fyodorov, whose office displays

the slogan that monetary growth is "the opium of the national economy", has warned against easing monetary reins and allowing spending to rise. The minister of finance, with his

harsh attitude to credits to industry, must either change his views or not hamper other people in saving the economy," Rossiiskiye Vesti wrote. If Fyodorov was not prepared to allow new credits to restructure in-dustry and increase Russia's competitiveness, "his place should be oc-

cupied by a man sharing Gerashchenko's views as far as the reasons for inflation in Russia are Western economists view Russia's

privatisation campaign as the most successful element of reforms to date. Rossiiskiye Vesti said Deputy Prime Minister Anatoly Chubais, responsible for privatisation, would probably stay as a minister, but this remained unclear. "So far his future is unclear. Taking into consideration the results of the privatisation pro-gramme... Chubais has completed his job and he could apparently be sacrificed without any damage," the paper said. — Reuter

U.S. PACKAGE BOMBING SUSPECT Super agent Swifty Lazar is no more

endary talent agent Irving "Swifty" Lazar, known for his lavish parties the night of the academy awards, died of kidney failure on Thursday. He was 86. Lazar died at his home Thursday evening, said Teresa Sohn, his friend and social secretary.

Considered among the top talent and literary agents in Hollywood, La-zar was known for the star-studded parties he threw at Trendy Spago res-

His client list included Cole Porter, Ernest Hemingway, Faye Dun-away, Michael Caine, Vladimir Nabokov, Truman Capote, former president Nixon and director Franco

Irving Paul Lazar got his nick-name from Humphrey Bogart in 1955 after the agent got five screen properties for Bogart in just one day.

"I started at midday and by the time 6 p.m. came around I had made the five deals:" Lazar told the Los Angeles Times in a 1980 interview. After that I was 'Swifty."

Lazar said he didn't actually like the name and only a few friends, such as Lauren Bacall and Arthur Schlesinger, were allowed to address him

Dancer Gene Kelly, who knew Lazar for 50 years, said Lazar's death "came as a big blow." "The town will

be much poorer without him. A lot of towns, including London, New York and Paris. He was quite a man around town. We will miss him and the town will miss him," he said on

is dead

rightist Contras used Honduras as their base to try to topple the leftist Sandinista government in neighrome O'Leary, reported.

The Guinness Book of Records The Sandinistas eventually were

defeated in elections in 1990 and the

her and are sorry that she could not make her 50th birthday on St. Patrick's day next year." - AP

A small-time con man with big-time delusions

ROCHESTER — The man accused of killing five people by sending bombs to wipe out his girlfriend's family has a reputation as a smalltime con man with big-time delusions and a history of talking himself into

Michael Stevens fancied himself a slick-talking salesman, yet he was nabbed and imprisoned for running a coupon scam - in part, because he carelessly confessed.

And when he masterminded the vengeful plot to kill his girlfriend's relatives, the scheme fell apart just hours after the bombings because Stevens failed to realise the evidence would quickly point to him, author-

ities said.

This guy was weird," said Michael West, a former district attorney who prosecuted Stevens in 1987 for the coupon and telemarketing scam. "He was a few pickles short of a bar-rel." Stevens, 53, and a friend, Earl Figley, 56, were charged in Tuesday's bombings. Authorities said Stevens sent six bombs to relatives of his girl-

friend, Brenda Lazore Chevere, throughout upstate New York. Three bombs killed Chevere's mother and stepfather, Robert and Eleanor Fowler of West Valley south of Buffalo, a sister and her boyfriend in Rochester and a co-worker of Robert

Fowler's in the Buffalo suburb of Cheektowaga. Another bomb injured Chevere's

uncle, while two others intended for two more relatives were defused or detonated by police.
"When the intended victims are all members of a certain family, you

can start to narrow the suspects down," said Erie county district attorney Kevin Dillon. A law-enforcement official who spoke on condition of anonymity said Stevens apparently sent the bombs to

get back at Chevere's relatives, who

wanted her to break up with him. Stevens of the Rochester suburb of Victor and Chevere lived together and had a 2-year-old son, but the relationship was rocky and Chevere was thinking about breaking it off,

Said Ron Sahr, a friend of Robert Fowler's: "Somehow he probably began to think that it was the family's fault he was having all these prob-

Whatever he did, Stevens seemed to find fault with people and pick fights. Victor town supervisor Kenneth Wilson said Stevens used an alias when he applied for a building permit at his home and was abusive

Figley apparently had a fierce devotion to Stevens, who persuaded his friend to buy 25 kilograms of dynamite in Kentucky last summer. bring it back to New York and help him make the bombs, authorities

there," said Monroe county district at-torney Howard Relin. "These people had more than a strong attachment.

former Schoharie county prosecutor, said the two knew each other before At Stevens' trial on the telemarketing charges, Figley stood at the entrance to courtroom and tried to in-

Figley met in prison, but West, the

Authorities have said Stevens and

timidate witnesses as they came in to testify against Stevens, West said. "Figley was like an indentured servant" for Stevens, West said.

The trial had comical moments West said. Stevens' father frequently cursed and shouted "a pox upon you" at the judge, while his sister sat at the back of the courtroom and wailed.

Before the trial, West visited Stevens' parents in Rochester. On the walls of their house were pictures of themselves with the late entertainer Danny Thomas, whom they said was

Jackson is 'stonewalling' SANTA MONICA — The law-

yer for a 13-year-old boy suing Michael Jackson for allegedly molesting him says the pop superstar is

"stonewalling."

Jackson's attorney countered that his counterpart was just whining.

Attorney Larry Feldman filed a superior court motion on Thursdayasking the court to compel Jackson to

answer written questions in the teenager's civil suit. The only questions the 35-year-old Jackson would answer were his name and birth date, Feldman said.

The motion will be considered during a January 14 hearing, four days before the entertainer is scheduled to give a deposition in the case. Trial is set for March 21.

and that he really doesn't mean what he says in the press - that he wants to have a quick resolution and prove his innocence," said Feldman. Hundreds of questions ask for information about various young-sters allegedly entertained by Jack-

"It just shows he's stonewalling

son since January 1, 1983, Feldman In the court documents, Jackson attorney Howard Weitzman repeatedly claimed that, because of a criminal investigation, compelling

Jackson's answers would violate his constitutional rights. Los Angeles and Santa Barbara county authorities have been in-

vestigating child molestation allegations against Jackson, though no criminal charges have been filed.

"It is totally predictable," Weitzman said when asked about the court motion. "The key word with Mr. Feldman, for me, is whine." — AP

Big Bertha

says Big Bertha was born on March 17, St. Patrick's Day, 1944. It lists her not only as the world's oldest cow but also as world holder of the lifetime

O'Leary, whose farm is near the market town of Kenmare in county Kerry in southwest Ireland, said Big Bertha fell sick five weeks ago and

end," O'Leary was quoted as saying by the Irish *Independent* newspaper. "We did everything we could for

seven states: California, Connecticut, Illinois, Michigan, Ten-

to officials.

formation superhighway. Federal agents have expanded

er was killed. "Internet users are precisely the A US federal task force known

> network. "You are not being asked to place yourself in harm's way. You

owned by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. People on the Internet can download the information to their own computers or browse through the documents

The FBI offered a \$1 million reward for information leading to conviction of whoever sent the "diabolical devices." "All have caused terror, grief and fear," the FBI told internet users.

The document gives a description of all 14 bombings and

lists some clues in the case. The Internet got its start as a way to link universities doing defence research, but the network has

expanded far beyond its origins. It has evolved from a purely ac-

community of gourmet cooks with recipes to share, computerwise kids with games on their minds, anarchists, the White House, Neo-Nazis, the Library of Congress, Zen Buddhists, and now, federal agents hoping to solve a string of crimes. The Clinton administration

wants to develop an information superhighway by expanding the Internet's capacity to carry information and link it with networks built over the years by the telephone and cable TV industries. Since Clinton took office, government agencies have scrambled to make their information available on the Inter-

drawers and dust off all cases against civilians and soldiers involved in the painful subject of the disappeared in The human rights commission's report blamed Honduran counter-intelligence units trained by Americans and Argentines and backed by the Contras for the torture and mur-

world's oldest cow, Big Bertha has died at age 49, her owner, farmer Je-

breeding record for cattle, with 39

died on the farm on Sunday.
"It must have been old age in the

WASHINGTON - The US Federal Bureau of Investigation is stalking a deadly bomber down a different kind of mean street: the in-

their search for the so-called university bomber to the Internet, a vast network of computers that reaches an estimated 20 million people worldwide.

as Unabom is seeking the person responsible for 14 bombings since One man died and 23 people

were injured in the attacks.

Most of the bombings were targeted at the computer industry, the aircraft and airline industries and you have information. universities. The bombings were in

Stalking a criminal on information highway

nessee, Utah and Washington. In the most recent attack, a Yale University computer scientist was injured when a parcel he was opening exploded. In 1985, a Sac-

type of individuals that to date have been recipients of explosive devices attributed to Unabom," said FBI special agent William Tafoya in a notice posted on the computer

ramento computer rental store own-

are encouraged to come forward if The FBI placed the information

India, Pakistan stick to their guns

From Our Correspondent

ISLAMABAD -Both Pakistan and India took up tough bargaining positions yesterday as their top foreign office bureaucrats prepared for their first rendezvous in 16 months in Islamabad today prior to formal talks

There will be no more formal talks on bilateral relations in the present format if the Indians fail to come up with concrete proposals on Kashmir," a Pakistan Foreign Office spokesman set the mood for the hosts.

The Indians were in no mood to show any sign of weakness or pres-

"Kashmir is an irrevocable part of India and organising a referendum there was out of question. So any further talks of a plebiscite is meaningless," the Indian Foreign Minister Dinesh Singh said in New Delhi.

Both sides have let it known through their normal channels that they did not expect the talks to produce any positive result but neither is prepared to abandon the dialogue fearing the blame may be placed at its

Indian Foreign Secretary J.M. Dixit knows Islamabad very well as he was Indian High Commissioner in Pakistan before he was called back and promoted to become the top bureaucrat handling foreign affairs of the

He is unlikely to see Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto as she has opted to stay away from the talks and would be flying out to her hometown Larken this morning to prepare for her battle

prayers at late Z.A Bhutto's grave.

Benazir's decision to keep her distance from the Indian delegation has been interpreted in Islamabad as another signal that the PPP Government did not want to be seen to be brushing its shoulders with a dialogue which was expected to produce more bickering and a sharpening of bilateral at-

Diplomats agree that both India and Pakistan would not have come to the negotiating table if Washington had not used its pressure on Islamabad and New Delhi but almost everyone agrees that bringing them to a negotiation table means nothing as they have already been sitting across a table for the last six rounds without moving an inch forward. Their last round was in August 1992.

The Indians are hoping that the foreign secretaries would set a date for the Prime Ministers of the two countries to meet but Pakistan has already rejected a summit at that level unless India took positive steps in Kashmir, included among them the withdrawal of at least two divisions of troops and

to end human rights violations. The first PPP Government of Benazir Bhutto had moved fast with improving its relations with Rajiv Gandhi's India who was invited to Pakistan and paid what was then the first official visit by an Indian Prime Minister

in decades. But Benazir Bhutto received a lot of flak for her enthusiastic approach to woo New Delhi and was accused of bargaining the rights of the Kashmiris

just because Rajiv Gandhi had to trav-

Both sides are also claiming now they would be "positive and realistic" in the talks but what it means to either of them is the real problem.

Diplomatic experts say the Indian perception of being "realistic" means recognition of the fact that Kashmir was an integral part of India and hence

Pakistan interprets the same word as acceptance of the reality that Kashmir has not been able to merge with India despite 46 years, three wars with Pakistan and massive supression of the Kashmiri people by brute military

Both the countries have used interference by each other's intelligence agencies in their domestic affairs as a justification to stifle political dissent at home and both deny the charges with equal vehemence.

The latest charges have come from India which says the ISI of Pakistan was fomenting trouble in Kashmir and Punjab by supplying arms and training to the militants, charges which a Foreign Office spokesman denied strong-

Pakistanis say the Indian RAW was "hyper active" in Pakistan and several RAW agent have been nabbed by Pakistani authorities recently.

"If the Indian do not stop the mudslinging campaign against the ISI, the names and deeds of the arrested RAW agents would be publicised," Pakistani officials warned recently, retaliating to



Ringing in the New Year

Children help themselves to a sidewalk filled with colourful cardboard horns for sale to merrymakers on Thursday in Manila, in preparation for the New Year celebration.

BRITAIN-BASHING OVER HK

China fires last salvo of the year

vesterday over plans to widen democracy in Hongkong, ringing out a year of ugly bickering and portending more tension as the colony's 1997 return to Chinese rule draws near.

Senior leaders and state media took different tacks, ranging from Communist Party chief Jiang Zemin's attack on London's "wrong stand" to Xinhua news agency's dark blasts at Hongkong Governor Chris Patten and Britain's alleged ulterior motives.

"Our resolution to restore China's sovereignty over Hongkong will not change," Jiang said in a new year's speech printed in the official China The message was clear -Britain's days of influence in Hongkong were limited and London had better get used to it.

"The time when Britain can dominate the world with its gunboat diplomacy is gone for good and you should no longer dream the beautiful dream of being imperialists again," said a Xinhua editorial appearing in

"Do not say we have not warned

As if acting on the implied threat, China said a committee formed to chart Hongkong's transition had "intensified" its work. Some analysts believe the body will act as a pro-Beijing shadow government over the next three years.

Xinhua blamed Britain for the col-

would negotiate only if Patten scrapped his reform bill, parts of which he put to the legislature in De-

Patten's scheme to expand election franchises, increase the number of elective seats and lower the voting age has sparked fury in Beijing, which says it violates bilateral agreements.

The sides failed to resolve the dispute in 17 rounds of talks over seven

China says its first act as Hong-kong's sovereign on July 1, 1997, will be to dump any elective bodies whose members are seated through liberalised elections. Xinhua said London must accept that Hongkong would no longer be a "jewel in the royal crown". It attacked London for trying to maintain its influence there.

"They have disregarded diplomatic commitments, employed all the experience gained by their colonialist predecessors and - under the dazzling halo of 'democracy' - created a fait accompli which they think China cannot help but accept after 1997," Xinhua said

How China rules Hongkong will be China's own business, Xinhua quoted Zhang Junsheng, a top Chinese official in the colony, as saying.

"It is an internal matter of our country," he said. "It is only absurd that (Patten) should have something to

Former super cop decides to take a break

BOMBAY — Julio Ribeiro, India's erstwhile top cop, has an appointment to keep. This time, it is not with the Bombay underworld or Punjab terrorists. Instead, he is faced with the intimidating prospect of confronting his dentists. "I have a problem with my molars when I chew," says the man who once forced

After four decades of distinguished government service, Mr Ribeiro, former director-general of police in Punjab, police commissioner in Bombay and, till November, the ambassador to Romania, has finally decided to take a break. "I don't want to do anything which is taxing and seen as further punishment," he laughs. Life after retirement can be difficult, especially when you have survived two assassination attempts and are still on the hit-list of Punjab terrorists. The 64-year-old Mr Ribeiro is followed by a posse of security guards wherever he goes. "It is a big nuisance since nobody wants their freedom curtailed. But I lose no sleep over the possible dangers. I have done my job, the terrorists may try theirs," he says with karmic fatalism.

Having returned to Bombay only a few days ago, he is still mapping out his future. "I am the sort of person who must remain active otherwise life will be difficult." says the tall police officer who enjoyed leading from the front.

He has already agreed to chalk out anti-terrorist courses for young police officers based on his vast experience in the subject. He is also keen on writing about his encounters. "It won't be an autobiography since no one is really interested in reading about an old cop. But, I would like to write human interest stories that I have come across in the police force," he hopes.

A bit of social work is also on the agenda. "I am particularly keen on working with policemen's children. Many of these children go astray because their fathers are so involved in their work. Contrary to the popular impression, the life

of a policeman can be very tough and demanding," says Mr Ribeiro, who had undertaken a similar childrens' welfare project when he was superintendent of

The police force remains dear to his heart, and it does not take much prodding to get Mr Ribeiro to take a trip down memory lane. Criticism of his twoyear tenure in Punjab between 1986 and 1988 still seems to rankle. In particular, his statement that he would match the terrorists "bullet for bullet" had generated much heat. "People chose to take that statement too literally. I had a specific assignment in Punjab which was to raise the morale of the police force and confront the terrorists. My task was not to do away with terrorism altogether. From whatever I have seen or read, it is not possible to eradicate terrorism in a short time. He is obviously pleased that the back bone of terrorism in the Punjab has been broken. "The position today is certainly very good and much beyond my expectations," he remarks.

Mr Ribeiro believes that a variety of factors are responsible for the improved state of affairs, including the presence of a popular government in the state. "I think the most important factor which has influenced the course of events in Puniab is the disgust of the Sikh masses with the violence unleashed by the terrorists Without popular support, you can never fight terrorism," he feels. He is also full of praise for his successor as DGP, Mr K.P.S.Gill, "I have always maintained that Mr Gill was an excellent operations man. In fact, when as special secretary (home), I was asked to recommend names for the DGP's post, my first choice had been Mr Gill," he confesses.

Mr Ribeiro's stint as Bombay police commissioner from 1982 to 1984 was always believed in reaching out to the people because only then can a policeman

be expected to fulfil his obligations to society," claims Mr Ribeiro

The recent communal riots in Bombay have left him greatly disturbed. "I am emotionally attached to Bombay and hate to see the city where I grew up being polarised in this manner," says Mr Ribeiro, a product of St Xavier's school and He is equally dismayed by allegations that the police played a partisan role

during the riots. "It has been my experience that an average policeman when he dons his uniform is a law enforcer first and last, not a member of some community. A few stray cases are not enough to target the entire force. Unfortunately, the allegation that the police are partisan is routinely made because people are looking for a scapegoat," he avers

Mr Ribeiro himself was at the helm of affairs when communal riots broke out in 1984. "I think it is the daily struggle for existence that makes this city so

He would, however, like to see policemen in general become more accessible to the public so that the latter see them as friends and not adversaries. He recalls an experiment he tried when he was Thane police chief whereby small groups of spectors and sub-inspectors would regularly interact with labour le dents, doctors, social workers and other community members.

It is this people-oriented approach, which saw Mr Ribeiro march through the riot-affected areas in 1984, that is probably the secret of his success as an officer. Now, of course, Mr Ribeiro is faced with far more comforting settings, including club membership and watching sports, especially cricket, on tele vision. But his hyperactive nature will ensure that he is not reduced to a couch equally controversial, with his critics accusing him of playing to the gallery. "I potato. "In any case, I'm not very good in domestic affairs and my wife would get worried if I started spending too much time in the kitchen," he laughs.

India to open up electronic media

NEW DELHI — Indian government has drawn up plans to open the state-controlled electronic media to the private sector keeping in

tune with the liberalisation process. The Information and Broadcasting Ministry would shortly take the plan drawn up in this regard to the cabinet committee on economic affairs, reports the daily The Observer.

This in effect would allow private stations to compete with Doordarshan and All India Radio, in the process offering a better deal to the viewers and listeners. However, according to plans that are now being processed at the ministerial level, only Indian citizens and companies would be allowed to avail of this opportunity.

Foreign broadcasters, which are mounting pressure on the government for entry into the country, would not be entertained as yet.

The private stations would, however, not be allowed to broadcast any programme of their choice.

The government has no objection to entertainment programmes being shown, but news, current affairs and international relations would be kept out of the ambit of the private channels

Also, they would have to mandatorily abide by the broadcast and advertising code. Thus, the private stations cannot telecast, say, advertisements of tobacco or drinks.

A three-tier plan is currently under preparation for opening up the broadcasting sector. As per the plan, the government would also first open up the radio sector to the private sector, under which private companies would be allowed to install FM radio

The second phase would entail allowing private companies to own television transmitters and uplink their Companies which go in for this can get into some arrangement with the cable community to help them reach the viewers. The third stage involves

permission to private companies to network their television channels. This would mean that a Delhi-based broadcaster can uplink the programmes here and downlink them at any other city.

This will be similar to the satellite based terrestrial channels, like the five DD satellite channels. And viewers in

both the cities can then view the channels without any dish antennae or cable operator. However, companies would be

allowed to use only Indian satellites for the purpose Since the state owned

Doordarshan has already taken up 17 transmitters, or 40 per cent of the available frequency for transmitting from the Indian satellites, the private companies can only compete for the rest. The remaining frequencies of the Insat series satellites, the only satellite series available in the country, are at present being made use of by the department of telecommunications (DOT), department of space and the

defence services. Companies planning to establish their own television stations would have to buy the frequencies from these three agencies. They would also have to obtain licences from DOT to begin operations. DOT would be in charge of allocating frequencies and giving clearance for the transmitters used by the companies.

While this should not be much of a problem for the private radio stations, companies launching TV stations would have to overcome a lot of hindrances.—PTI

India to have more private airlines

will shortly be invaded by another 20 air taxi operators in the wake of the government's decision to repeal the air corporation act, reports The Observer. Twenty air taxi operators have already been licensed by the government to commence their operations. These are in addition to the existing 17 airlines. The 20 companies, sources said,

have already secured the 'air taxi operators permit' from the government. The success of some of the pri-

vate airlines within a short span of time and the rapidly growing aviation market in this country have inspired these companies to enter the market", It is estimated that the air traffic,

which is growing at a rate of more than 10 per cent per annum, will grow further due to the rapidly changing business climate and liberalisation of the economy, the burgeoning middle class, affluent overseas Indians and the government's thrust on tourism.

'Many consultancy firms, including Arthur Anderson, has estimated that the size of the civil aviation market in this country is about 23 million passengers, which means that there is a massive untapped segment of over 13 million passengers," said a marketing representative of East West Airlines, a leading player in the in-

The private airliners disagreed with the civil aviation secretary's observation that the air traffic was not growing in the manner expected.

'The November statistics show that the air traffic market has grown by 11.3 per cent compared to the corresponding period last year, carrying about 29,256 passengers per day against 26,275 passengers in November 1992," said the private airline representative.

Even the International Air Transport Association (IATA) has pointed out that India's air traffic will grow at around 7.2 per cent in the second half of this decade and its share in the Asia-Pacific air travel would jump to around 6.1 per cent by the year 2000 from 2.1 per cent in 1991 following the rapid economic changes taking

The international association, in its latest report - 'Air traveller forecast: "Air visitors arrivals in key Asian countries: 1981-2010' - explained that by 2010, India's share would surpass that of two newly industrialised countries: Taiwan and Singapore. India is estimated to have an air travel market of about 13 million by the year 2000 from about 6.7 million in 1990, it in-

Japan's royals wax poetic

failures, recession, the mysterious loss of speech by the empress. Even Japan's Emperor Akihito, who is usually the picture of serenity and good cheer, had to admit

1993 was, well, a disaster. In typical Japanese royal style, however, that hasn't stopped him from being poetic about it.

To mark the coming of the new year, the palace released five poems composed by Akihito and several by his wife, Empress Michiko, during 1993. The emperor's poems were uncharacteristically

TOKYO - Tidal waves, crop gloomy. Two dealt with natural dis- rential rains and flooding," he said. asters, one with the lingering pain of "It is my deep-felt hope that those World War II, another with the death of his longtime friend King Baudouin soon recover.' of Belgium, and the fifth with his visit to the Berlin Wall.

> In Akihito's official summing up of the year past - a terse, threeparagraph statement that accompanied the poems - he noted that 1993 had a little bit of everything for Japan - and most of it was bad.

> "Amid severe economic circumstances, we were visited by a cold summer and experienced in addition such disasters as earthquakes and tor

who suffered pain or damage will

One of those believed to be on the road to recovery is the empress, who collapsed on her 59th birthday, October 20. Palace doctors have described the cause only as a "deep sadness" likely brought on by a slew of articles accusing her of being overbearing and petty.

Michiko has suffered a near-total loss of speech since her collapse, but palace officials say she is gradually recovering and can now utter certain

Where His Majesty and I Passed some thirty years Had a window through which We viewed the sunset.

ace on December 8:

This palace.

The year did hold one bright event for the royal family, and for the nation: The lavish June wed ding of Crown Prince Naruhito to Princess Masako, a former rising star in the diplomatic service. -AP

She is otherwise said to be quite

healthy, and even penned this rather

melancholy poem to commemorate

her move with Akihito to a new pal

Aids boom in India

MADRAS - The Aids scenario in India is acquiring alarming dimensions and, by the turn of the century there are likely to be three to five million Aids cases in the country, according to Indian Health Organisation Secretary-General Dr. I.S. Gilada.

The number of HIV positive cases was likely to touch 30-50 million, Dr. Gilada, the country's first campaigner against Aids, said in Madras.

Going by experience and a careful study of Aids-related statistics during the last seven years, the number of HIV positive cases appeared to double in just 12 months and even if there was a suitable intervention programme, the figure would still double in an estimated 24 months, he said.

If the doubling occurred at the estimated pace, there would be about 50 million HIV infected cases in the country as compared to the present figure of one million.

This projected figure for India alone is tragically five times the world's total number of HIV infection cases as of today which is a modest 10 million," Dr. Gilada said quoting from an IHO publication.—PTI

NUCLEAR SITES' INSPECTION

N. Korea, US in basic agreement

SEOUL - Washington and Pyongyang have agreed in principle on outside inspection of North Korea's suspect nuclear sites and cancellation of a US-South Korean military exercise in 1994, Seoul's state

radio said yesterday. "But they have failed to reach a full agreement due to trivial differences between their positions on the scope of the North Korean nuclear inspection," the Korea Broadcasting System (KBS) quoted an unnamed senior South Korean government official as saying.

The report did not elaborate on differences in the talks between North and US envoys in New York on Wednesday

The official was quoted as saying the two sides had also agreed in principle on resumption of high-level contacts between them and of interKorean talks, as well as on the exchange of special envoys between

Washington acknowledged on Thursday it had moved closer to agreement with North Korea in the latest talks over the North's suspected nuclear arms development pro-

North Korea went further on the outcome, saying it had made a 'break-

The North's Korean Central News Agency on Thursday quoted a foreign ministry spokesman as saying the US side had expressed readiness to stop its annual 'Team Spirit' military exercise with South Korea.

In exchange, the North had basically agreed to resumption of inspections of its suspected facilities by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), he said.—Reuter



Sharif in Sarajevo

Former Prime Minister of Pakistan and currently leader of the opposition, Nawaz Sharif, visits a wounded child at the Kosevo hospital in Sarajevo on Thursday. Sharif was on a two-day visit to the Bosnian capital.

Convenor of the national federation of post and telegraph employees K Raman termed the strike as total and said it was called to protest

against the centre's move to privatise

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

- The one-day sit-in strike yesterday

by the telecom employees has af-

fected trunk and telephone services in

Telecom strike in Kerala

He said no trunk calls or telegrams were booked here.

strike would affect only manual ser-As 89 per cent of the subscribers

Meanwhile, an official at the telecom administrative office said, the

had STD facility, people would not be affected much, he added. - PTI

Turkish press leaves

behind a harsh year

urkey was one of the most dangerous places to be a reporter in 1993.

the days of the former military regime. The year began with the bombing death

in January of columnist Ugur Mumcu, who won international fame for reporting on the 1981 shooting of Pope John Paul II. In July, 35 people were killed in a

riot by extremists protesting a newspaper's publication of excerpts from Salman Rushdie's novel "Satanic Verses," which they consider blasphemous. The

paper's editor escaped unhurt. The year ended on the same grim note, as two tel-

evision reporters were arrested by a military court in December for airing inter-

face up to two years in prison if convicted of "provoking the population against the army." International Press Associations protested. "We fail to understand why two civilians should be tried under military court when the country is not

under martial law," said the Pen American Centre. Newspapers questioned Tur-

key's democratic system and attacked the government. "The country has been disgraced," wrote commentator Yalcin Dogan in the newspaper Milliyet. Turkey

has 900 laws that can be used to restrict its press, according to Oktay Eksi, chief columnist for the major national newspaper *Hurriyet*. The government is par-

ticularly watchful because of the Kurdish separatist movement in the southeast.

Pro-Kurdish reporters are often arrested and their publications seized. The har-

vest-hit has been the daily newspaper Ozgur Gundem. Just 18 months old, it has been the target of 170 judicial actions. Nine of its reporters and 11 of its distributors have been killed, and its issues have been confiscated 200 times.

The newspaper is charged with collaborating with the separatist Kurdish Workers Party, known as the PKK. In a recent raid, police found pistols, gas masks, false military IDs, and PKK documents at its Istanbul office.

pistols and gas masks were to protect its reporters. Extremists also are blamed

for the killings of pro-Kurdish journalists. The PKK ordered mainstream Turkish

reporters out of the southeast to protest what it said was biased reporting.

It doesn't help that Turkey's press also is suffering from a credibility prob-

Total daily newspaper sales have held steady at about 3 million for nearly two decades, despite a fast-growing population. "The media in Turkey is no longer a means for disseminating information and intelligent comment aimed at

informing and enlightening the public," wrote Semith Indiz in the Turkish daily

News. "It is only a medium for generating massive profits for newspaper owners." The biggest national newspapers — *Hurriyet*, Sabah and Milliyet — give

away encyclopedias to their readers, and each newspaper has spent a year attacking the quality of its competitors' encyclopedias. At times, the attacks fill the whole front page, leaving no room for news. Peter Galiner, former president of

the London-based International Press Institute, was quoted as saying Turkish

teriorated?" asked Ertugrul Ozkok, the executive director of Hurriyet. "That is

Other opinions

With the New Year and two major domestic policy victories under his belt (Nafta and US budget bill), American President Bill Clinton is gearing up to make an all-out push for the next two items on his domestic agenda: Health

But one comment that he made during the height of the Bosnian crisis

bodes ill for US foreign policy in the coming year. Clinton told a White House aide that he was frustrated by the number of hours he was spending on Bosnia

which was deflecting his time away from domestic concerns. Bosnia was "a distraction," he said. Clinton, popularly elected on a mandate to put America's house in order, probably felt that by spending so much time on foreign policy,

he wasn't fulfilling the role that he was elected for. Fair enough. But in today's

superpower to engage in an active foreign policy, not retreat into semi-isolationism or as it is euphemistically called in Washington circles these

days, "selective disengagement." There is a need for Clinton to pay attention.

This is not to say that Washington should always be poking its nose into

solutions or mechanisms to deal with the problems of the 90's and beyond.

only be done but must also be seen to be done. It is also said that, while a guilty person might be allowed to go free, the innocent must never be punished. For both these reasons it is important that, in arriving at a decision

on the finance minister Dr Manmohan Singh's letter of resignation, Mr P V

Narasimha Rao must do the just and honourable thing. In this case the only

correct course for the Prime Minister to follow will be to say "no, thank you"

to Dr Singh. The latter has indeed done the proper thing by sending in his letter

criticised his role as the finance minister. More importantly, it is quite possible

that Dr Singh is deeply distressed at the manner in which his own partymen,

of resignation, for it is quite understandable that he should feel both dismayed

and bitter at the manner in which the Joint Parliamentary Committee has

including his colleagues in the Union council of ministers, have held his

policies responsible for the ruling party's lacklustre performance at the last

many of them have refused to defend the fiscal stabilisation and structural

Pakistan has offered to provide two additional battalions for the UN

with proper equipment. The offer, which came in the wake of high-level

exchanges between Pakistan and the US in Islamabad recently, reflects

eacekeeping force in Somalia on condition that its soldiers would be provided

Pakistan's commitment to strengthening the UN role in maintaining peace and

security in Somalia. Although the scale of violence has considerably abated,

collapse. It is this constant carping from behind and the relentless

a day, rather than just the observations of the JPC.

What next in Somalia?

elections. Rather than support him, both publicly and within the government,

adjustment programme that has helped India return from the brink of economic

machinations of ambitious colleagues that may have forced Dr Singh to call it

A fundamental principle of modern jurisprudence is that justice must not

world, where tribalism, ethnic conflict, stirrings of neo-fascism, nuclear

international stew, there is a pressing need for the world's only remaining

proliferation, civil strife, and wordwide depression make an explosive

e internal affairs of other countries. But it means

The honourable course

stiff competition of the free market economy.

US policies

care reform and welfare reform.

lem, accused of focusing on profits of the expense of professional standards.

Ozgur Gundem said the materials were intended for news purposes, and the

Ali Tevfik Berber and Erhan Akyildiz of the popular programme "Antenna"

Seven journalists were killed, many in areas where Kurds are fighting

a violent separatist struggle, and another 41 were jailed in an echo of

By Zeynep Alemdar **Associated Press**

views with conscientious objectors.

& VIEWS & COMMENTS

BENAZIR BHUTTO

five constituencies were counter-

The biggest casualty of the

manded due to death of candidates.

1993 polls were religious parties,

specially the Pakistan Islamic Front

(PIF) led by Jamaat-e-Islami chief,

Qazi Hussain Ahmed, which had

fielded 103 candidates. PIF bagged

only three seats in the lower house.

Campaigning and elections were by and large peaceful, but for

the assassination of former Punjab Chief Minister and PML-N leader

Ghulam Haider Wyne, and that too

was reportedly because of an old

formed a coalition government at

the centre as also in Punjab prov-

ince. In Sindh it managed an ab-

solute majority but lost out in gov-

ernment formation to pro-Sharif forces in the NWFP and Balochi-

Bhutto was able to gain the much-

needed political stability with vital

Punjab supporting her and the new

President declaring his intentions

of not interfering in government

The year began with the sudden

Political observers feel that

PPP bagged 86 seats and

Saturday, January 1, 1994

MARK

HEINRICH

Tudjman

faces disillusion

over Croatia's

woes in Bosnia

openly question Pres-ident Franjo Tudjman's military adventure in Bosnia after a

The groundswell of unease has

not yet produced a retreat from the

policy of arming and steering Bos-nian Croat forces fighting Bosnians

for territory. But public dismay, en-

couraged by the threat of European

Community sanctions, has spilled

break the grip of rightist hawks on Tudjman's HDZ party, although the president's personal authority re-mains unchallenged.

of Croatian policy have begun to review it, thinking: "Was there any-thing else we could have done?"

newspaper Vjesnik.

vision over Bosnia.

"Even the most faithful disciples

the government-controlled

Earlier this month Defence Min-

ister Gojko Susak, architect of Za-greb's military role in Bosnia, had a

shouting match with opposition

leaders in a debate on state tele-

The opposition said the govern-ment was tarnishing Croatia's im-

age and jeopardising its claim to a

rebel Serb enclave in Croatia by

supporting the Bosnian Croats.
"Bosnia's division along na-

credibly foolish because it runs the

risk of the same thing happening in Croatia," said a senior Western dip-

Nationalist Serbs in Croatia

seized a third of its territory in 1992 and have proclaimed their own republic of Serb Krajina.

land which lies within the UN-

as allies of the Bosnian-led govern-

ment trying to hold the multi-ethnic

country together against Bosnian Serbs backed by Belgrade.

from Croatia, later emerged as

separatist force which took over the

zegovina and part of central Bosnia.

Croats and Bosnians have been at

war there since last spring with the

ix towns since June, repulsing

Croats along a broad central front. Up to 100,000 or more Croat ci-

fertile, heavily populated croat land in (central) Bosnia," said a western

diplomat. "Tudjman has to adjust

his territorial ambitions according

Geneva peace talks -- in which the

Bosnian Croats would get their own ethnic republic, like the muslims

Diplomats say Tudjman regards partition as a step towards an-

nexing any Bosnian Croat state in

'greater Croatia", just as rump Yu-

Bosnia in "greater Serbia".

mini-state.

oslavia intends to absorb Serb-held

Critics believe the demographic

pheaval caused by Croat-Muslin

fighting will mean up to two out of

three Bosnian Croats may end up

stranded outside a future Croat

Many would be refugees, im-

posing a severe economic burden on

Croatia and breeding a culture of

revanchism which could make for

and economy are endangered with-

out a unified Bosnia. The con-

could be disastrous for us," said

Martin Spegelj, a retired Croatian

sequences of Bosnia's partition

'Croatia's geostrategic position

long-term turmoil in the region.

Croatia officially favours a future independent Bosnian con-

to the hard reality on the ground.'

The Bosnian army has captured

The Croats have lost the most

Croats getting the worst of it.

southwestern region of

vilians have fled.

The Croat HVO militia, armed

recognised borders of Croatia.

Zagreb wants to recover this

In Bosnia, Croats began the war

It has enabled moderates to

into the state-dominated media.

series of battlefield defeats.

PAKISTAN IN 1993

Stability now, after year-long turbulence

akistan politics emerged from a turbulent phase in 1993, as democracy was reinforced, which saw the reelection of Benazir Bhutto as Prime Minister, even as President Ishaq Khan and Premier Nawaz Sharif were forced to quit following their failure to resolve dif-

For the first time, the army did not take over in the event of a political deadlock between the President and the Prime Minister as Army Chief Gen Abdul Waheed Khokar suggested that both Sharif and Khan resign and seek fresh mandate from people.

Fresh elections to the National Assembly and four provinces of Punjab, Sindh, Bałuchistan and North West Frontier Province were announced on July 18 after Sharif and Khan quit and a caretaker government with a former World Bank Vice-President, Moeen Qureshi, was sworn in.

Qureshi is credited with having conducted what is being described as the nation's most free and fair poll since 1970, and with taking hard decisions to put the sagging economy back on rails, exposing bank loan defaulters and ordering a crackdown on drug barons.

The elections gave the country its first hung Assembly and even though Bhutto's Pakistan People Party failed to get an absolute majority, she managed to form a gov-ernment with the help of in-

newspapers couldn't function properly because they were preoccupied with their own rivalry. His remarks did not come as a surprise to Turkish journalists.

"It is time that we ask the question why our image has been so much de-PPP scored yet another victory with the election of its senior leadwhat happens when the press does not meet any norms and gets involved in the er and former Foreign Minister, Farooq Leghari, as President.

The post, however, had become highly controversial as three governments had been sacked in he last five years through the exercise of powers under the Eighth Amendment introduced by the late Gen Zia-ul-Haq before he lifted martial law in 1985.

Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N) did not enter any major poll alliance except with the Awami National Party (ANP) of Khan Abdul Wali Khan and Pakhtoonkhwa Milli Awami Party led by Mahmood Khan Achakzai.

He, however, emerged as a national leader in his own right, bagging 72 out of the 217 seats in the lower house. Elections were held for 212 seats including ten belonging to minorities as polls in

controversy in April when his wife, Begum Nuzhat Nawaz, alleged he had been poisoned with arsenic, indicating she suspected close as-

The controversy was laid to

sociates of Nawaz Sharif.

MOEEN QURESHI

foreign experts conducted autopsy on the General's exhumed body and concluded that he had died of a heart attack.

Differences between Sharif and Ishaq Khan reportedly began over the choice of Janjua's successor in In late March, two ministers -

Hamid Nasir Chattha and Anwar Saifullah (Khan's son-in-law) resigned. Several others followed suit. In the midst of the political crisis, Ishaq Khan summoned Sharif and asked him to take corrective measures on allegations of corruption and maladministration. Sharif, instead, addressed the

nation on television and radio on April 17, accusing the presidency of "becoming a hotbed of conspiracy" against his government.

The next day Ishaq Khan sacked Sharif's government under

the Eighth Amendment and ordered fresh elections for July 14. Balkh Sekh Mazari was named caretaker Prime Minister.

Sharif, who moved the Supreme Court challenging the Presdential Order, was reinstated on May 26 and the National Assembly death of Army Chief, Gen. Asif was Nawaz Janjua which sparked off a dict. was restored by a ten to one ver-

Sharif, however, could not sustain long as he failed to have a "working relationship" with the President despite his assurances to this effect to the Supreme Court.

The crisis depended with Ms rest in December when a team of Bhutto threathening to storm Is-

March" The army chief then stepped in to find a way out. Protracted negotiations were

held among the power "Troika" that led to the dissolution of the National Assembly on July 18 and Ishaq Khan announced his decision to quit the highest office after nearly five years.

Fresh elections to the National Assembly and the four provinces were announced for October.

Moeen Qureshi became the care-taker Prime Minister, after political parties failed to agree upon a consensus candidate. After the general elections, wit-

nessed by foreign observers, Bhutto's PPP emerged as the single largest party in the National As-The election of PPP-sponsored

candidate, Yousuf Raza Gilani, as National Assembly speaker on October 17 made the elevation of Bhutto as head of government for the second time an academic exercise. She was voted to power on October 19.

Having lost out on the number game at the centre, Sharif turned to Punjab, where a hostile regime by Manzoor Ahmed Wattoo had ear-

lier added to the political crisis. However, the PML-N failed to muster enough majority in the state and Wattoo, elected on a PML (Junejo) ticket, formed a government

with the support of PPP. Bhutto, soon after assuming of-



lamabad by holding a "long idential elections on November 13. Ishaq Khan too filed his papers although he withdrew at the last min-

> with differences between Bhutto and her mother, Begum Nusrat Bhutto, who campaigned for selfexiled son, Mir Murtaza Bhutto, seeking election to the National and Sindh Assemblies.

rorism" charges in Pakistan, won only from one Assembly seat in Larkana in Sindh. Benazir announced that he would have to face due legal process on his return. Murtaza was arrested on November 3 at Karachi airport when he flew in from Damascus. He was last week charged with sedition in a special Karachi Court for which he ces death if convicted.

NAWAZ SHARIF

fice, was faced with the pres-

tional lines will not protect its Croat community and will not exactly advance Croatia's ambition to The PPP, itself, was marred recover its (Serb-held) territory, said Social Democratic Party (for mer communist) chief Ivica Racan. "Tudjman's policy in sup-porting Bosnia's breakup is in-

Mir Murtaza, who faced "Ter-

Differences between Benazir and her mother deepened further when she replaced Begum Nusrat as chairperson of PPP. Begum Nusrat maintains she had been nominated by her husband, Z.A. Bhutto and lashed out at Benazir for the

With the return of political stability, Pakistan foreign exchange reserves rose to \$1.048 million on December 19 from \$338 million when Ms Bhutto assumed office and the government overdraft from the State Bank came down to Rs 10 billion from Rs 27 billion in just

Africa's hard treadmill

ern pressure for democracy.

gan dismantling one-party systems after nearly three decades in power, Western-style democracy has failed in much of the world's poorest continent.

and one-party governments in Af-

ic management and pluralist for aid — Africa's lifeblood.

—Times of India

political problems have raged on stave off isolationism or chaos.

the collapse of communism as their opportunity to spread democracy in Africa, saw hopes for a peaceful democratic revolution across the continent diverted into helping grapple with the chronic problems there and new ones both at home and in the former communist states.

They now stress the need for

have been the real solution to its history of uncertainty and chaos,"

Even South Africa, Africa's richest nation and seen as a new test case for democracy, faces a rocky road in the new year.

Its first all-race elections are set for April 27 but the runup is plagued by violence -- most between supporters of the African National Congress and Zulu-

In Rwanda, a broad-based transitional government is supposed to be formed this week under peace accords to end three years of tribal-based civil war before pluralist elections scheduled

rundi that killed president Melchior Ndadaye in October and the

elections in June were a major setback in Africa's steps towards

Western pressure has failed to force Zaire's president Mobutu Sese Seko to call multi-party

In Burundi, the army revolt

The opposition challenged the results and gun battles which erupted in June between government and opposition supporters

Political analysts say the fighting is fuelled by tribal hatred and the opposition's ambition to regain control of Congo's oil

From Benin to Zambia, more than a dozen states in the last five years have ended a monolithic hold on power by in-

But political experts said in many of those countries, the wave of pluralism failed to heal endemic corruption, bad management of state utilities and tribal hatred linked to graft.

"In Zambia, the main donors have complained of rising corruption by top government figures after the departure of president Kenneth Kaunda in 1991, said a Western diplomat.

"In Cameroon, President Paul Biya's supporters play a tribal card and urge Biya's Beti people to fight an opposition which they say is dominated by northern and western tribes," he added.

Nairobi University political scientists said only African semidemocratic nations under strongarm leaders so far thrive.

They pointed to partial political and economic success in the Ivory Coast, Botswana, Kenya, Namibia, the Congo, Zimbabwe, Cameroon and Egypt compared to decline or stagnation else-They also said non-party dic-

tatorships, such as Uganda where President Yoweri Museveni has

year, and Libya have the power to survive in turbulent Africa.

Civil wars in Liberia, Sudan, Somalia, Mozambique and Angola have destroyed agriculture, transport and communications and fuelled lawlessness and famine which killed millions of

Sudan, Africa's largest state remains split between the Arab, Muslim North and Christian and animist South, where rebels have fought for a decade for more of the meagre national cake. Civil strife in the continent

has forced millions into exile abroad and many mostly poor Africans have been driven from their homes and internally displaced in their own countries.

The continent is also weighed down by an external debt of some \$270 billion and much of its agriculture-based economies have floundered because of depressed global commodity prices.

While democracy falters, Africa's population flourishes with it set to explode to 900 million people by the year 2000 from the present 700 million despite the ravages of an Aids epidemic.

army general and popular commentator. Regular Croatian soldiers poured into southwest Bosnia to reinforce the battered HVO and pos-

> sources say. Last month Tudjman sacked the HVO commander who had tolerated drunken violence and crime within his ranks. He was replaced by a Croatian army general in the hope of whipping the force into

sibly prepare for counter-offensives, independent military

professional shape. Tudjman cannot afford to cut Bosnian Croats adrift because Herzegovinian soldiers fought for Croa-

tia's independence in 1991. Rich Herzegovinian expatriates poured money into the new state and got powerful posts in the gov

Many ordinary Croatians would rather forget their kin in Bosnia, fearing they are dragging the moth er country into a diplomatic de-

The discontent surfacing in the croatian Media and among newly ascendant moderates in the HDZ has not escalated into any broad op-

position to Tudjman and few expect He remains a larger-than-life 'father of the nation" for leading Croatia to independence. His HDZ wields a two-thirds majority in par

liament, facing no elections until

"Tudjman's personal poll rating in the high 40s per cent is remarkable considering the circumstances," said a Western diplomat. "The political opposition is totally flections of their leaders' personalities." —Reuter

addressed to: The Editor, Times of Oman

gaining against democracy annulling of Nigerian presidential then turned to plunder national

By Manoah Esipisu

he crippling trap of Africa's treadmill of war, tribal strife, poverty, famine and disease is gaining ground against waning West-

Five years since Africans be-

Since "people power" revolts toppled communism in Eastern Europe in the late 1980s, demands for democracy have ousted or weakened many military

Western countries in turn embraced the interventionist strategy of demanding better economdemocracy as firm pre-conditions

But its deep economic and and some Western donors are having to decide whether to stick to their demands or give aid to

Western powers, having seen

through reform to provide the resources to foster democracy.

"It would seem Africans failed to obtain the correct formula for democracy," said an African diplomat in Kenya, where donors ended a two-year aid suspension in November after some

'Pluralism appears not to added the diplomat.

based Inkatha Freedom Party.

A bloody failed coup in the small central African state of Bu-

bri Masjid's demolition. There is

democracy, analysts say.

elections or step down.

triggered a bloodbath in which up to 50,000 people were butchered and 750,000 were forced to flee while events in Nigeria paved the way for a return to power by troops. Parliamentary elections in Congo only brought more strife to the country

are still going on.

dividuals or parties that claimed to represent a majority in the struggle for independence but

it, that, whatever its other faults, management too. Wish you and all my colleagues in Oman and abroad a very Happy New Year, the year I

Who is rich? 1993 was a good year for me. I

posed to be rich and advanced.

If Germany, Japan, France, Britain and the US are in economic trouble, and having legions of unwho in this wide world is rich and

ness and peace in the world and in

Hussain A. Noorani North Ghubrah

ican business weekly the other day From one end to the other, it talked of job cuts and secession in all the advanced countries, which are sup-

Letters should be

vith sporadic fighting going on in some parts, especially south Mogadishu, the overall situation remains ominously fluid. It is not known what assessment of he political situation was provided by the American team visiting Islamabad and what strategy is being evolved for promoting political reconciliation and neasure of peace and order. However, after more than 15 months of bitter and often bloody conflict which has left deep scars on Somali society, eacekeeping in the post-US withdrawal phase is not going to be an easy

nderscores the importance of reconciling the warring groups and accelerating he all-important solution to the conflict. From the 'Times' archives

indertaking by any means. Thus, in spite of suggestions that Pakistan would

eacekeeping remain hedged with grave imponderables. In particular, the UN

officials have expressed concern that the UN operation might unravel without

he presence of well-equipped American and other Western contingents of the

e playing a leading role after the departure of US troops, the prospects of

eace force and that famine and civil war would return. This clearly

JANUARY 1979

Year of the computer

MUSCAT — For many people the year 1978 could be called the ear of the computer. Concern is still expressed in some quarters that hese machines might change something about people. There is certainthe probability that they might induce a tendency to think of moral roblems as only factual ones. But every realistic man has to admit that he fear of computers developing their own minds is baseless. As one xpert in the field says "It is their own fears and imaginings at which eople are looking." It is a fact that today computer has forced people think and to confront social problems they may have been avoiding What we are doing is giving undue importance to the negative and maginary aspects of this scientific marvel. What is needed is better edcation about the good aspects and uses that computers can be put to.

Africans to help themselves and **READERS' FORUM**

Happy New Year Today is the first day of the New Year. Let us all join in wishing a Happy New Year to His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, and the generous Omani people and the good country of Oman

M. Verghese

New Year's resolve

At this time last year, India was rocked with communal riots, sparked by the despicable demolition of the Babri Mosque at Ayodhya. The riots resulted in the loss of life of hundreds, injuries to countless others and distruction of property worth crores of rupees.

But the country has recovered remarkably from the shocks of Ba-

relative communal peace in India now and everyone is engaged in taking full economic advantage of the new opportunities that have been opened up by the liberalisation programme. The demolition anniversary itself passed off without much bloodshed on 6th December last month.

Let all Indians in the Sultanate take a New Year's resolve today to join in the efforts to create communal peace in India and help the country to progress economically become a strong and influential nation.

We should also help the Indian government in its efforts to strengthen secularism in the country and contain the forces of fundamentalism and fascism Let us face the Congress Party has provided stability of government and never tired in its crusade for secularism. It needs our blessings and support, as never before. Gangadharan

Wadi Hatat My hope!

got some things which I was waiting for, but I think that 1994 will be a year better than 1993 if I will get a job and some more things in 1994. I am expecting some good jobs in the beginning of the New Year. So let's see what I will get in this year. My New Year wishes to each and every reader of (Times of Oman) and the staff of (Times) the

I was reading a leading Amer-

employed person then I ask you -

It makes very amusing reading, indeed. hope that will bring full of happi-

prosperous?

Or is it another ploy by the Western world to take us, the Third

World, for a ride again? They are perhaps bargaining that we will fall in false complacency again and not grab the opportunities offered by their slackness

K. Khalid

Postal Code: 112

AYFARTHATWAS

By Jerry Schwartz Associated Press

A 2-year-old boy was abducted from a busy Liverpool shopping mall and killed by two 10-year-olds. Seven homeless boys were massacred on the streets of Rio De Janeiro.

And children were consumed by fire in Waco, Texas, in David Koresh's inferno. "Do not do this to those people this is not the way to end it"

cried FBI agent Byron Sage, as the first flames emerged.

But 51 days after the standoff began with an inept raid and the deaths of four federal agents, this is exactly how it ended - with an apocalypse, ignited by a messianic madman. The Branch Davidian compound was in ashes, and Koresh and more than 80 adherents were dead.

Among them: at least 17 children. So we must list children among the victims of 1993, a year when the victims were heartbreakingly apparent and victors were harder to come by.

Indeed, the victims were innumerable - six New York rail road commuters, gunned down by a man with a lethal chip on his shoulder; eight foreign visitors

In Somalia, a mercy mission to stop civil war went terribly wrong. In early

Thousands struggled to find their way down as many as 100 floors, through smoke and darkness. Within days, the arrests began - alleged militants, allegedly inspired by a blind cleric, Sheik Omar Abdel-Rahman. Authorities alleged conspiracy to murder and kidnap and to bomb other New York landmarks. Bill Clinton had inherited the presidency barely a month before. Clinton was neither a winner nor a loser in 1993 - or rather, he was both.

Peacekeeper's

He was sent to Somalia to save lives, but somewhere along the way, Michael Durant saw that notion turned on its head. Durant, an army helicopter pilot, spent his last days in Mogadishu hoping desperately that his own life would be spared. The 32-year-old from Clarksville,

Tennessee, was captured on October 3 during a furious battle with the forces of Gen. Mohamed Farrah Aideed. Eighteen Americans died, and television cameras captured scenes of cheering, dancing Somalis dragging one American's lifeless body through

That scene, and television footage of a battered Durant being held captive, helped reverse American public opinion - and policy - toward Somalia, where the United States had led a UN mission to end a devastating fa-

Durant was held for 11 days. After his release, he recalled how the or-deal began: He had been captured, beaten and blindfolded, then dragged alive through a crowd similar to the one that had cheered the sight of the

"There's no doubt about it. I was sure they were going to kill me.

"I thought about how nice it would be

immediately fell into a series of misfortunes. A promise to admit gays to the military ran into a political buzzsaw, trans-

though he insisted he would have re-

tired anyway, it was hard to believe that his father's death didn't push him

toward it. Jordan said he had decided

it was time to move forward, away

Of course, sports "retirements" are often more like sabbaticals. What of

Jordan's? "I'm not making this a 'nev-

er' issue," he said. "I'm saying I don't

forming it to a policy of "don't ask, don't tell" and satisfying nearly nobody. Two successive choices for attorney general, both women, were caught up in controversies over aliens they employed in their households.

Congress tossed aside his economic stimulus package; a fancy haircut on the Los Angeles airport tarmac brought derision; he dropped his nominee for assistant attorney general for civil rights. And his popularity rating fell to 36 per cent, a record low for a new president.

His ultimate choice for attorney general, Janet Reno, could have been destroyed by the Waco fiasco, but emerged a hero by accepting responsibility. His budget passed. His supreme court nominee, Ruth Bader Ginsberg, won almost unanimous applause. He won the fight over the North American Free Trade Agreement, with a little help from Al Gore and Ross Perot. At long last, the Brady gun control bill became law.

And Clinton drew strength from his wife. Hillary Rodham Clinton revolutionised the concept of first lady. Sure, she planned the White House redecoration. But she also led the administration's most important project - a health care proposal breathtaking in its complexity and ambition.

Michael packs Norway shepherds his Air Jordans peace agreement

else to prove," he said in announcing his retirement from the Chicago Shortly after taking office as Norway's foreign minister in Bulls. Nothing to prove and, perhaps, no one to prove it to. The man that Jordan considered his greatest in-fluence and closest friend - his father, April, Johan Jorgen Holst defied world opinion - and international law - by insisting on Norway's James Jordan - had been shot and killed by roadside bandits in North Carolina in late July, and Michael right to continue killing minke whales, both for research and commercial purposes. Jordan took it hard. He spoke of an "overwhelming feeling of grief and loss." And al-

By autumn, he was being talked about as a potential Nobel Peace Prize winner.

The 55-year-old Holst, a former defence minister and international affairs expert, didn't win the Nobel, but he did win international acclaim for shepherding Israeli and Palestinian negotiators into a peace agreement that could end decades of terrorism and war.

The agreement, signed on September 13 in Washington, was cobbled together partially in Holst's Oslo home, where his 4year-old son, Edvard, helped melt the thaw by getting Palestinian and Israeli negotiators to play with him on the floor.

By the end of the year, Holst was back on the wrong side of the law, or at least of government policy. His shuttle diplomacy, it turns out, had netted him 200,000 frequent flier miles on Delta Air Lines - 200,000 more than he was allowed to accumulate on government business. Holst, the diplomat, promised to cancel them.

It was in Clinton's backvard that Yasser Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin shook hands, signing an accord in which the Palestinians renounced warfare against Israel and the Israelis promised autonomy for the Palestinians. "Enough of blood and tears. Enough," said Rabin.

The children of Abraham, the descendants of Isaac and Ishmael, have embarked together on a bold journey," said Clinton. "We bid them shalom, salaam, peace." Of course, it wasn't so simple - violence escalated, wrangling

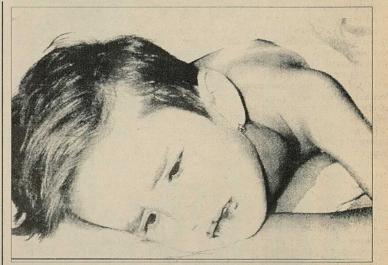
persists. Meanwhile, nature had its way as always.

An earthquake killed nearly 10,000 people in India. A tidal wave hit Japan.
Floods ravaged Westerm Europe, South Asia and the American midwest. In 1993, uplifting stories were often lost.

Michael Jackson, accused of molesting young boys, checked into drug rehabilitation; Heidi Fleiss, the hollywood madam, became a celebrity; Prince Charles and Diana were exposed in embarrassing taped conversations.

In Russia, Boris Yeltsin battled hard-liners. South Africa continued down the road to democracy. Japan struggled with a limping economy, and voted out the incumbents of nearly four decades. Italy was ripped by scandal, and shocked by the bombing of its great museum, the Uffizi. Colombia terminated drug lord Pablo Escobar. Aids continued its lethal advance.

Meanwhile, real history marched on.



A young girl's battle

Irma Hadzimuratovic's achievement in 1993 was giving a human face to the war in Bosnia. It very nearly cost her life. Irma, then 5, was wounded on

July 30 by shrapnel from Serbian shelling that pierced her spine and

The wounds left her paralysed and critically ill.

Doctors in Sarajevo lacked the facilities to treat her properly, and complained that UN delays kept them from sending her for care elsewhere. Without it, they said, she would soon die. With time running out, the doc-

plight to the world's attention. Irma offered graphic evidence of what was at stake in the former Yugoslavia. What was at stake was Irma's life, and the lives of children

With international indignation mounting, British Prime Minister John Major arranged to have her flown to London. In a hospital there, she recovered from meningitis, but remains paralysed from her spinal injuries and cannot

Her outlook, like that of her shattered homeland, remains cloud-

'Karma' and Sunny Deol did not last

and Rishi Kapoor, both of whom had

been over-paired with her, leading to staleness. Rishi was already easing

her off, since he no longer needed to

do heroine-oriented films for the sake

of his career. And Anil began to root

in for the younger heroines like Ra-

veena Tandon, Karishma Kapoor and

That left her with Anil Kapoor

breathe without a ventilator.

A long way down and up for Clinton



Bill Clinton's 1993 was like a trip to the Grand Canyon. It was a long way down, and a long, hard way back up.

There was a sense of excitement and vitality in the air when Clinton was sworn in on January 20 as the nation's 42nd president. Six months later, he was being written off as a failure — "the incredible shrinking presidency," Time magazine scoffed; "Bumblin' Bill," the New York Daily

LONDON - A bus conductor,

a farmworker and a school care-

taker joined the usual celebrities on

Prime Minister John Major's first

'classless" New Year honours list.

still contained top honours for the

prominent: a knighthood for Shake-

spearean actor Derek Jacobi, and

other awards for singer Shirley

Bassey, fashion designer Paul

Smith, and octegenarian crime

Baker was made a companion of

honour, one of the nation's highest

awards, for service "of conspicuous

Mezzo-soprano dame Janet

The list of those to be honoured

Major has promised to overhaul

is drawn up by Prime Minister John

Major and approved by Queen

the honours system following crit-

icism that it mostly rewards mil-

itary and civil service time-servers.

Critics say he hasn't gone far

enough but this time around he

broke with tradition by inviting the

public to nominate those they con-

His 10 Downing St. office was

swamped with 7,500 names, some

writer Ellis Peters.

national importance."

Elizabeth II.

sider deserving.

The list, announced on Friday,

Clinton and his administration looked indecisive and hesitant overseas in Bosnia, Somalia and Haiti, at home in appointments such as Zoe Baird, Kimba Wood and Lani Guinier.

But he plugged along, and what stand out in retrospect is Clinton's doggedness, his ability to shrug off failure and move on, just as he had in the democratic primary campaign the year before. Only one event, the suicide of his close friend and White House counselor Vincent Foster, Jr., really seemed to shake him. "There are a lot of things that we're not in control of, and a lot of mysteries that we don't understand," Clinton After Foster's death on July 20,

Clinton's fortunes seemed to reverse. He won tough battles on the budget, on the North American Free Trade Agreement and the Brady Bill. A Mideast peace accord more or less fell into his lap, and he helped settle an American Airlines flight attendants'

By year's end, the perception was that he was back - at least to

200 of whom were honoured on

rine, a bus conductor from south

Among them is Anthony Seve-

MAJORIS FIRST

'CLASSLESS'

ordeal

dead American. "I was terrified," he said.

In captivity, he said, he thought a lot about what meant the most of him. It was his family - his wife, Lorrie, and their toddler, Joey. And he thought about one more thing that, as it turned out, he would live to see. to have Christmas at home again with

MICHAEL JORDAN

October, Americans watched in revulsion as a US soldier's body was mutilated

and dragged through the streets of Mogadishu. Enough, President Clinton said

ultimatums and humanitarian aid, and the death toll rose to more than 200,000 men, women and children, and the misery was unending.

terror this is my life, the life of an innocent 11-year-old schoolgirl," wrote Zlata

Filipovic, in a diary published in 1993.

For an instant - at 12:18 p.m. Friday, February 26 - international terror visited the United States. At that moment, a bomb planted in a Ford Econoline van

ripped through level 2 of the World Trade Center's parking garage, leaving a

60-metre-by-30-metre crater. Six people died and 1,000 others were injured.

Inaugurated on a sun-dappled Washington day - his 14-minute speech a remarkable feat for a man who tends to use 10 words where three might do - he

we're leaving. In former Yugoslavia, the United States and other powers sent

Boredom shootings shells people being killed desperation starving misery

Was there anything Michael Jordan couldn't do? He could put a basketball in a basket in ways that hadn't been conceived. He could thread his way through a brick wall and score on a whim. He could fly. And then, on October 6, at the

pinnacle of his career, he did the one thing no one expected. He packed his Air Jordans and walked away. "I have achieved a lot in my short career. I just feel I don't have anything

Surprise hit of Washington

from games.

This was a defining moment of 1993: Attorney General Janet Reno at the podium, her expression grim, her bearing resolute, taking full responsibility for government action that led - directly or indirectly — to the deaths of 87 cultists near Waco, Texas. "I don't do spin stuff and I'm not distancing anybody from anything. I'm telling you exactly what happened," Ms. Reno said

The attorney general would later be criticised by some people for failing to carefully consider the FBI's plans for tear-gassing the Branch Davidian compound. But a government investigation absolved her of blame for the fiery holocaust at the ranch where cult leader David Koresh and his disciples were sequestered. And somewhere along the way, Mrs. Reno became a star. She hadn't been Clinton first choice for attorney general.

The Florida native was known for a quirky independence, an un-Washington-like candor and a buck-stops-here sense of accountability. All of which made her the surprise hit of Washington. Her sister, Maggie Hurchalla, summed up her appeal: "She is real."

comment that he made during the height of the fall lighters is the control of the state of the s

panic all around as films worth millions of rupees were stalled. But before long, the industry bounced back to life, only to be encountering a number of other shocks.

The bomb blasts in March, Divya London, who is made an MBE, or Bharati's fatal plunge from her fifth member of the order of the British floor apartment and superstar Sanjay Dutt's arrest on charge of possessing illegal firearms left Bollywood in a Farmworker John Gibbon, 90. was "overwhelmed" to be made an daze. And then, as in any Hindi pot-MBE for his visits to the sick - but boiler, the climax came: Sanjay was planned to continue his "rounds" on released and the audiences clapped. his bicycle. However, the man who benefitted

Also created OBE is actor Donmost from the Sanjay Dutt conald Pleasence, star of "The Fall of troversy was Subhash Ghai, who got the House of Usher" and scores of all the publicity he required for his other films and plays. 'Khalnayak' (featuring Sanjay in the Sir David Nickson, chairman lead). The controversy faded, but not Clydesdale Bank, and Sir the "Choli Ke Peeche" number which Wright, former head of Patrick almost became the national anthem

the diplomatic service, become 'Aankhein', was another expected hit of the year, followed by There are knighthoods for Iain 'Hum Hai Rahi Pyar Ke'. "Tiranga' Vallance, chairman of British tele-'Baazigar' and 'Anari'. In fact, these communications, and Michael were the only hits out of the 140-odd Perry, chairman of food and chem-Hindi films released in 1993. All the ical giant Unilever. rest, including the much talked about

Rebecca Stephens, the first British woman to climb Everest, becomes an MBE.

Also honoured, at the queen's request, were firefighters who battled a blaze at her Windsor Castle home in November 1992. - AP



'Roop Ki Rani Choron Ka Raja ' and

Meenakshi Seshadri fighting against her husband and family in 'Damini'. Dimple Kapadia has also been experimenting with unorthodox roles as in 'Rudali' (where she plays a professional mourner) which brought here the national best actress award. Tunesmiths are not lagging be-

hind either. Music is increasingly playing a major role to make any film successful. The songs of 'Baazigar', 'Khalnavak', 'Anari' and 'Hum Hai Rahi Pyar Ke' had become superhits even before the release of these films and none of these scores can be called original.

Thus, music has emerged into a major industry. The Nadeem - Shravan composers duo reportedly received Rs 4.5 million for a film the highest so far. But after the success of films like 'Baazigar' and 'Phir Teri Kahani Yaad Aayee' (a telefilm) it is Annu Malik who is the top tu-

Much of this can be directly at-

was a year of major tronic media — particularly satellite dustry would feel adequately repreupheavals. Riots in the television - which is not only chang-sented.

3.5 million. 'Sunny metropolis over the Ayodhya issue spread ing public perceptions, but also setting new standards in movie making. At one stage, film makers registered this intrusion, but now the attitude seems to be - if you can't beat them, ioin them.

So Mahesh Bhatt made 'Phir Teri Kahani Yaad Aayee' for Zee TV. It cost the producer barely a million, but has raked in 20 times the amount through repeat telecasts. Today, top film makers like Prakash Mehra and Om Prakash are working for one television channel or the other.

Despite the changing trends and exposure to foreign media, filmmakers are still hesitant in experimenting on the quality and content of scripts. Instead, they seek an easy way out. Which means, including a few dare scenes, for which the stars do not really mind. After all, they are in the



FLOPPED: Anil Kapoor and Sridevi in Roop Ki Rani Choron Ka Raja.

And so, the leading stars of the

pack are Sanjay Dutt (among heros) and Juhi Chawla (among heroines). Yet another controversy has broken over the holding of the 25th Inter-

national Film Festival of India (25-IFFI) at Calcutta from January 10 to This time it has nothing to do with

boycotts, nor with holding the government at ransom, it is about choosing to grant either Mirinal Sen or Shivaji Ganesan the honour of inaugurating the festival. Sen is a Bengali and has been rec-

ommended by the Eastern India Motion Pictures Producers Association to be the chief guest by virtue of his stature as a filmmaker of inter-Ganesan, on the other hand, has his supporters in the government who

believe that by honouring the Tamil-

The information and broadcasting

minister, Mr. K.P. Singhdeo is re-

ported to be particularly interested in

having Ganesh to inaugurate the festival in Calcutta. Said Pradip Dey of the producers' association: "A poor state like West Bengal has to shoulder the burden of a costly affair like the film festival. And we don't have any say regarding the selection of the chief guest. The minister should first consult us before

making an announcement in the mat-The general opinion is that any controversy on the issue would be insulting to both the film personalities and that, it would be appropriate to decide upon another dignitary to in-

augurate the festival. Various names are being suggested in this connection, the most prominent being Michaelangelo Antonioni who would be attending the festival with his latest documentary, 'Roma', another name being mentioned is that of the visiting Argentinian filmmaker, Fernando Solanas.

Who's on the top? No. it is not Sridevi or Anil Kapoor, neither it is Dimple Kapadia or Salman Khan. In fact, they seemed to



Divya Bharti's death stunned the film industry.

be completely sidelined in the year

gone by, going by their box-office The film industry, in Bombay particularly, went through a number of upheavals and with that a number of new faces emerged, leaving very little

If star rating are taken into consideration the top 10 stars selling today would be: 'Sanjay Dutt': He is the numerouno who gets what he wants. He is

the only star who commands a whopping Rs 3.5-4.0 million a film. Govinda: With the recent blockbuster, 'Aankhein', he is back in full form and once again in big demand. His going rate is RO 3.0 million a

'Jackie Shroff': " His steady and strong position a the box-office makes him a producers' favourite at an average price of about Rs 2.5 to 'Sunny Deol' : This national

are ready to shell out Rs 2.5 million. 'Shah Rukh Khan': The only TV idol to become a big screen superstar, who does not mind doing negative roles, charging between Rs 2.0 and

the producer.
'Madhuri Dixit': Her fees of Rs 2.0 million per film have got producers a little wary of her of late.

Rs 2.5 million per film, depending on

'Juhi Chawla': Her rising boxoffice status and a fair fee of about Rs 1.8 million has producers making a beeline for her.

'Karishma Kapoor' : Considered one of the safest bets amongst young heroines since she is modestly priced at Rs 1.2 million.

'Pooja Bhatt' : She is considered



A scene from Khalnayak.

an attractive prosposition for nonconventional roles at about Rs 800,000 per film. 'Raveena Tandon' : Although she

is yet to produce a hit in years, producers find her affordable at a price of Rs 750,000 per film. Nobody talks about Sridevi any-

more. Her producers have deserted her, actors, who once were prepared to give their right hands to be cast opposite her, are now backing out, and worse still, the trade-'wallahs' are openly stating that she is no longer a box-office selling actress.

The slide down the popularity charts began more than two years ago when 'Farishtey' bombed. The disaster coincided with the phenomenal rise of Madhuri Dixit and, for a large section of moviegoers, Sridevi's charisma had gone cold. Even then, veteran producers like Yash Chopra, Harmesh Malhotra, Boney Kapoor and Pankaj Parasher, were prepared to back her up.

Then came a series of flops 'Lamhe', 'Roop Ki Rani Choron Ka Raja', 'Heer Ranjha', 'Chandramukhi' the movie goddess who had the world at her feet, was unceremoniously removed from her pedestal. Many explanations are be-

For one, her choice of roles and costars have been totally off the mark. as he was disinterested in playing award winner is very selective about his roles. Producers who go for him Apart from an unconvincing plot that off the screen. borders on the supernatural, her teaming up with a younger hero like Salman Khan was something audiences

did not accept. Another explanation is that so long as she had a saleable hero, a big banner and good music, Sridevi was a hit. Starrers like 'Sadma' (with Kamal Hasan), 'Mr. India' (with Anil Ka-

poor) and 'Himmatwala' (with Jeetendra) prove this. Obviously, Sridevi did not carry a film



Aamir Khan and Juhi Chawla in Hum Hain Rahi Pyar Ke.

It is said that if Sridevi liked a director or actor. she would sign with him without really being bothered to check out

on the plot, her role and characterisation. This is in sharp contrast to the earlier Sridevi of 'Nagina' and 'Chaalbaaz' when she used to go into every detail of a film. Most industry observers believe

that 'Roop Ki Rani'.. was the end of this versatile actress's career. Even as the role was literally written for her, down to costumes and characterisation, the jinxed extravaganza spelled doom for her future pros-A panicky Sridevi tried to redeem

herself with an infinitely superior performance in 'Gumraah'. In fact, for the first time in her career, she went on a publicity binge to promote her film and herself. It didn't work. The over-the-top performance failed to impress her fans. Apart from these factors, Sridevi

faces another dilemma: She has run out of heroes to work with. Initially she banked on Jeetendra to establish herself on the Hindi domain and suddenly, after half-a-dozen films like Himmatwala' and 'Justice Chaudhury', she dropped him.

Her personal discord with Mithun Chakraborty meant that he too was no longer in the running as her hero.

So that leaves Sridevi literally solo. Or else, she could go for the younger crop of heroes like Aamir Khan, Shah Rukh Khan, Saif Khan, Avub Khan, Faizal Khan... but then sharing the lead with Salman Khan in 'Chandramuki' has taught her not to commit the blunder of being paired with kids in future.

Actor-producer Dara Singh has completed the filming of 'Karan', starring his son Virendra, Trishna, Anupam Kher, Prem Chopra and Raza Murad. Directed by Shiv Kumar on a script and story by Ratan Aulakh, the film is due for early re-

Director Ajay Kashyap is picturising the climax, action and dramatic sequence of 'Pathreela Rasta' over a 12-day schedule in the basement of a cinema hall in Bombay. Lead stars Divya Kumar, Dimple Kapadia, Varsha Usgoankar, Poonam Dasgupta and Sadashiv Amrapurkar are taking

Jeetendra, Moushmi Chatterii. Navin Nischol, Raghubir Yadav and Tinnu Anand are camping with the unit of director K.V. Raju's 'Udhaar Ki Zindagi' at Mahabaleshwar, a hill resort near Bombay. With this 16-day stint, shooting of the film will be almost complete.

Producer-director Gautam Bokadia has moved to Kulu Manali for a 10-day shoot for his "Aao Pyar Karen'. All the lead stars of the film, including Rakhee Saif Ali Khan, Somy Ali, Prem Chopra and Sujata Mehta are participating in the shoot.



Malaysia to boost Islamic banking US oil prices lower O NATIONAL BANK OF OMAN LIMITED (S.A.O.G) Head Office P.O. Box 3751 Ruwi, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman Tel: 708894, Fax: 707781. Telex: 3281 NBO ON, Cable: NATBANK

- Malaysia takes another step in 1994 toward a complete Islamic banking system to run side-by-side with conventional banks.

New interest-free banking methods will include check-clearing and an interbank money market operating on the basis of profit-sharing, commission or deferred payment, officials said yesterday.

Bank Negara, the country's central bank, will run two separate check-clearing pools from Monday for conventional interest-based banks and for those offering Islamic financial services.

Islamic banking in Malaysia is based on Sharia - Islamic law -

CURRENT HANG SENG 11888.39 (+1)

principles which prohibit "Riba," the interest from lending money or money paid for borrowing.

But Sharia does permit profit, salaries, rental payments, fees and commission. The profit allowed may come from both profit-sharing contracts or contracts of exchange.

Malaysia didn't invent Islamic banking but Bank Negara officials believe they now have the most elaborate system, offering almost everything provided by conventional banks, 21 services ranging from checking accounts to welfare

'More Islamic instruments will be introduced in due course," said Bank Negara adviser Nor Mohamed Yakcop. An Islamic capital market is planned before the end of the decade. The first Islamic bank was established in 1973 in Dubai and there are now more than a hundred in the Middle East, Africa, Asia and in a few European cities.

Bank Muamalet Indonesia, the first Islamic bank in the world's most populous Muslim nation, opened in Jakarta last year.

Malaysia, a multiracial but predominantly Muslim nation of 18.6 million people, started the first Islamic bank in Southeast Asia -Bank Islam Malaysia - in 1983. It now has about 350,000 customers, over 17,000 of them non-Muslims, and was listed on the Kuala Lumpur stock exchange last year.

Nine commercial banks, five financial institutions and a merchant bank now take part in interest-free banking. Freedom of religion is guaranteed by the constitution but Islam is recognized as the official

Bank Negara Governor Jaffar Hussein, in March 1990, said it was his dream to see two comprehensive financial systems: "The decade of the 1990s would not be the decade for replacing the Malaysian financial system with the Islamic financial system.

The non-Muslims should not be alarmed. They would have a choice." — AP



TOKYO - Stock dealers exchange bows after the last trading session of 1993 at the Tokyo Stock Exchange on Thursday. Share prices rose in the session, with the Nikkei Stock Exchange ending up 145.21 points

Asian stocks end 1993 on a raging bull run

HONGKONG — Asian stocks ended the year of the raging bull market by setting a clutch of new record highs yesterday and brokers said they expect more records to fall in the New Year.

HONGKONG - A trader runs across the floor of the Hongkong Stock

Exchange yesterday as trading finished 1993 on a record note, with

the Hang Seng Index closing at 11,999.39 to fall short of breaking

The dollar, meanwhile, ended a very quiet day little changed in trade dominated by year-end position adjustments in the absence of Tokyo dealers, bro-It closed at 1.7340/50 marks after holding within a 10-point range from its opening 1.7348/53 level. The dollar firmed slightly against the yen to close at

111.80/90 level from its 111.80/90 opening level.

Taiwan's vibrant stock market set the pace surging 257.01 points to a 30month high of 2,425.68, representing an 80 per cent gain on the year.

"Some people took profits (in the morning) but then they saw how strong the market was and rushed to buy again," said Ben Chen of barings in Taipei.

"But by that time there were almost no stocks available any more. The Tokyo, Seoul, Manila, Bangkok and Jakarta stock markets were closed

for the New Year holidays.

Last minute bargain-hunting in Hongkong erased an early 248.41 loss to send the hang Seng index to yet another all-time high of 11,888.39, a gain of 10.92 points on the day and 115.67 per cent advance on the year. Brokers said they suspected a touch of window-dressing in late afternoon

trade to ensure the Hangseng ended the year in positive territory after morning "After the New Year the market is going higher," said Ivan Leung of PBI

securities in Hongkong. Brokers said speculators regarded the presence of three eights in the Hang-

"Eight" in the Cantonese dialect spoken in Hongkong is a homonym for

Kuala Lumpur and Sydney proved no exception to the trend, climbing 43.59 points to a record 1,275.32 high and 19.1 points to a post-1987 crash high of 2,173.60 respectively. Singapore also gained but was an exception in breaking no records en route

to its 35.07 gain to its 2,425.68 close, just off a new high. We have seen a remarkable year and have been overwhelmed by good

things," a Vickers Ballas dealing director said. holiday spirit spilled over into the energy market with spot prices

holding steady in quiet Asian trade, dampened by the absence of Tokyo trad-

February Brent was well bid at \$13.20 while February Nymex light crude

falling oil prices ended with a consistent theme on Thursday, as crude dropped in the final day of 1993 futures trading.

February-delivery of light sweet crude oil settled at \$ 14.17 per barrel, down 27 cents, at the New York Mercantile Exchange. The New York commodities markets are closed new year's eve. Crude oil finished 1992 at

\$19.50 per barrel.

The market has been rocked in the past year by expectations that Iraq will soon be allowed to resume exporting oil, increased production from non-Opec countries such as Norway and Britain and failed efforts by the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries to reduce its own out-

Thursday's trading was marked by thin dealings and little fundamental news to give market participants an indication of which way prices were headed.

The American Petroleum Institute on Wednesday evening reported that last week's increase in domestic inventories of crude oil was at the high end of public fore-

A slight increase in heating oil supplies surprised many who had expected a drop because of recent cold weather in the northeast, which accounts for about 75 per cent of the nation's heating oil

Prices for next-month delivery of refined products were lower on the last day to trade January futures contracts.

Unleaded gasoline settled at 38.77 cents a gallon, down 0.41

Home heating oil settled at 44.16 cents a gallon, down 0.66. February-delivery of unleaded,

which will represent the spotmonth price beginning on Monday, finished at 40.00 cents. February heating oil finished on Thursday at 44.52 cents.

Natural gas prices were lower on Thursday, with contracts for delivery in February settling at \$1.997 per 1,000 cubic feet, down 5.7 cents.

Natural gas rose 31 cents over the past year as the oversupply that had appeared to be a chronic problem for the natural gas industry began to fade.

national Petroleum Exchange.

Exchange rates

Foreign currency for one Omani Rial

Selling Currency Australian Dollar **Austrian Schilling** Bahraini Dinar Bangladesh Taka Belgium Franc Chinese Renminbi Cyprus Pound Danish Kroner Deutsche Mark **Dutch Guilder** French Franc Hong Kong Dollar

Indian Rupee Italian Lira Japanese Yen Jordanian Dinar Kuwaiti Dinar Malaysian Ringit New Zealand Dollar Norwegian Kroner

Pakistani Rupee

Singapore Dollar

Spanish Pesetta

Swedish Kroner

Swiss Franc

US Dollar

UAE Dirham

Pound Sterling

Qatari Riyal

Saudi Rial

346.02

In London, North Sea brent blend crude oil for delivery in February settled at \$13.24 per barrel, down 26 cents, at the InterOmani Rial per one unit of foreign currency

Selling 0.2635 0.03185 0.03244 0.00966 0.01006 0.01066 0.01088 0.2913 0.0664 0.0682 0.745 0.760 0.05788 0.05696 0.2222 0.2254 0.1986 0.2011 0.06551 0.06646 0.0494 0.0503 0.01215 0.01255 0.000224 0.000231 0.003437 0.003478 1.280 0.1425 0.2140 0.05109 0.05209 0.01277 0.01312 0.566 0.1063 0.1052 0.1021 0.1032 0.2424 0.2392 0.00289 0.00255 0.00810 0.00770 Sri Lankan Rupee 0.04607 0.04709 0.2621 0.2661 0.1043 0.1054

\$1b lawsuit

against Upjohn

Co. for hiding

drug's side

effects

against Upjohn Co. accuses the drug

company of conspiring for 20 years

to conceal what the suit called the

dangerous side effects of halcion, the

The lawsuit filed in Dallas state

most widely prescribed sleeping pill.

ages on behalf of three halcion-users

who committed suicide, another who

attempted suicide and a fifth who

clubbed his father into a coma, the

Houston Chronicle reported or

The plaintiffs allege that Upjohn, based in Kalamazoo, Michigan,

relied on falsified clinical studies and

paid off researchers "to whitewash

halcion" in an effort to influence the

food and drug administration, the fed-

eral agency that supervises the phar-

The suit was extraordinary not only because of the amount of dam-

ages sought, but because it alleges

that the drugmaker conspired with re-

maceutical industry.

Thursday.

HOUSTON - A new lawsuit

Courtesy: National Bank of Oman Limited (SAOG) 30.12.1993

Weak US customs opens door for drugs smugglers

LOS ANGELES — Weaknesses in US customs' cargo tracking system may have opened a door for smugglers of drugs and other contraband and cost US taxpayers millions of tariff dollars, according to sources and

Among the problems' false inspectors' names are showing up on cargo entry records, passing containwithout inspection and seals placed on containers bound fir distant destinations are breached in transit, allowing contraband to be removed or contents stolen between the dock and inspection points.

The laxness is alarming because more than 90 per cent of the cargo that enters Los Angeles harbour is shipped form Asia, which is also a primary source of heroin for the Unit-Customs depends on a computer

network that links its intelligence files with manifests for incoming cargo to help inspectors identify suspicious shipments. False information in either half of the system undermines its integrity. While customs records obtained

the Associated Press do not show conclusively that the tampering involved smuggled goods, they do raise the possibility that a computer system igned to halt contraband at the border has been converted into a tool Federal authorities are in-

have been manipulated to avoid tariffs on cargo entering the Los Angeles-Long Beach harbour complex, the nation's busiest, a source close to the investigation told the Associated Press. Because Mexico has no major seaports on its Pacific coast, many containers bound for Mexico come through Los Angeles-Long Beach and are transported overland. These "in-bond" cargo containers are not inspected or assessed duties until they reach their final destination. Investigations are checking

whether some containers were falsely passed through Los Angeles customs as in-bond but then delivered to local importers. Agents believe records were signed with a false name, and paying kickbacks to inspectors, said the source, who requested anonymity. The files shown to the AP in-

dicate a separate but similar situation at the port of Los Angeles. There someone entered the name of a nonexistent inspector into a record while processing a legitimate shipment of Chinese rifle parts that had been flagged for possible tariff evasions.

The records also show that customs never verified whether the shipment reached its proper destination.

A customs source, who also spoke on condition of anonymity,

said other records have been signed

off under names that do not cor-

toms' Los Angeles district, said he was generally confident the agency's inspections system was effective, but he did not rule out the existence of

respond to inspectors who work at the

John Heinrich, director of cus-

isolated problems. "If we've got something going on, we certainly want to clear it up," he The in-bond containers, such as

those at the centre of the federal investigation, have presented a customs problem for years. The agency has never been able to track all such containers to their final destinations whether in Mexico or distant US cit-

Furthermore, because cargo volume has increased well beyond the computer system's ability to track it all, officials have routinely done monthly purges of "lost cargo" records, deleting hundreds of files at

Through random checks of importers, customs estimates that 97 per cent of the unconfirmed shipments are delivered. But the in-bond containers remain a worry for federal officials, who believe smugglers use the container to distribute Asian heroin around the United States.

more sophisticated cargo handling system that should eliminate the need

searchers to dupe the government about halcion years before the FDA approved it. Upjohn spokesman Phil Sheldon refused to comment specifically on the latest lawsuit regarding halcion except to say that the drug is "completely safe and very effective"

when used as its label indicates. Sheldon said halcion continues to be the most commonly prescribed sleeping pill in the world despite foreign government restrictions and negative publicity that have cut sales in half since 1991. Sales of the drug have totaled \$1.9 billion since 1979.

The lawsuit, filed on December 22, alleges that one of the earliest clinical studies of halcion began in 1973 - nine years before FDA ap-proval for sale - in a Houston clinic operated by Dr. Louis Fabre.

Fabre is accused of falsifying his results in several ways, including giving his patients more than one drug at a time and following one test with another without allowing time for the drugs to leave a patient's system.

The lawsuit says Upjohn knew as early as 1974 that Fabre's results were falsified, but used them to obtain FDA approval for halcion and continues to cite his research as le-

The plaintiffs also say one of Fa bre's patients nearly died after taking halcion and a sister drug, xanax, for a

"Upjohn sent a man to Houston with \$150,000 in cash in a suitcase to

pay her off (or her family in the event she died) to prevent legal action against Upjohn, the lawsuit claims.

A. Scott Alford, a Houston attorney for Fabre and his clinic, Fabre

Research Clinics Inc., released a statement saying the doctor and the clinic "deny any and all allegations made in the recent lawsuit filed in Dallas, Texas.'

Halcion has been under siege around the world almost since its

marketing began abroad in the 1970s. - AP

Europeans, more than **Americans**

according to the World Bank.

2. Luxembourg - \$35,260 3. Japan - \$28,220

4. Sweden - \$26,780 5. Denmark - \$25,930

Other measures include tightening customs, export and import regulations, Khomenko said.

ternal debt touched a massive \$71.8 billion at the end of 1991, with a lion's share of the debt component comprising of long-term and multilateral debts, according to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

debt zoomed from 32.4 billion in 1984 to 64.4 billion dollars in 1990 and to \$71.8 billion in 1991.

stitutions amounted to \$28 billion. India's debt to non-OECD cred-

itors including Arab countries amounted to \$8.1 billion in 1991. Even at the beginning of the decade, India's short-term debt stood at a high of \$4.8 billion in 1990 which fell to \$3.7 billion by 1991. Altogether, India's debt service rayments amounted to \$5.2 billion in 991, which is slightly below the 1990 figure of \$5.6 billion.

The OECD survey has put the external debt of all developing

lion at the end of 1992, which showed a rise of three per cent from the previous year. It said the clear slowing down of the pace of growth of the stock of debt had been evident since 1987 continued both for the developing countries as a whole, as well for as for each of the main income

OECD referred to 'a quite fundamental change' in the distribution of total external debt between the regions over the last decade.

The survey noted that the recovery in resource flows to the developing countries which was progressing streadily since the mid-1980s took 's quite dramatic turn' in 1992 with total net resource flows surging to \$175

Out of the \$100 billion private flows to developing countries last year, a major jump was in inter-national bank lending, though other components also reached record lev-

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) also continued its uptrend, increasing by four billion dollars to over \$30 bil-

Asia continues to obtain the largest share of resource inflows, though there was some upsurge in Latin America's share last year, as improved economic prospects caused private flows to double. — PTI

Large oil spill in Alaska

ANCHORAGE — A disabled emergency valve failed to stop oil from spilling from a drilling site at Prudhoe bay on Thursday, causing as much as 17,000 gallons (64,600 liters) of oil to flow onto a drill pad and surrounding Tundra. Alaska officials and executives of Arco Alaska Inc., which operates the drilling site, said the spill occurred when a weld in a 6-inch (15-cm) diameter feeder pipe gave out.

Arco spokesman Ronnie Chappell said the emergency valve failed because it had previously been "manually disabled." He wouldn't elaborate on when or why the valve had been put out of com-

mission or by whom, saying only that the valve and weld problems were being investigated. The failed pipeline connected a well to a central collecting area at the drill site, the first stop on the way to the trans-Alaska pipeline and the 800mile (1,290-km) trip south to Valdez.

The exact amount of oil on the ground wasn't immediately known, but Arco gave the state an early estimate of 12,500 gallons (47,500 liters) to 17,000 gallons (64,600 litres), based on analysis of production data from the well. - AP

India's external debt | Sebi chief to be replaced amid row

capital markets regulator said yesterday he will be replaced soon, a move that is an apparent blow to reforming turbulent bourses and comes amid his unresolved row with Bombay's powerful stock brokers.

G.V. Ramakrishna, chairman of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi), said he expects to go in mid-January.

Asked by Reuters about a local report he was to be shifted to the Planning Commission, he replied: "It is true. I may get my orders today or tomorrow.

The planning Commission is regarded as a convenient siding into which officials can be shunted, political analysts said. Ramakrishna, feisty 63-year-

erful stock broking community to clean up Indian bourses. Asked if he was happy about

and former diplomat, has been locked in battle with India's pow-

old Harvard-trained bureaucrat

kets, analysts said.

ago ended a 10-day strike in protest against a Sebi ban on for-

curb what Ramakrishna had called excessive speculation. The Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) index had reached a 1993 high of 3,454.81 on December 13,

of November, when the ban was The Indian express newspaper said Ramakrishna's place could be taken by the former Chairman of

of India, S.S. Nadkarni. His replacement appeared the result of behind-the-scenes manoeuvering by brokers opposed to his hardline stance against rampant speculation in the stock mar-

Brokers are likely to view his move, and Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's rejection of the resignation of reformist Finance Minister Manmohan Singh, as good news to start 1994.

'For the stock market now it is just up, up and away, at least in the short term," said an analyst with broking firm SSKI. "The Prime Minister's decision has sent the right signals to the world and the market will open at least 100 points higher on Monday.

The Bombay Stock Exchange 30-share index ended 1993 at 3,346.06, up 971.34 points or 41 per cent from its 1992 close.

Foreign investors had largely welcomed Ramakrishna's attempts to clean up India's stock exchanges.

Bombay, the largest, has a capitalisation of \$80 billion. But Indian brokers saw Ramakrishna as too confrontational. Chitkara, chief executive of Jamnadas Morarjee Co. An analyst with India Secur-

ities Ltd said however Nadkarni was likely to continue the reform "That is one reason why the government must have chosen

him. Obviously a new broom cleans better. Ramakrishna, or GVR as he is popularly known, began trying to clean up India's largely unregulated capital market in 1990 when he took over the fledgling and

then powerless Sebi. The watchdog body was given regulatory powers to enforce the rules through a presidential ordinance in January 1992.

India has 22 stock markets and over 6,000 listed companies. Ramakrishna points to sloppy settlement and payment procedures, lack of transparency in operations, insider trading and market "There needs to be a change in Sebi's working style," said Arun manipulation as areas that need reforming. — Reuter

Russian shops to stop accepting US dollar

1, most shops will stop accepting what has become the currency of choice in Russia - the American The hard currency ban was or-

dered by Russia's central bank, which has told stores to accept only rubles or credit cards, something few Russians have. Many stores, especially those

that sell imported merchandise, now accept dollars, German marks and other foreign currencies. many refuse rubles. Central bank spokeswoman

pride was one of the main motives for the bank's order. "No other country in the world allows sales of goods or services for foreign currencies," she told

Natalia Khomenko said national

Inflation has sharply eroded the value of the ruble since prices were freed after the 1991 Soviet

Many people now prefer foreign money and Russians who work for foreign companies and joint ventures are often paid in hard currency.

Khomenko said stores will still be allowed to fix prices in foreign currencies, but they can accept only rubles or credit cards. Credit card transactions can be in hard

Most hard-currency stores only accept rubles at their own exchange rates. These rates are generally higher than the official rate and are designed to discourage ruble customers.

Some store officials say the new regulation may mean higher prices, others say consumers won't notice any difference. Larisa Niskina, a manager of a

Russian-Swiss-Austrian partment store called "No. 1" said her firm has a contract with a commercial bank that will, in effect, turn its checkout stands into currency exchanges. Customers will pay in hard

currency, she said. What they will not notice is that, in the process, their dollars

will be converted into rubles and then back," Niskina said. At another store, however, an accountant said prices may rise as much as 10 per cent to make up

"We can't pay our suppliers

tain by dealing in rubles.

abroad in rubles, and selling rubles at exchanges means a loss of a part of our profit," she said. "We also expect to lose a lot of clients, mostly foreigners, who now can pay for purchases at our store in 16 currencies.' Khomenko said the central

bank hopes the new regulations will increase demand for rubles, currency and get change in hard keeping its rate firm. The regulations are only one

measure in a package intended to strengthen the ruble and bring about stabilization of Russia's financial system," she said.

the losses the store expects to sus-

Japanese earn The top 10 nations with the highest average earnings per capita,

1. Switzerland - \$36,230

6. Norway - \$25,800 7. Iceland - \$23,670

8. United States - \$23,120 9. Germany - \$23,030 10. Finland - \$22,980

world's biggest single market. While Nafta, a free trade zone linking the United States, Canada and Mexico, is far bigger than the EEA in terms of territory, the EEA is bigger in terms of population, scope, gross domestic product and share of Although the Americans claim that Nafta is bigger, that's not true. We are bigger from many points of view. It is the world's biggest single market and as such has tremendous importance," Efta secretary general

The EEA's GDP stands at \$7,501 billion against \$6,770 billion in Nafta and the EEA exports \$3,878 annually per person against only \$1,683 for Nafta, according to Efta figures.

And the EEA, whose members

overall send more than half of their

While Nafta is almost five times

bigger than the EEA in terms of ter-

ritory, the EEA will have 372 mil-

lion consumers, against 360 million

Georg Reisch told Reuters.

EEA knocks

out Nafta

as biggest

single market

Economic Area, which from mid-

night will link the European Com-

munity and Efta in a giant trading

zone, outstrips the North American

Free Trade Agreement (Nafta) as the

exports to each other, will cover \$1,679 billion in imports and \$1,615 billion in exports against only \$715 billion and \$624 billion respectively in Nafta, according to the Efta fig-Efta (European Free Trade Association) officials pointed out that the EEA also extends to trade in

most services, unlike Nafta which re-

mains restricted to a single labour

The EEA is also bigger than As-

ean, the Association of South East

Asian Nations, which has set a 15-

market.

year timetable for implementing its own trading zone Afta (Asian Free Trade Area) Asean groups Thailand, Sin-capore, Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei. - Reuter

touches \$71.8 billion

NEW DELHI - India's ex-

In its just released 1992 survey "Financing and external debt of developing countries", the Parisinter-governmental think tank of 24 rich industrial countries said India's aggregate identified

While debt owned to OECD countries including Official Development Assistance (ODA) being amounted to \$30.1 billion in 1991, India's debt from multilateral in-

MOSCOW — As of January the Associated Press.

Ramakrishna said: "I'll do what I have been assigned to do.' Brokers at four major Indian stock exchanges exactly a week

being shifted from Sebi in the

middle of a major controversy,

ward trading, imposed in a bid to up 32 per cent since the beginning

the Industrial Development Bank

Despite boom, China lagging in per capita GNP race

world's fastest 'growing economy but it is still ranked alongside a poor, tiny African country like Gambia when comparing its per person share of economic output

Currency reforms slated for today will make the comparison look

The dual effect of being the world's most populous nation and having a currency that has continually sunk in value means that in US dollar terms China's 1.2 billion people have not gained much more of the growing economic pie.

"Despite its stunning economic growth, China's per capita gross national product (GNP) is almost at the same level as Gambia, the tiny country in western Africa," the official Xinhua news agency moaned on Thursday.

The agency was commenting on

the just-published "World Bank At- tread water in the league table. las 1994", which said China's per capita GNP grew to \$380 by the end of 1992, an increase of \$10 from 1991.

The numbers are set to look even worse on Saturday, when China ditches its artificially high official currency rate and goes to a marketrate standard, implying a further devaluation of 50 per cent for the yuan. The state statistical bureau proudly announced this week that in 1993 the per capita share of the economy's value grew to 2,500 yuan, what the spokesman called "synthesising the

At the current official exchange rate, that 2,500 yuan is worth \$431 -but that nice looking figure is valid only until midnight on December 31. At the latest market-set rate, the 2,500 yuan represents only \$287, meaning that China cannot even just

national energy to jump to a new lev-

"The country at almost the same level (with China) is Gambia, whose per capita GNP was \$390 last year,' Xinhua said. "In terms of per capita GNP, China is a bit ahead of Kenya, Guyana and Equatorial Guinea, each at \$330 "

Many economists, however, think that looking at a country's economy in terms of US dollars is meaningless. The International Monetary Fund

(IMF) this year tried a new method of calculation which no longer converts output to US dollar values at market exchange rates. Instead, it looks at the compar-

to try to get a more realistic view of

Under the purchasing power parity system, China's absolute economy is four times larger than pre-

viously calulated, making it third in the world right behind the United States and Japan.

The huge size of China's population still keeps the per capita share of the economy relatively small, however. China, trying to spur its people on to ever-faster economic growth, was not happy about the re-rating which said it was already an economic superpower.

The report of the IMF has overestimated the economic output of China," a foreign ministry spokesman said when the re-rating report first

The numbers game is important. If the new ranking becomes generative purchasing power of currencies ally accepted, China might lose out on some of the concessionary loans, special grants and other help it has relied on to push economic growth up by some 13 per cent two years in a row. — Reuter

Hanoi passes bankruptcy law

HANOI — Vietnam's parliament, nailing in place more planks of its fledgling market economy, has boosted its 1994 growth target to eight per cent and passed a landmark bankruptcy law to start paring down the state sector.

The national assembly finished its three-week session with a vote to set next year's gross domestic product (GDP) growth target at eight per cent, the official Vietnam news said yesterday, up from about 7.2 per cent for Industrial output value was tar-

geted to grow by 11 per cent in 1994, while exports should grow by 20 per cent and inflation should remain under 10 per cent, the parliament projected on Thursday. Agricultural output, long the

mainstay of the economy, was seen rising by four per cent next year to hit an output of 25 million tonnes of food in 1994, the newspaper said.

The centrepiece of the half-yearly parliament session was passage of the hotly-argued bankrupcty bill, which will finally provide Vietnam with a legal framework to force state companies to sink or swim according to their market performance.

"The issuing of this law is very important and necessary," the assembly said in a statement published yes-

"(It) helps to push enterprises to make efficient business decisions and ensures social order and discipline."

Vietnam's socialist-style state sector, a relic of the days when Hanoi copied Soviet central planning, has proved a brake on overall growth as poor accounting methods and the promise of endless government subsidies kept official managers placid.

While Vietnam's state sector is small compared to other former socialist countries - employing only six per cent of the national labour force compared with 77 per cent in Russia, for example — it covers key industries and accounts for some 25 per cent of overall GDP, according to

That is all now due for change as Hanoi races to catch up to the east Asian "miracle" economies, dropping many price controls, slashing subsidies and taking steps toward jointstock company ownership that could result in an experimental securities market. - Reuter

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| erggare. | OMR | USD | DEM | GBP | JPY | CHF | NLG | AUD |
| Savings - | 3.25% | 2.00 | 5.06 | 4.25 | 1.46 | 3.00 | 4.72 | 2.37 |
| Call | 2.00% | 1.00 | 4.06 | 3.25 | 0.46 | 2.00 | 3.72 | 1.37 |
| 1 Month | 3.25% | 2.87 | 5.93 | 4.75 | 1.93 | 3.87 | 5.22 | 4.00 |
| 2 Month | 3.25% | 2.87 | 5.68 | 4.62 | 1.78 | 3.68 | 5.10 | 4.00 |
| 3 Month | 3.25% | 2.87 | 5.56 | 4.56 | 1.65 | 3.56 | 4.90 | 3.93 |
| 6 Month | 3.50% | 2.93 | 5.18 | 4.65 | 1.40 | 3.38 | 4.65 | 4.06 |
| 9 Month | 3,62% | 3.06 | 4.93 | 4.56 | 1.37 | 3.37 | 4.43 | 4.12 |
| 12 Month | 4.00% | 3.25 | 4.75 | 4.50 | 1.37 | 3.15 | 4.37 | 4.06 |
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| ation | n lend | ing ra | ites | | | |
|-------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
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| 5.18 | 8.62 | 6.88 | 4.12 | 6.37 | 7.55 | 5.06 |
| 5.00 | 8.06 | 6.88 | 4.00 | 6.12 | 7.32 | 6.25 |
| 5.00 | 7.81 | 6.87 | 3.81 | 5.93 | 7.20 | 6.25 |
| 5.00 | 7.68 | 6.81 | 3.68 | 5.75 | 7.00 | 6.31 |
| 5.06 | 7.31 | 7.78 | 3.53 | 5.57 | 6.75 | 6.31 |
| 5.18 | 7.06 | 6.68 | 3.43 | 5.50 | 6.56 | 6.37 |
| 5.37 | 6.93 | 6.62 | 3.43 | 5.34 | 6.50 | 6.56 |
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| JPY | NLG | ITL |
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| | | 0.00022742 |
| 0.0034581 | 0.19838 | 0.00022740 |
| 0.0034583 | 0.19802 | 0.00022738 |
| 0.0034585 | 0.19802 | 0.00022736 |
| | 0.0034578 0.0034579 0.0034581 0.0034583 | 0.0034578 0.19968 0.0034579 0.19905 0.0034581 0.19838 0.0034583 0.19802 |

| Spot rat | 7 | Cross rates | | | | | |
|----------|------------------|-------------|------------------|--------|--------------------|---------|--------|
| of page | USD | DELL | DEM | GBP | JPY | CHF | FRF |
| GBP | 1.7028 | DEM | 2 5500 | 0.3914 | 65.5300 | 0.8484 | 3.4030 |
| | 1.5015 | GBP | 2.5580 | 0.5073 | 166.9500 | 2.1875 | 8.6535 |
| JPY | 111.55 | JPY | 1.5272 | 0.5973 | 77.2600 | 1.2955 | 5.1973 |
| FRF | 1.4445 5.7950 | CHF | 1.1796 0.2941 | 0.4614 | 77.2600 19.2800 | 24.9482 | 4.0145 |
| NLG | 1.9084 | FRF | 0.2941 | 0.1150 | 19.2000 | 24.9462 | |
| AUD | 0.6793 | | | | | | |
| ECU | 1.1345 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |

Bullion

TENDER BOARD

Electricity and water meters' read-

I. List of tenderers in alphabetical

1) Modern Light Trading & Con-

2) Oman Investment and Finance

3) Oman National Electric Co.

II. List of tender amount in as-

Quotation

1.65%

1.75%

non-Government 4.50% 5.90%

non-Government 5.72% 6.98%

Printing of ministry of health med-

I. List of tenderers in alphabetical

1) Al-Akidah Printing Press LLC.

3) Al Bustan Printing Press LLC.

4) Al-Dakhliya Printing Press

5) Al-Huda National Printing

8) Batna Printing Press and Sta-

9) Golden Printing Press LLC.

6) Al Nahda Printing Press

7) Al Zahra Printing Press

2) Al Anan Printing Press

Option (1) Option (2)

OPENED ON 20-12-93

TENDER NO. 118/93

ing and bill collection

tracting Co. LLC.

cending order:

1) Government

2) Government

ical forms

tioners LLC

REGRET

OPENED ON 20-12-93

TENDER NO. 127/93

Co. Ltd.

Courtesy of THE BRITISH BANK OF THE MIDDLE EAST, OMAN.

Shipping schedule

| Ship | Cargo | Date. of |
|-------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| Hual Tracer | Vehicles Ro-Ro | Arrv. 5.1 |
| Berlin | Tourists from Germany | 7.1 |
| Berlin | Tourists from Germany | 17.1 |

SATURDAY

Airline Schedule

| 200 | | | SATURD | | |
|-------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|------------------------|--------------|
| | | | ARRIVA | | |
| | Flight No. | | From/V | | ETA |
| | GF2018 | | Paris/Ba | | 0015 |
| | GF004 | | London | Doha | 0020 |
| | GF1711 | | Bahrain | | 0110 |
| | GF1154 | | Abu Dh | | 0125 |
| | KU669 | | Kuwait/ | Dubai | 0210 |
| | GF155 | | Manila | | 0320 |
| | AF8202 | | Paris/Dl | nahran/Dubai | 0450. |
| | GF051 | | Bombay | | 0535 |
| | GF741 | | Karachi | | 0710 |
| | GF006 | | London | | 0710 |
| | EK200 | | Dubai | | 0835 |
| | GF2005 | | Delhi | | 0850 |
| | GF064 | | Abu Dh | abi | 0940 |
| | PK217 | | Karachi | | 0750 |
| | PK297 | | Gwadar | | 1135 |
| | | | DEPARTU | RES | |
| | Flight No. | | To/Via | | ETD |
| | GF2018 | | Delhi | | 0115 |
| | GF740 | | Karachi | | 0145 |
| | GF154 | | Manila | | 0230 |
| | GF711 | | Nairobi/ | Dar es Salaam | 0250 |
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| | GF501 | contractor en | Dubai/B | ahrain | 0700 |
| | KU670 | | Dubai/K | uwait | 0700 |
| | KL530 | | | lam/Kuwait | 0750 |
| | GF165 | | Riyadh | | 0900 |
| | GF005 | | Doha/Lo | | 0945 |
| | PK217 | | Karachi | | 0850 |
| | PK298 | | Gwadar | | 1215 |
| | | | OMAN A | | |
| | | Mu | scat-Salalah | -Muscat | |
| | FLT. NO. | | FROM | | ТО |
| | | DEP | ARR | | |
| | WY401 | MCT | SLL | 1130 | 1300 |
| | WY402 | SLL | MCT | 1345 | 1515 |
| | WY403 | MCT | SLL | 1600 | 1730 |
| | WY404 | SLL | MCT | 1815 | 1945 |
| | | | | | |

HOTLINES

| 1. | Weather Forecast |
|----|---------------------------------|
| 2. | Muscat Securities Market |
| 3. | Foreign Exchange |
| 4. | Airport Traffic |
| | Arrivals |
| | |

Departures 5. ROP Coast Guard 6. Radio Oman Services

Brief news Pharmacies on duty Radio frequencies Radio programme

English 1102 1103 1110 1111 1107 1106 1101 1100 1100 1101 714888

1104

3) Gibb, Petermuller & Partners

Engg. Co. 6) National Engineering Office 7) Nespak Consulting Engineers

18) Printers Suppliers & Stationers II. List of tender amount in ascending order:

4) 48,181,959 5) 50,769.698 6) 54,801.072 7) 66,807.018 8) 69,964.551 9) 73,282.943 10) 78,763.175

10) International Printing Press

12) Mazoon Printing Press LLC.

13) Modern Colour Printers

15) Oman Newspaper House

16) Oman Printers & Stationers

17) Oriental Printing Press and

II. List of tender amount in as-

14) Muscat Printing Press

11) Loay Printing Press

Ltd. Co. LLC.

cending order:

Rials Omani

1) 9,913.350

2) 27,793.060

3) 29,231.774

Stationery

11) 78,918,700 12) 80,418.170 13) 84,804.820 14) 93,097.023 15) 94,346.955 16) 104,828.960 17) 116,347.735

18) No Total

OPENED ON 20-12-93 TENDER NO. 129/93 Supervision of repair works of Wadi Al-Jizi road bridges I. List of tenderers in alphabetical

1) Asie Etudes 2) Conser Consulting Engineers

4) Italconsult Oman 5) Khatib and Alami Consolidated

8) Renardet Consulting Engineers

1) 98,535.000 2) 110,300.000 (Main offer) 104,950.000 (Alt. offer)

3) 119,240.000 4) 125,250.000 5) 134,250.000 6) 149,884.000 7) 159,950.000

8) 173,900.000 OPENED ON 20-12-93 **TENDER NO. 132/93**

Supply of surgical items for the ministry of health I. List of tenderers in alphabetical

1) Al Khadrawain Electronics and Instrumentation 2) Al Khuwair Pharmacy

3) Ebin Rushed Pharmacy 4) Hassan Haider Darwish 5) Ibn Sina Pharmacy LLC. 6) Industrial Management Technology and Contracting (IMTAC) 7) Mazoon Pharmacy 8) Muscat Pharmacy 9) Mustafa & Jawad Trading Co.

10) Muttrah Pharmacy 11) National Constructions and Trading LLC. 12) National Pharmacy

13) Oriental Pharmacy 14) Waleed Pharmacy II. List of tender amount in ascending order: Rials Omani 1) 880.900

3) 2,514.050 4) 16,418.200 5) 21,879.220 6) 26,706.450 7) 34,500.000 8) 39,390.500 9) 39,968.675

2) 2,456.510

10) 41,912.905 11) 55,000,000 12) 70,161.750 13) 127,050.000 **OPENED ON 20-12-93 TENDER NO. 135/93** Repair works of Wadi Al-Jizi

bridges I. List of tenderers in alphabetical order & the tender amount: in Rials Omani

1) Galfar Engineering & Contracting LLC; 1,180,410.772 2) Strabag Oman LLC; 886,607.046

Classified

GOOD NEWS



Bank Muscat Al Ahli Al Omani (SAOG)

25 FREE LUXURY CARS. SECOND CAR DRAW IS "LEXUS"

AND THE WINNER IS

MR. MUNIR BIN AHMED BIN SULEIMAN AL LAVATIEH (RUWI BR)

10 CONSOLATION PRIZE

WINNERS
Air Ticket (MCT-SLL-MCT OR MCT-DXB-MCT) 1) MR. SHUAIN SALIM AL RAWAHI (HEAD OFFICE BR.) 2) MR. NASSER ALI AL OUFI (RUSTAQ BR.) 3) MR. KHALFAN RASHID AL BALOUSHI (MUSCAT BR.) 4) MR. SALEM MOHD AL HATTALI (RUSTAQ BR.) 5) MR. NASSER MURAD AL ZEDJALI (AL KHOUD BR.) 6) MR. SAEED ALI AL MANDHERI (RUWI BR.) 7) MR. SALMEEN MOHD SALMEEN (RUSTAG BR.) 8) MR. ADEL NASSER AL GABERI (SEEB BR.) 9) MR. KHAMIS HAMED AL SIYABI (FANJA BR.) 10) MR. SAUD AHMED MOHD

SITUATION VACANT

(MUSCAT BR.).

Urgently required female nurse. Please contact Essaco, 795533-44/705969-70.

ACCOMMODATION WANTED

Single bedroom flat wanted Ruwi/Muttrah area, reasonable rent. Contact

Urgently required single Room accommodation, preferably ground floor in Ruwi/ Wattayah. Contact 752080.

BUY AND SELL

Used Furniture. Telephone 712167.

FOR SALE

1.3 cc. Toyota Corolla, 1989 model 136,000 km, R.O. 1600/-. Call Peter 705009.

A/c, Motor bike, Cooking Range. Tel. 752080 before 1

FOR HIRE

Mixer machine wite lift, mediummixer machine, damper, vibrator, com-pressor with hamourjook, scaffolding compressor for spray. Tel Mohammed -712073, 709032.

CONFECTIONERY

A Dozen reasons to Celebrate

- Many Happy Returns.
- Happy Birthday.
- Congratulations.
- Good Luck.
- Best Wishes.
- Happy Anniversary. Welcome Home.
- Seasons Greetings.
- Get Well Soon.
- Well Done. Bon Voyage. Thank You



THE PATISSERIE Wonderful Cakes for so many

of your treasured moments. Branches: Al Sarooj, Tel. 698423, Sabco Centre, Tel. 562319 Al Harthy Filling Station, Tel. 566137

SITUATION WANTED

Lady graduate with law graduation and computer application. Experiene - 3 years in lawpractice and 3 years in administration of company. Seeks immedate placement. 695265.

Male hotel executive, 14 years F&B experience in India, suitable for managing, resorts, guest houses, clubs, Indian restaurants etc, widely travelled seeks placement, call Mr. P.K. De. Tel: 790206 (Ruwi) or Fax: 0121-541973 (India).

Draughtsman (Mech) 4 years experience seeks suitable placement. Contact Tel. 869631- Sreekumar (Time 1 P.M. to 4 P.M.)

Light duty driver, ready to join immediately. Contact - 713856 (Haris).

2 years experienced male typist (English-Arabic) seeks immediate employment. Contact - P. Sulaiman, P.O. Box 1290, Ruwi 112, Tel.

Lady pathology laboratory technician, on visit. 3 years experience in Bombay, seeks suitable job. Visa expiring 29.12.93. Tel 736768.

Graduate with 4 years Gulf & 4 years Indian experience as typist clerk/office asst. with computer knowledge seeks suitable employment. Please contact - C/o Mathews Tel. 560175.

Post graduate with 30 years experience in marketing / International Trading / Office administration on visit seeks suitable job. Contact Amjad Tel. 788498.

ALL JOB SEEKERS ADVERTISE YOUR WAY TO A JOB

Here is a golden opportunity to use our "Situations Wanted" classified space. The first three insertions will not be charged.

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Commercial Bank of Oman (S.A.O.G.)

R.O. 100/- WON TODAY BY MR. SAEED ABDULLAH ALI

> SAREHI LIWA BRANCH

The only prize draw with so many, many, many cash prizes.

SERVICES

Interior decoration Masonary, Carpentry, Electrical, Plumbing, Water proofing, Multicolour printing. Bleep 9114726.

We Sell your land in Ma'Bela. Call 553352.

PARTS TECHNICS - Walja -Friday Market Road. Dealers in Genuine Parts :- Land Rover, Range Rover, Discovery. General High Quality Parts for :- Toyota, Mazda, Nissan, Mitsubishi, etc. Tel. 787584, Fax. 787507.

Professional cleaning services - carpet shampooing, curtain, sofa, auto interior, floor cleaning and polishing, general cleaning, building maintenance. Tel: 708695, 793535, 791393; Fax: 752177; Pager: 9110286

Courier International

WISH TO SEND ALL

YOUR IMPORTANT

DOCUMENTS &

PARCELS AT

REASONABLE RATE

ANYWHERE IN THE

WORLD?

CALL US AT

693909/693609

"WE DELIVER

WHAT OTHERS

PROMISE'

MANPOWER

FOR YOUR MANPOWER

RESTAURANT



NEEDS, CONTACT ESSACO MANPOWER 795533-44/ 705969-70/(Fax) 707224 C/ 753626. o Liza. All types of workers available from Philippines,

NEW ARRIVAL

Are you looking for? Car Insurance,

India or locally.

Fire Insurance, Marine Insurance, House Holders Comprehensive Policy

and all other classes of General Insurances. Please contact our Insurance Manager for the best rates and professional service. Bin Solaa Trading, Tel. 791003/791004,

Fax. 707224.

MUSIC

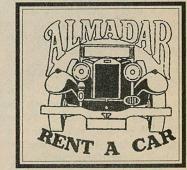
future

present' for the

AFFORDABLE TO MOST

Tel. 563001, Fax. 565392 Al Wadi Commercial Centre - Qurum, Shop G-7

RENT A CAR



Tel: 693909, 693609

Nujaima Rent-a-Car, Tel. 708658, 9109158.

HOTEL &



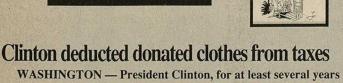
Sea View Hotel, Corniche. Tel. 714555. Located close to Riyam Park. Fully air-conditioned rooms. All rooms provided refrigerator, colour direct dial telephone.

FOR RENT

Flat with 1 bedroom, hall 8 kitchen at Darsait. Contact



Opposite Gulf Stationary. 789987 (Office) 'Wayne's World' is funny second time around



while governor of Arkansas, donated his old clothes to charity in the 1980s and took what may have been inflated tax deductions for it, according to documents published on Tuesday by the Washington Post. For tax deduction purposes, Clinton valued three pairs of his old clothes at \$6, or \$2 a pair, in publicly available documentation

supporting his 1986 tax returns. "We don't get it very often, but usually it will be sorted through to see what's usable, and the rest sold as rags" Little Rock, Arkansas, Salvation Army major Dwey Alderson said. — Reuter

'Mrs Terminator' to break ice

REYKJAVIK — A mysterious Icelandic sage predicts that next year the American wife of Austrian-born actor Arnold Schwarzenegger, star of the Terminator movies, will mediate talks between the United States and Cuba. Schwarzenegger's wife, Maria Shriver, is a NBC television personality who interviewed Cuban President Fidel Castro last year.

Iceland's most famous volva (sage) has been making globe-scanning New Year forecasts for years. Despite being a national institution, her identity is one of the country's best kept secrets. Each year Icelanders rush to buy the edition of the weekly magazine Vikan containing her New Year predictions. — Reuter

Banking by battle tank?

SAO PAULO, Brazil - Heavily armed gangs have robbed so many armoured bullion vans carrying money this year, that security firms are considering using helicopters instead of armoured vans, security officials said on Tuesday.

The number of such hold-ups quadrupled in 1993 to 60 from 15 in 1992, and gangs got away with a total of \$12 million in local currency. Most such robberies occured in Sao Paulo, Brazil's financial capital.

"If measures are not taken we will soon have to transport money in combat tanks," joked Percival Aracema, President of the Association of Brazilian Armoured Van Companies. — Reuter

Safari not a cure of delinquency

LONDON - A teenage tearaway who was sent on a character-building African safari at taxpayers' expense landed in fresh trouble only days after getting back to Britain.

Police said the 17-year-old was arrested in the western city of Gloucester on Monday for an alleged negligent driving offence, three days after returning from the £7,000 (\$10,500) trip. He was freed on bail pending sentence for a range of earlier offences, which he had admitted including burglary, assault and car theft. Social workers sent the youth to see the Nile, the Pyramids and Victoria Falls in hopes he might reform. The jaunt touched off a storm of protest. - Reuter

Ivory turns to gold

MEDFORD, Wisconsin — The piano of the town's late barber is still out of tune, even after \$140,000 in neatly wrapped bills was extracted from its innards. Piano tuner Dan Shereda said on Monday he found mouldy bundles of cash wrapped in aluminium foil inside the century-old oak upright piano, bought for \$70 at a sale of barber Harley Stim's effects.

The buyer found the piano out of tune and called Shereda, who discovered the stash of \$5, \$10, and \$20 bills dating from the 1930s. The loot in the piano, along with cash in books and mattresses in the dead bachelor's barber's home, was turned over to his estate. Shereda said tuning the piano will be a job. - Reuter

Museum times

Natural History Museum, Al Khu-wair, Tel.: 602565 605400 (direct)

Thursday 9am to

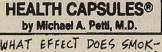
to 2pm and 4pm to 7pm; Saturday, Mon-day, Tuesday and Wednesday 8am to 2pm. Oman Museum, Information City, Oman Aquarium at Marine Sciences and Fisheries Centre, Al Bustan. Tel 740061. Opening times: Saturday to Wednesday 8.00 am to 2.00 pm. Thursday

8.00 am to 1.00 pm. Friday closed.
Children's Science Museum, Shatt al-

Qurm area, Qurm. Tel: 605368, 605369.

8am - 2 pm, Monday, 4 pm - 8 pm (for fam-

Armed Forces Museum, Bait al Falai, Tel:312645, 312646. Opening times; Sunday and Wednesday for general public and Monday for school children: 8.:30 - 12:30. Oman-French Museum, near Muscat police station, Tel: 736613. Opening times; Saturday to Wednesday 8.30 am to 1.30 pm.



ING HAVE ON A WOMAN'S PERIODS 2



GOES THROUGH MENOPAUSE ABOUT THREE YEARS EARLIER, WHICH DEPRIVES HER OF THE PROTECTION OF FEMALE HORMONES

Health Capsules is not intended to be of a

In Movie Theatres Wayne's World 2 - It's hard-

ly Schindler's List, but Wayne's World 2 may prove one of the more entertaining tickets of the holiday

10 LIFE & LEISURE

Once again, Wayne (Mike Myers) and Garth (Dana Carvey), with a script co-written by Myers, have done an intelligent job of making a silly movie. Many of the key elements from the first film are recycled here, but the filmmakers have managed to stay one step ahead of predictability. Rejoining the Aurora, Illinois-based cable show hosts are Tia Carrere, as Wayne's rock singer girl friend, Cassandra; a slimy media type who thinks he can outwit the seemingly dumb duo (this time he's played by Christopher Walken, rather than Rob Lowe); and, of course, some againg rock celebrities. Last time it was Alice Cooper, this time it's Aerosmith. Though this might seem like a carbon copy of the first Wayne's World, the filmmakers have maintained a degree of fresh-

phrases ("..NOT!") which were so popular last year seem horribly dated now, and so they only put them into the mouths of characters who are trying to be smart, but end up looking, well, silly and dated.

The plot (about Wayne's dreaminspired mission to host a giant rock festival, "walleye," in Aurora), is as throwaway as you would expect, but it does feature some hilarious setpieces, particularly a take-off on badly dubbed martial arts movies, a sequence built around the Village People's "YMCA", and an extended spoof on the closing sequence of *The* Graduate. For those of you who hated the last one, I'm sorry to have to say that this is, in fact, Wayne's world: We just live in it.

Rock and Reel

They may not make great musicals any more, but scores of contemporary films have been written around rock-related themes. Here are a few you might wish to check

Possessed

Pythias (abbr.)

Wears away

compound

Article

(abbr.)

ending

Adjective

Pampered

10 Symbol for

Coarse wool

Actress Merkel

Bodies of water

Crystalline gem

Deciliter (abbr.)

Sandwich type



Mike Myers and Dana Carvey reprise their Saturday Night Live roles The Commitments — English as Wayne and Garth in Wayne's World II.

American rail

44 Earth goddess

46 Accomplish

48 Large trucks

51 Icelandic

writing

53 Bandleader

Arnaz

57 Legal matter

64 Note of scale

43 Coin

brought us Fame, tried to get a bit grittier with this engaging story of the rise of a young Irish soul band. It's implausible (no group could be this successful playing cover versions of soul classics) and essentially a sitcome, with plenty of snappy one-liners to spare,

Purple Rain — Ok, let's see. It's about a young black musician unhappy family life and achieves fame and fortune thanks to his very personal blend of funk, soul and rock. Though you may already have a pretty good idea, I can't tell you who this movie is about. Why not? Because he doesn't have a name he goes by a symbol which my antique computer can't reproduce. But I'll give you a clue; when he wants to, this guy can be a pain.

Quadrophenia - One of the best rock-oriented films ever made, this superb drama is set against the back-drop of England's 60s clashes between rival youth gangs - the nattily dressed, scooter-riding Mods and the hairy, motorbike-

FIND THE WORDS. THE NAMES OF THE PICTURE CLUES ARE

HIDDEN IN THE SQUARE, CIRCLE EACH WORD, GOING ACROSS,

SSSSOCK

TSSNAKE

RSSIWSS

NSPOON

SNAKE, SOCK, SNAIL, SAW, STARS, SPOON.

WORD LIST: SWALLOW, STORK, SHARK, SWAN,

ASTO

propelled Rockers. Based on the double album by English supergroup The Who, Quadrophenia" also boasts soundtrack songs by James Brown, the Supremes and others, and marks the acting debut of Police chief Sting.

Sid and Nancy - It's a long way from Wayne's World to Sid's, but the trip is well worth making. Cult English director Alex Cox from Minneapolis who escapes an (Repo Man) attempted the impossible in two ways - trying to convincingly recreate the London punk rock scene of the mid-70s, and to make us care about two doomed, narcissistic characters - and pulled it off. Gary Oldman and Chole Webb are completely believable as punk icon Sid Vicious and girl friend Nancy Spungeon, and even a re-creation of a concert by grunge forebears The Pistols manages to look fairly real. Stardust — One of those rare

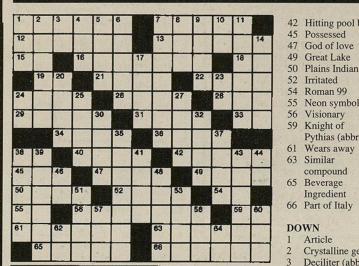
sequels that actually improved on the original (in this case, That Be the Day), continuing the story of a Beatles-style rock group led by a charismatic, conflicted teen idol (David Essex). Directed by Michael Apted Thunderheart, Gorillas in the Mist, Stardust boasts a soundtrack that features Joe Cocker, The Animals, Jimi Hendrix, Jefferson Airplane, Stevie Wonder and many,

many more. a must-see. Roadie - Ridiculous, but I bet Wayne and Garth love it. Meatloaf (who had a small part in the first Wayne's World plays a Texas boy who, though he may be poor, has lofty ambitions: He wants to be a roadie for Alice Cooper! (Who also had a small part in the first "WW.") He eventually hooks up with Alice, though most of you will question whether it's worth the wait. Several musicians, including Blondie and Roy Orbison, perform onscreen, and the soundtrack features the likes of Cheap Trick and Pat Ben-

This is Spinal Tap — This hilarious pseudo-documentary about a fictional group of aging British rockers was so ontarget in its satire that many viewers mistook it for the real thing. Director Rob Reiner and his cast perfectly capture all the hallmarks of "dinosaur rock.

-James Pallot By Art and Chip Sansom

CROSSWORD PUZZLER



loved by

Choice morsel Resident of

Havana 13 Wild ass of India 15 Spanish article

26 Aromatic 18 Artificial

29 000 Zeus 31 Wampum 21 Dispatch 33 Delirium 22 Where N.Y. tremens (abbr,) Mets play State

34 Surface coating 36 Blade 38 King (It.)

28 " - the season

to be"

37 Singer — Te 58 Fabulous bird 60 Lift with lever 38 River in 62 Violent 39 Diner whirlwind

Cut

Rowing tools

23 Height (abbr.)

Not of the

32 Shudder of fear

24 Job's home

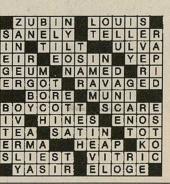
clergy

35 Muddiest

25 Pawn

30 Certain

Answer to previous Puzzle



STELLA WILDER

YOUR BIRTHDAY

Born today, you have one of the strongest, most dynamic, and colourful personalities of any individual born under your sign. You take it for granted that everyone has an opinion of you of some kind, and you are quick to work with these often supportive, often critical views in order to have your own way! How you do it is anyone's guess, but you know how to make almost everyone - even your worst enemies - hand you what you want on the proverbial silver platter!

There are times in which you may be rather lonely and withdrawn, but you can be counted on to pull yourself out of such doldrums and enjoy a full and profitable social life whenever necessary. You have what it takes to make a fine parent, loving and generous - though perhaps overly strict at times. Also born on this date are: J.D. Salinger, author; J. Edgar Hoover, FBI director.

To see what is in store for you tomorrow, find your birthday and read the corresponding paragraph. Let your birthday star

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) You should be able to work well today Your feelings may be changing

anced with care today. On the road, you must guard against overspending. AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) -You're more in the mood to help others than to engage in self-serving endeav-

ors. It's a good start to 1994! PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) -Others may already have expressed surprise over one or two of your choices this year. Today, you can prove

ARIES (March 21-April 19) -You'll realise today that your efforts over the past days, weeks, and months have not been misguided or ill-advised.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

Travel and finance must be bal- with those who usually stand in opposithroughout the day. tion to your efforts and your ideas GEMINI (May 21-June 20) —

You have every reason to expect results today, even if you've just put a new project on line. You can raise the CANCER (June 21-July 22) -

Hold off on any firm decisions until late in the day, when all the information you need is at your fin-

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) - You'll feel energised and inspired today. Philosophical concerns may take a back seat to more physical pursuits. VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

It's important that you let friends know you're there for them

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) — You must be willing to hone your skills and redefine your primary goals today. A test of sorts is looming just ahead.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) You may feel as though you've begun on the wrong foot today, though the reason may be unclear. You can start again.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). - You may be nervous and on edge through the first part of the day. Calm descends when news comes your way.

THE BORN LOSER

SAY, PRETTY

PLEASE"

DOWN OR DIAGONALLY.

THINGS THAT BEG

SAY, PRETTY PLEASE WITH SUGAR ON TOP"

OH, ALL RIGHT, THORNAPPLE, I THIS AFTERNOON TO FIX YOUR IMPACTED WISDOM



GARFIELD

SPLATSPLAT

SPLAT

SPLAT

SPLAT

SPLAT

SPLAT

SPLAT

SPLAT

Larry Ling

World Bus. This Week

Headline News Update

Headline News Update

03:10

03:20

03:35

03:45

04:00

04:30

06:00

06:20

06:40

08:00

08:50

09:00

10:00

11:00

11:30

04:10

04:35

05:00

05:55

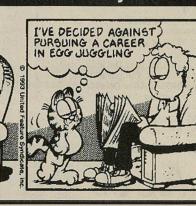
06:00

06:40

10:50

10:55

EVENING



RADIO

Oman MORNING

Royal Anthem

Holy Quran

08:16 News in Brief 08:26 Religious Talk 08:38 Children's Cartoons 09:01 **Cartoon Serial** 09:24 Local Prog.

08:00

08:03

10:01 **Arabic Seria News in Brief** 11:00 **AFTERNOON** 01:00 **News in Brief** 01:18 **English Serial** 02:06 **Cultural Prog** 02:30 Competitions

03:10 Afternoon Prayer 03:30 **Arabic News** 03:45 Intl. Reports 04:00 Basketball 05:12 **Cartoon Serial** 05:36 **Sunset Prayer** 05:40

Medical Encyclopaedia **EVENING Arabic News** 06:00 Foreign Informations Network With the Poets

06:43 07:01 **Evening Prayer** 07:22 **English Serial** 08:00 **English News** 09:15 This Evening Prog. 08:57 **Arabic Serial** 10:00 **Arabic News** 10:30 Sports Roundup 12:27 **News Headlines**

Holy Quran

Royal Anthem

12:42

12:50

MORNING

Asian Football Show 06:00 Gillette World Sports 07:00 07:30 **NBA Inside Stuff** 08:00 Intl. Motorsports Best of Rugby 7's 09:00 10:00 **Best of Roccer Baseball's Greatest**

AFTERNOON 12:00 **Games, 1970 WS** The Best of Adminton 02:00 04:00 **WWF Wrestling Mania** 05:00 Johnnie Walker World Champs, Highlights

EVENING Boxing 06:00 08:00 **Baseball's Greatest Games**, 1970 WS 10:00 SUNDAY **WWF Wrestling Mania** 12:00 Johnnie Walker World 01:00

Champs., Highlights 02:00 Boxing 04:00 **WWF Wresting** Live - College Football

MORNING Intl. Family Classics -"A Tale of Two Cities" 07:30 Garfield 08:00 G.I. Joe 08:30 Crossbow **Videofashion Monthly** 09:00 Special: The Ice Star's

Hollywood Review Lifestyle of the Rich & Famous, Best of '93 **AFTERNOON** 12:30 **Movie Television**

01:00 02:30

03:00 04:30 **Knights & Warriors** 05:30 Baywatch **EVENING**

07:30 **Anything But Love** 08:00 **Flying Doctors** 09:00 Dynasty 10:00 11:00 Special Forces 11:30 Late Night Movie:

01:30 **Young Doctors** 02:30 **Movie Television** 03:00 **Baby Follies** 03:30 Little Flying Bears 04:30 Eric's World East of the Moon



07:00 Gone Taiwan **MTV Sports** MTV's Top 100 **AFTERNOON** 05:00 1933 Video **Music Award EVENING** Dial MTV

Riviera For Your Entertainment **Fashion Television** New Year's Special The Hypnotic World of Paul Mckenna

The Trials of Rosie O'Neil

"People Next Door" SUNDAY **Choppy & The Princess**

MORNING VJ David Wu 06:00 Videos of 1993

08:00 **Alternative Nation** 10:00 11:00 Classic MTV SUNDAY 12:00 VJ David Wu 02:00 **VJ David Wu MTV Rockumentary** Indus Creed

Week in Rock



06:00 World Service News 06:25 World Review **World Service News** 07:00 07:25 World Service News 08:25 1993 Nobel Peace Prize **World Service News** 09:00 The Clothes Show 09:25

MORNING

10:00 World Service News 10:25 **Germany Means Bus** 11:00 **World Service News** 11:25 The Late Show **AFTERNOON** 12:00 World Service News 12:25 Beecham

World Service News 01:00 01:25 Film 93 02:00 World Service News 02:25 **World News Week** 03:00 World Service News 03:25 04:00 World Service News 04:25 A Question of Sport **World Service News** 05:00 05:25 The Late Show

EVENING 06:00 World News Headlines Whicker's World: 06:05 07:25 1993 Nobel Peace Prize 08:00 **World Service News** 08:25 Film 93 09:00 World Service News 09:25 Tomorrow's World

10:00

10:25

11:00

11:25 Crime Ltd. SUNDAY 12:00 World News Headlines 12:05 Lakeland Rock **World Service News** 01:00 01:25 02:00

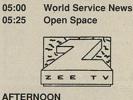
The Late Show

World Service News

World Service News

02:25 **UN World World Service News** India Business Report

World News Week



Cartoon

05:00

12:30

09:30

10:00

10:30

11:30

01:00 Commander 01:30 02:00 Yeh Hai Bombay Meri Jaan 02:30 Anand 03:00 Parampara 03:30 Hindi Feature Film **EVENING** 06:00 Sa Re Ga Na 06:30 07:00 07:30 Tara Shakti 08:00 **Ghumta Aaina** 08:30 09:00 Ras Barse

Philips Top 10

Sab Chalta Hai

Gaane Aniaane

Ek Minue

The Dream Merchants

12:00 Close Down

MORNING 06:00 Larry King 07:00 **World News World News** 08:00 08:30 **Showbiz Today** Monelyine Worldwirde Update 11:30 **Headline News Update AFTERNOON**

12:00 12:30 02:00 03:00 03:30

Intl. Correspondents 04:00 The Big Story **Headline News Update EVENING** 06:00 Healthworks 06:30 Money Week 07:00 Science & Tech. Week 07:30 Style with Elsa Klensch 08:00 Showbiz This Week 08:30 **Headline News Update** 09:00 **Earth Matters** 09:30 **Evans & Novak** 10:00 World Bus. This Week 10:30

11:30 Style with Elsa Klensch SUNDAY 12:00 Your Money 12:30 Intl. Correspondents 01:00 **Headline News Update** 01:30 **Future Watch** 02:00 Headline News Update 02:30 **Newsmaker Saturday Headline News Update** 03:00 03:30 Pinnacle 04:00 The Big Story 04:30 On the Menu 05:00 **Headline News Update**



MORNING News - France 3 09:00 09:30 News - France 2 Pre-recorded Magazine AFTERNOON 12:00 Show

Magazine

01:40

02:00 News/in English 02:10 Magazine

Documentary

Music Videos or

Documentary

France 3 - Live

Papal Blessing

News/in French

News - France 2

Pre-recorded

Magazine

Magazine

Sport

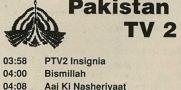
Music



Oman Radio Opening, the Holy Koran

programmes 7.10 7.30 News bulletin. 8.00 Focus on festival. 9.00 10.00

Music Show Magazine 12.03 News - France 2/Live 12.30 Sports News - France 3 1.00 1.02



National Geographic Special Al-Akbhar The News **Aiou Courses** Aasaan Hesaab A Place To Live Janwar Aur

Hamara Qaeda

Aiou Courses

07:05 07:30 Hamari Maeesha Sami's Lab 08:00 Khabarnama 08:30 Commercial News 08:35 Sooraj Kay Saath Saath 09:20 **Sports Show** Halat-e-Hazira

Kal Ki Nasheriyaat

National Anthem &

Close Down

preview of morning

and weather forecast. Classical showcase. Classical showcase. Hooked on classics. Henry-Wood promenade 11.00 News Highlights. 11.05 Popular classics. 12.00 Preview of afternoon programmes and news headlines. Quiz time. Music montage

News headlines. Kalila and Dimnah. 1.15 Focus on development 1.30 Melody time. 1.57

Weather forecast and TV programmes. 2.00 **Health matters** 2.30 2.40 This in Oman. 2.58 Weather forecast and TV Preview of evening programmes.

3.02 4.00 4.05 5.00 6.00 6.02 6.30 6.40

7.00 9.45

Most treasured melodies Local news bulletin Swing and things. Young country music. News headlines. News bulletin. Weather forecast and pharmacies on duty. Words in action. Chart show. The Holy Koran. News summary, preview of morning programmes, pharmacies on duty. Close down, National Anthem.

over the Philadelphia 76ers.

which improved to 21-5.

struggling

berwolves, 110-104.

Miller was 12-of-14 from the

field and 8-of-8 from the free-

throw line, while Barkley had 22

points, 14 rebounds and 12 assists.

Danny Ainge made 4-of-7 three-

season-high 22 points for Phoenix,

uwon scored 15 of his 34 points in

the fourth quarter and Otis Thorpe

added 20 points and 17 rebounds to

Minnesota

Olajuwon also notched a sea-

son-high eight blocks. Houston,

which improved to 24-4, had

In Minnesota, Hakeem Olaj-

Hornets snap Bulls' winning streak

dale had 21 points and Lionel Simmons scored 15 to lead the Sacramento Kings to a 97-91 win over

the Detroit Pistons on Thursday. Terry Mills had 22 points and an Elliott added 17 for the Pis-Sean Elliott added 17 for the Pistons, who extended their losing

streak to six games.

The Kings trailed 56-55 early in the third, but went on a 9-0 run and led the rest of the way

In Charlotte, Dell Curry scored 28 points and Hersey Hawkins added 26 points and 12 rebounds as the Charlotte Hornets routed Chicago, 115-95, snapping the Bulls' 10-game winning streak.

The Hornets, playing without injured starters Larry Johnson and Alonzo Mourning, won their eighth of 11 games.

game-high 22 points to lead the ington Bullets. Washington lost triple-double as the Phoenix Suns

DETROIT — Wayman Tis- San Antonio Spurs to a 107-82 victory over the Indiana Pacers.

Ellis shot 6-for-7 from the field as the Spurs outscored Indiana, 29-14, in the third quarter on the way

cent from the field, have lost five straight games. In Miami, Shaquille O'Neal

scored 27 points and Scott Skiles added 21 to lead the Orlando Magic to a 108-100 victory over the Miami Heat. The Magic have taken all three games from their intrastate rivals this season.

O'Neal, who was ejected late in the third quarter on Wednesday in a loss to Atlanta, left the game with 8:06 remaining when he picked up his fifth foul.

In New York, John Starks In Indiana, Dale Ellis scored 16 scored 29 points and Patrick Ewing of his 21 points in the decisive had 24 to lift the New York Knicks third quarter and J.R. Reid scored a to a 102-84 victory over the Washfor the 14th time in the last 16

Pervis ellison paced Washington with 23 points and Rex Chapman added 21.

In Denver, Robert Pack hit two free throws with 14.2 seconds remaining to help Denver hold off a late Golden State charge and send the Nuggets to their fifth straight victory, a 101-96 decision over the

Golden State erased all but two points of a 13-point deficit in the final seven minutes, but ran out of Mahmoud Abdul Rauf led Den-

ver with 22 points and Laphonso Ellis added 18

Latrell Sprewell scored a gamehigh 28 and sparked Golden State's In Phoenix, Oliver Miller

dropped three of its last four games after winning 22 of its first 23 games. Rookie Isaiah Rider had scored a career-high 32 points and 30 points and a career-high 12 regrabbed 13 rebounds and Charles bounds to lead Minnesota, which Barkley notched his 18th career has dropped seven straight games

kept rolling with a 119-107 victory and 10 of its last 11.

In Milwaukee, Frank Brickowski made two free throws with 2.6 seconds left to give the Milwaukee Bucks a 105-103 victory over the Cavaliers on a night when Cleveland centre Brad Daughtery surpoint attempts and finished with a passed 10,000 points for his career. Daughtery, the first overall pick of the 1986 draft, recorded 26 points and has 10,003 points in his eight seasons out of North Carolina. In Los Angeles, Sherman Douglass scored 10 of his 15 points during a lead the Houston Rockets past the 20-6 Boston run to open the fourth quarter as the Celtics held on for a 119-111 win over the Los Angeles Clippers, halting their seven-game

> losing streak. Boston took an 84-79 lead heading into the fourth quarter, before Douglass' 10 points and Dino Radja's six points keyed the rally that gave Boston a 104-85 advantage with 5:44 left in the game.



RAO sports day

MUSCAT — Major General Ali bin Rashid bin Mohammed al-Kalbani, Commander of Royal Army <mark>of</mark> Oman, presided over the closing ceremony of the sports day of the Sultan's Armed Forces and Royal Guard of Oman. The final day's competitions included the 100, 200, 400, 800 and 1,500 metres races, the 4x100 metre relay, 4x400 metre relay, discus throw, javelin throw, shot-put, long jump, high jump and tugof-war. The Royal Army of Oman emerged overall champions with 162 points, followed by the Royal Guard of Oman with 148 points. The Royal Navy of Oman bagged the third place with 96 points.

Major General Kalbani presented the awards to the winners. The prize distribution ceremony was attended by Brigadier Majid bin Zahir al-Ghafizi, Senior Officer of Staff at RAO, Air Commodore Yahya bin Rasheed al-Juma'a, Secretary of the Committee of Defence at the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for Security and Defence, Air Commodore Mohammed bin Nasser al-Rasibi, Assistant Chief of Staff of SAF for Administrative Affairs, and Brigadier Said bin Juma al-Hadi, Chief of Social Services and Military Consumer Establishment. Picture shows one of the winners receiving his trophy.

Battling Wessels guides South Africa to a draw

rican captain Kepler Wessels endured the pain of an injured knee to guide his side to a draw in the first Test against Australia on Thursday.

Wessels made an undefeated 63 as the tourists reached 258 for three in reply to Australia's first innings 342 for seven declared. Jonty Rhodes was the other not out batsman on 35. The veteran left-hander proved his fitness for the second Test, which begins in Sydney on Sunday, although he appeared in some discomfort during his three-hour stay at the crease.

Wessels aggravated a strain in his right knee while fielding and took no part in proceedings on Wednesday.

He walked to the middle after the two quick wickets fell after lunch on the final day even though South Africa were in no danger of losing a match ruined as a contest by poor "There was no need for Kepler to bat but he wanted to go out there," South African coach Mike Procter told reporters.

"He is 95 per cent certain to play at the Sydney cricket ground.' Wessels, 36, who played in 24

SCOREBOARD Australia first innings 342 for Waugh 84, Matthews three for 68)

A. Hudson c Boon

G. Kirsten c Taylor

D. Cullinan c Border

H. Cronje retired

b M. Waugh

McDermott

K. Wessels not

J. Rhodes not

Extras (LB-2

South Africa (overnight 59 for

Fall of wickets: 1-49, 2-157, 3-

Did not bat: David Richardson,

Bowling: McDermott 23-6-60-1

Pat Symcox, Craig Matthews, Fanie de Villiers, Allan Donald.

(NB-6), Reiffel 21-4-55-0 (NB-1)

M. Waugh 12-3-20-1, May 28-7-

58-0, Warne 31-7-63-1. - Reuter

1986, appeared determined to bat against his former colleagues.

South Africa, who resumed on 59 for one, had another injury scare when opener Andrew Hudson retired hurt on 64 after lunch.

Hudson, who suffered severe bruising on his left forearm after being hit by a throw from Shane Warne, is certain to be fit for the second Test, said Procter.

There was more encouraging news surrounding South African allrounder Brian McMillan, sidelined for a month with a damaged knee.

Procter said McMillan would test the injury by bowling at full pace on the match wicket after Thursday's end of play

There is a very good chance Brian will be ready for Sydney,'

Hudson's departure was followed by the loss of two quick wickets with the total on 157 as South Africa

stumbled for the first time during Hansie Cronje, who made a fine 71, was brilliantly caught by David only wicket of the innings.

Daryll Cullinan was dismissed first ball by fast bowler Craig McDermott to cap a miserable match for the young batsman, who dropped four catches in the Australian in-

Australian cricket officials were equally miserable after sustaining a huge financial loss in staging the first

Ken Jacobs, Victorian Cricket Association executive director, said at least \$600,000 in potential gate receipts had been lost because of rain over the first two days

Opener Mark Taylor maintained his concentration during the constant interruptions to hit a marathon 170, his highest Test score on home soil.

Along the way, he became the first batsman to score 100 on his debut against four different countries. The rain, which allowed only

four hours of play over the first three days, made a draw inevitable.

The third and final Test in the series takes place in Adelaide, starting

MIAMI, Florida - Shaquille O'Neal of the Orlando Magic (left) shoots over the defence of Miami Heat forward John Salley during second period action of their game.

Flames douse Oilers' fightback

WASHINGTON - Rick Tabaracci made 26 saves to post his fourth career shutout as the Washington Capitals defeated the Mighty Ducks of Anaheim 3-0 on Thursday

The Capitals got goals from Mike Ridley, Enrico Ciccone and Dmitri Washington improved to 2-0-1 in its last three games. Mike Ridley scored his 13th goal of the seawith 1:40 remaining in the first period.

Ciccone scored his first goal as a member of the Capitals at 12:18 of the second period to double Washington's advantage. Khristich added his team-leading 19th goal of the season in the third period. In Calgary, Joe Nieu-wendyk and Kelly Kisio each had a goal and two assists as the Calgary Flames scored six unanswered goals over the final two periods in a 7-1 rout over the Edmonton Oilers. Nieud-wendyk snapped a 1-1 tie just 1:01 into the second period to start the six-goal barrage. Al Macinnis tallied just over two minutes later to give Calgary a 3-1 edge. Robert Rechiel extended the advantage to 4-1 at 7:01 and Kisio

Brazil begins probe into match fixing

lice began an investigation late on Thursday into allegations that soccer referees were told to rig the outcome of key games, including qualifying rounds for the national championships. State police chief Nilo Batista said an attempt by the Rio Soccer Federation president to delay a congressional investigation prompted his decision to enter the case

"This is a case for the police," Batista said at a news conference. "If the accusations of rigged soccer games are true, then a criminal act is taking place," he added. Batista said police would examine how public funds subsidising soccer were used. He said police would question a former referee union leader who disclosed that referees were told in a Dec. 3 meeting that they must "take care of games in agreement with federation interests."

Earlier this month, one referee said

division for the national championship tournament. Wagner Canazaro, director of state

soccer referees, was suspended three days ago by a sports court. A consumer defense society said Thursday it would file a lawsuit

against the Rio Soccer Federation for allegedly defrauding paying spectators of the alleged "fixed" games. Published opinion polls show the

public wants corruption investigated and punished.

"I detest public opinion," said Rio federation president Eduardo Viana. Viana on Wednesday lobbied suc-

cessfully to delay the formation of an investigative panel by the the state legislature. "The people could all be shot by machine guns, for all I care, Viana said. "I'm the son of a factory owner, the elite, and I'm a right wing-er." "But the people are getting robbed," state deputy Sergio Cabral Filho said at a news conference. -AP

Medvedev doubtful for Australian Open

PERTH — Andrei Medvedev faces an anxious new year after aggravating an old knee injury at the Hopman Cup yesterday perhaps forcing him to miss the Australian

Medvedev, representing Ukraine along with sister Natalia Medvedeva, hobbled around the court with increasing difficulty as his country was dumped out of the mixed team tournament in the first round by unseeded Austria.

The 19-year-old world number six was beaten 4-6 6-2 6-1 by Alex Antonitsch and hurried away to seek medical advice about the extent of the problem.

"From the second set onwards. the pain was getting worse and worse," said Medvedev, who received treatment for an inflamed knee muscle in Florida before Christmas. "I shall have to check with the doctor.

The Australian Open has al-

EAST

tions, notably Andre Agassi who has had wrist surgery and Boris Becker who is expecting his first child. Michael Chang, John McEnroe, Martina Navratilova and Jen-

Ukraine, seeded sixth, was looking shaky even before Medvedev

nifer Capriati have also decided

stepped on court. His elder sister was beaten 6-7 3-6 by Judith Wiesner in the openes and the pair eventually

scratched from the 'dead' doubles rubber to give Austria a 3-0 winning margin.

The organisers experienced a further headache when tournament stand-in Andrew Foster of Britain could not be found in time to replace Medvedev

His coach, Andrew Jarrett, was drafted to partner Clare Wood in an exhibition doubles match against the Austrian pair, who now face Spain in the quarter-

'Computer tennis' boring

PERTH - Players and umpires entered the world of computer-enhanced tennis yesterday but gave only a muted welcome to the new era of high-tech line-judging.

For the first time at a major professional tournament, all line calls at the Hopman Cup mixed team event are being performed by machine instead of humans, a move which some believe could alter the whole tone of the sport.

Entrepreneur Brian Wiliams pronounced himself "very pleased" with his TEL (Tennis Electronic Lines) system yesterday, but leading men Andrei Medvedev and Alex Antonitsch were not so sure. "The machine made three bad

calls today," said Medvedev, who lost in three sets to his opponent. "It's not fair to fire all the people. Human beings are better than

Antonitsch, whose win helped give Austria a 3-0 win over the Ukraine, felt the system made the game "more boring.

You feel like you're playing video games ... there's no-one to argue with," he complained. 'Somehow it's part of the game questioning calls. I'll have to start talking to the machine.'

was viewed more positively. British umpire Jane Tabor admitted the

system, which she operated with a hand-held computer, required extra concentration.

'There's a lot to think about, but the accuracy is superb. You just have to train yourself to do a few extra things. It is a comfortable feeling that you're not going to get any queried calls.'

Tabor conceded there had been teething problems, mostly involving the handset which has to be activated before each point. One of the buttons jammed at one stage and the system was turned off for the final 'dead' doubles rubber after several inadvertent bleeps. Medvedev also did his good-humoured best to sabotage the whole operation by unplugging the apparatus which organisers had hoped would be given a searching road test by the incomparable John

McEnroe, who once claimed the Cyclops service machine rec-ognised him at Wimbledon, is absent through injury but has a worthy replacement in the US team in the shape of Ivan Lendl. Lendl once blamed his poor

form at the Australian Open on 'logo skid' from the balls and has long been recognised as a tennis perfectionist. He makes his first appearance on Tuesday until then, the bee goes on. - Reuter

From the chair, the innovation

Colombian star Higuita on bail BOGOTA — Colombia'a most celebrated soccer star, jailed for alleged violations of anti-kidnapping laws, was granted bail on Thursday, the prosecutor

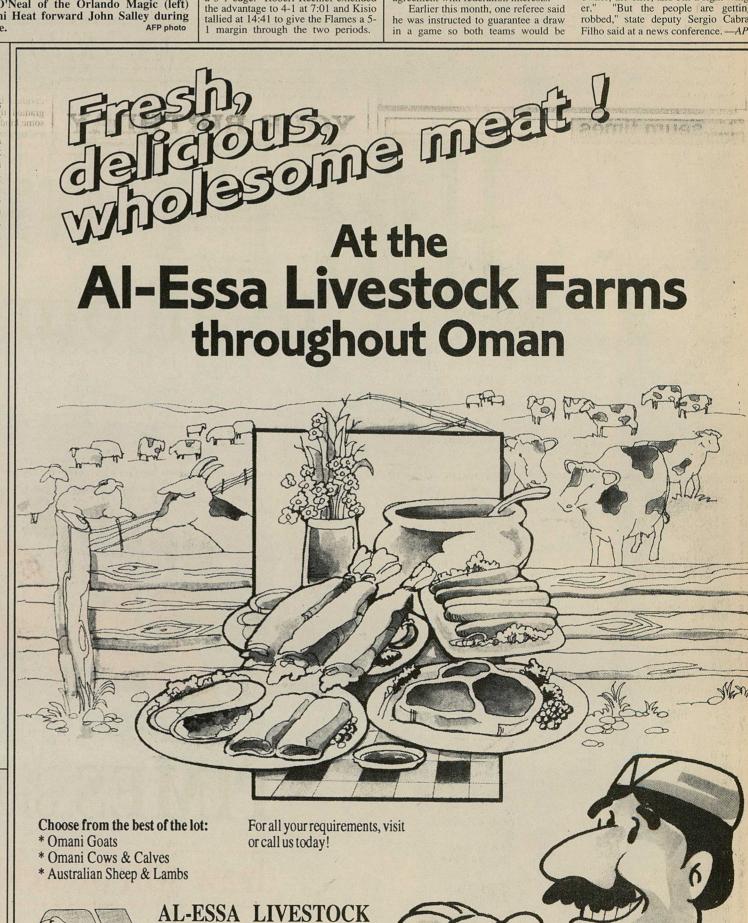
Goalkeeper Rene Higuita - who had been expected to play in Colombia's 1994 World Cup soccer team - was imprisoned on June 2 for allegedly helping negotiate the release of a hostage and accepting payment for it. Ana Lucia Obregon, spokeswoman for the prosecutor general's office, said

Higuita would be allowed to leave prison under \$10,000 bond But he apparently will have to remain in prison until Monday because his lawyer was unable to get to a bank before noon on Thursday, when financial insitutions closed for the long new year's weekend.

Higuita was paid \$50,000 by the father of a kidnapping victim, a girl, after

her release. The goalie claimed he was innocent and that he acted to save the girl. He said the money was an expression of gratitude from the father. Obregon said an investigation was still pending against the goalie and that he may be brought to trial. Whether Higuita will play in the 1994 World Cup in the United States is uncertain. After being imprisoned, another goalie, Pscar Cor-

doba, played for the team in its World Cup preliminary-round victories. Recognised by soccer fans by his shoulder-length black curly hair, Higuita became a worldwide sports star for his ability to suddenly sprint with the ball into opposing teams' turf and score - an unusual feat for a goalie. —AP



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*Sinaw * Quriyat * Salalah * Barka * Nakhal * Liva

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* Baushar (Slaughter House) * Ibra * Sur * Bidaya * Jalan Bu Ali

Aces on bridge

BOBBY WOLFF "Some praise at morn-NORTH 2-4-A • Q 10 9 7 ing what they blame at night,

WEST

Vulnerable: Neither Dealer: South The bidding:

Opening lead: Heart king

BID WITH THE ACES

ANSWER: Four spades. With two

aces and two trumps, South has a comfortable raise of North's strong

-Alexander Pope. ho gets the blame for not beating the dou-spade game?" asks a 'Obviously a club shift by West at trick two succeeds, but is he the only

one to get the blame?'

But always think the last

West led the heart king and continued the suit when East played his five. South ruffed, cashed one high trump and led a diamond to dummy's nine. He returned to his hand in trumps to lead another diamond, and when the suit behaved nicely, he was able to discard a club on a long diamond. South lost only a diamond, a club and a heart, and the defenders won the right to engage in a heat-

ed argument. East maintained that his heart five virtually screamed for a club shift. East could then establish a second winner before dummy's diamonds were established, and South would score only nine tricks.

West agreed that he should have shifted, but his alibi was that he suffered a temporary blind spot, not noticing that East had played his lowest heart.

Does West get 100 percent of the blame? Not quite. It's true that West should shoulder most of the blame, but East also missed his opportunity. He knew that the second heart would not cash. (The three-heart overcall placed West with five or more hearts.) Therefore, East should have overtaken West's heart king to shift to the club jack for the same down one.

The blame for a partnership disaster rarely falls on only one side.

Henman scalps Natekar

BOMBAY — Top seeded Tim Henman of Britain scalped unseeded Indian Gaurav Netekar 6-2 6-4 to enter the men's singles final of the Indian satellite (1st leg) tennis championships in Bombay yesterday.

Notekor who had may read to bake it to the main draw

Natekar, who had managed to make it to the main draw as quite a few foreign players pulled out of the champion-ship, went down fighting against a much fitter and faster

TIMES SPORT

Saturday, January 1, 1994

Jones back in Kiwi squad

WELLINGTON — The New Zealand cricket selectors yesterday named a predictable squad of 13 players for the second bracket of world series limited-overs matches against South Africa and Australia. Andrew Jones returns to the side after missing the first bracket of games for family reasons, while Blair Pocock has

Masur eyes spot in top ten

PERTH — Wally Masur, recovered from the bitter disappointment of being dropped from Australia's Davis Cup final team, has set his sights on a top 10 ranking dur-

Masur, the top-ranked Australian at No. 21, was omitted from the Australian team beaten 4-1 by Germany in the Davis Cup final in Dusseldorf in early December.

It was a discouraging end to a year that had seen the 30-year-old rise to a career-high ranking of 15 and a semifinal finish at the US Open. Masur begins 1994 by part-nering Nicole Provis on the Australian team that faces Sweden today in the first round of the \$510,000 Hopman Cup and has vowed to put behind him a series of early-round defeats late last season.

"In tennis, you can't afford to dwell on the past," he said. "You have to look ahead and even

though I've only had a three-week break I'm excited by the opportunity Despite his lack of power, Masur

believes has a mature-enough game to mount a challenge for a top 10

"For any player, it doesn't matter whether you are 21 years old or 30, if you are making progress it is very satisfying," he said yesterday. The top 10 is still a possibility,

sure. It seems to be easier, though, to move from 50 to 20 than from 15 to "To get into the top 10 you have

to win a lot of matches against the top guys. You need to beat a Becker, Sampras or Edberg in a big event and I'm still not doing enough of

Masur made five semifinals and two finals in 1993 without winning

an event.

"By November I was physically fatigued and mentally stale," he said. "I was sick of competing and missing out on the Davis Cup final capped it off." - AP

cricket captain Kepler Wessels, to bat through the pain barrier with a chronic right knee injury in the second Test against Australia starting on Sunday, is more fearful of facing spin than pace.

He struck an unbeaten 63 this week, coping well with pacemen Craig McDermott and Paul Reiffel in the rain-hit draw in Melbourne,

Wessels is hoping the mangled knee, already subjected to several operations, will stand the strain of the second Test in Sydney, after which he will consider further sur-

get through the game," said 36year-old Wessels.

but it is young superstar legspinner Shane Warne that weighs most on

Wessels said Warne, whom he faced for the first time in Melbourne, was as good as any bowler he had faced in a 20-year first class career.

"In my career, most of my challenges have been fast bowlers up around my ears," said Wessels.
"This (Warne) is a different problem but every bit as taxing."

Despite Wessels' caution about

Warne, and fellow spinner Tim May, there is a resurgence of optimism in the South African camp that he may not turn out to be as troublesome as feared. Allrounder Brian McMillan

summed up the mood. He is set to return to the side after spending last month recovering from surgery on his left knee, injured in a match against Victoria in Melbourne in early December.

McMillan said the first Test effort against Warne had given the side a huge lift and he felt too many people had made the mistake of thinking Warne would win the se-

"I thought our performance in the Melbourne Test was pretty good," McMillan said.

South Africa's first Test score of 258 for three in reply to 342 for seven declared was better than ex-Andrew Hudson hit 64 and Han-

sie Cronje 71. Ace fieldsman Jonty Rhodes struck an unbeaten 35, all coped well with Warne and May.

'A lot of people had written us off on the evidence of a couple of

warm-up games. It was just a matter of time until our batters came right and now they've had a good bat, it's going to be pretty interesting.

These two (Warne and May) are good spinners but they have to prove their worth against us. Shane Warne is obviously a top bowler and we have to watch him, but that applies to any bowler at inter-national level," said McMillan.

Both teams played gold yes-terday and will settle on final lineups after training today.

McMillan, who bowled in the nets this week, said yesterday he was a strong chance to regain his Test place if the knee came through a big workout today.

"The leg is strong and it's in my favour to play. I don't think I can do any damage structurally and it's just a matter of whether there is any swelling," he said.

A glut of injuries in December threatened South Africa's hopes of winning the series against Australia.

Fast bowler Brett Schultz was ruled out of the tour with knee problems, there is Wessels' knee problem and top fieldsman Jonty Rhodes is playing with a broken hand.

McMillan is also the side's best slip fieldsman. Daryll Cullinan dropped four catches at second slip in Melbourne.

But Australian skipper Allan Border has adopted a tough stance towards Wessels, lynch pin of his side despite the bad knee, and in Sydney will abandon the traditional agreement that permits substitutes and runners for disabled players.

Under law 2.1 of the game, substitute can be disallowed for any player who enters a match with a known injury.

Border said he wanted to see

Wessels initially in the field or his team left with 10 men.

"It's not the way I like to play. He can stand at slip can't he? "We know what the situation is with his knee and we'll wait and

see if it happens again," said Border. Australia has made no change to the first Test 12-man squad: Allan Border (captain), Mark Taylor, Michael Slater, David

Boon, Ian Healy, Mark Waugh, Craig McDermott, Shane Warne, Tim May, Glenn McGrath, Paul Reiffel, Damien Martyn. South Africa has yet to an-

nounce its squad. — Reuter First Test ends in draw Page 11

Bevan's ton puts NSW in command

SYDNEY - A masterful cen tury from Michael Bevan put new South Wales in a commanding position on the first day of their Sheffield Shield match against South Australia at Adelaide yesterday. Bevan hit 103, his 12th first

class hundred, as New South Wales reached 351 for six by the close. The gifted 23-year-old left hander provided a hint of what was to come with his first four scoring shots, all of which rocketed to the

His 50 came up off just 70 balls, his century took only just over one session and his 14 boundaries seemed to come without effort.

He was eventually undone when he tried to loft a ball from Danie Marsh over the infield to give the 20-year-old son of former Test wicketkeeper Rod Marsh his first first-class wicket.

New South Wales captain Steve Waugh kept up the momentum, scoring 73 and showing he had recovered from the hamstring injury which kept him out of the Aus-

tralian Test team. In Brisbane, paceman Michael Kasprowicz provided the heroics as he scored a gutsy 35 to help Queensland recover from a dismal start and then snatched two wickets in the final over to put his side right back into the match against Tas-

Seamers Shaun Young and Colin Miller each took three wickets as Queensland were dismissed for

But then with time remaining for only two overs, Kasprowicz took the second of them and with his second delivery produced an al most unplayable outswinger to have opener Nick Courtney caught be-

bowled nightwatchman Troy Cool to leave Tasmania on four for two

Wessels in a spin over Shane Warne

and fielding are problems enough the mind of Wessels.

the first Test against Australia in 23

gery.
"I want to play in Sydney and 36-

Running between the wickets

Gary Mabbutt, rugby union inter-

national Gavin Hastings, and 1950s

soccer hero Nat Lofthouse were

among sporting personalities in-

cluded in Britain's new year's hon-

Scott who led Manchester's un-

succsessful bid to host the 2000

Olympic games and honours too for

Karen Smithies, the captain of the

England women's cricket team (Or-

der of the British Empire) rugby

player Peter Winterbottom (Mem-

ber of the British Empire) Howie

Tamati the New Zealand rugby

league player (MBE), and Ian

Smith, the New Zealand cricketer

E.W. 'Jim' Swanton, 86, who has

written on cricket for 60 years was

named a Commander of the British

Empire (CBE) while Marea Hart-

(MBE).

There was a knighthood for Bob

ours list announced yesterday.

Soccer player

New year honours for Mabbutt man, 73, an athletics official, was

named a Dame Commander of the

Order of the British Empire. The most poignant award was the MBE awarded to Mabbutt, 32, the captain of Tottenham Hotspur whose 17-year professional career is in jeopardy after he suffered a horrific injury in a match against

Wimbledon five weeks ago. Mabbutt, who suffers from diabetes, received a fractured cheekbone and a shattered eye-socket after a collision with John Fashanu's elbow in a premier league match on November 24. He faces at least two more operations before doctors decide whether he can play again.

"I have suffered a lot of downs lately, but this award has put a smile back on my face," said Mabbutt, who came within one millimetre of losing the sight in his right Lofthouse, 68, known as the

"The Lion of Vienna" ever since an outstanding performance for England against Austria in 1952, retired from playing 34 years ago. He was awarded the Order of the British Empire (OBE). A prolific goalscorer in his playing days, he is currently the president of Bolton Wanderers. the only club he ever played for.

Scott, who worked closely with Prime Minister John Major as the mastermind behind Manchester's Olympic bid, was rewarded for his nine years of unrelenting lobbying for British sport with a knighthood. Two of British rugby union's greatest servants on the field were not forgotten either. Scotland and Lions captain Gavin Hastings won the OBE, while England's most capped forward Peter Winterbottom, who retired from the international arena in the summer, was made an MBE.

Reuter

Response to women's meet lauded

MUSCAT - Ayida Al Ghammari, head of the women's wing of the General Organisation for Sports and Cultural Activities for Youth lauded the response of the players to the recently concluded first women's

sports championship.

She said that the championship was a great success due to the cooperation of both the players and the organisation. Team spirit and harmony was very evident during the championship, she added.

The organisation was also encouraged by the enthusiastic response by all the participants and their desire to compete with each other at such a

" Now we will evaluate the success of the championship in discussions with experts", she said pointing out that a similar event will be held this year.

Injury woes for Leeds in key tie with United

LONDON - Leeds will be without top scorer Rodney Wallace when they attempt to beat runaway English Premier League leaders Manchester United at Old Trafford on new year's day. Wallace, who has scored six goals in the last eight games and ten so far this season, pulled a hamstring in Wednesday's 1-1 draw with Queens Park Rangers and has been ruled out by manager Howard Wil-kinson. Welsh international Gary Speed may be back less than a month after damaging knee ligaments at West Ham. Wilkinson delays naming his squad but central defender David Wetherall and striker Noel Whelan are struggling to recover from viral infections and teenager Kevin Sharp is doubtful after collecting a slight groin injury against QPR. Mark Hughes is Manchester

United's only doubt as they bid to extend their 14-point lead at the top of the table. Blackburn Rovers are in second place and Leeds a further point back in third. Hughes missed Wednesday's 5-2

win at Oldham with a heel injury and will have a late fitness test. Hughes is out, manager Alex Ferguson will rely on the side that won at Oldham as his team bid to extend their unbeaten run to 22 matches. Mark Robinson, a £450,000 signing from Barnsley last season, will start his first match for Newcastle in the Premier League against Manchester City at St James's Park. Robinson badly damaged his knee in a preseason friendly at Hartlepool and the Two balls later Kasprowicz injury kept him out until he made a fleeting appearance as substitute at Chelsea on Tuesday. - Reuter

