Restores ties

SANTIAGO: Only a few hours after its installation, the Chilean Government of President, Mr. Patricio Aylwin, restored full diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, East Germany, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and Poland. The Foreign Minister, Mr. Enrique Silva, signed the documents on Sunday during separate ceremonies at the Government house on behalf of Mr. Aylwin.

Losing support

LONDON: Polls in three British newspapers published on Sunday showed the Prime Minister, Mr. Margaret Thatcher losing support among her own Conservative Party law makers. The polls, in the *Independent*, the *Sunday Times* and *The Mail*, show that roughly one-quarter of the Tory members of Parliament surveyed believe that Mrs. Thatcher should step down before the next general election. — AP

Executions denied

JAKARTA: A spokesman for the armed forces of Indonesia has denied reports that the Government executed six men convicted of taking part in a communist coup bid 25 years ago. — AP

The Sajudis' leader and Lithuanian President, Mr. Vytautas Landsbergis, greets the parliamentary decision declaring Lithuania independent at Vilnius, capital of the Baltic republic on Sunday. — AP/PTI

Lithuania declares independence

MOSCOW, March 12.

The new Lithuanian Parliament has declared the republic's independence from the Soviet Union.

There were 124 votes in favour of independence in the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet yesterday, with no votes against. The six representatives of the Polish and the Russian minority abstained.

The Baltic republic was annexed by Josef Stalin 50 years ago.

Legislators joined hands, raised them over their heads, and chanted "Lietuva, Lietuva," or "Lithuania" after they voted to proclaim their homeland independent once more after a half-century of Soviet rule.

The vote was 124-0 with six deputies abstaining. Wild cheers erupted among a crowd outside the building. The crowd earlier had torn down the Soviet crest from the outside door of the legislative building. Some stamped on it. "That's the end of the Soviet regime," said a jubilant deputy looking on.

"Expressing the will of the people, the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania decrees and solemnly declares the restoration of the exercise of the sovereign powers of the Lithuanian state, which were annulled by foreign force in 1940," said the legislative decree. "And from this moment, Lithuania again becomes a sovereign state," it added.

The move was neither immediately recognised nor sanctioned by Moscow. It also changed little in the relationship between the Baltic Republic and the Kremlin.

Leaders of Sajudis, the Lithuanian independence movement, acknowledged that full independence would have to be won in long, difficult negotiations.

Change of emblem: The Supreme Soviet also voted to change the state emblem and the national anthem, a spokesman of the Sajudis movement said.

The emblem would now be knight on the horse and the old Lithuanian state anthem would be the national anthem, he said.

The new non-communist Government in Lithuania would like the existing economic links with the Soviet Union to continue, Mr. Radjkvilas Vitautas, member of the Sejm (ruling council) of the Sajudis said on phone from the Republic's capital Vilnius this morning. — DPA, AP, PTI

Reuter reports from Washington:

U.S. concern: The White House urged the Soviet Union on Sunday to respect Lithuania's decision to declare its independence from Moscow and urged all parties to avoid violence.

"The United States would urge the Soviet Government to respect the will of the citizens of Lithuania," the White House spokesman, Mr. Marlin Fitzwater, said in a statement.

The U.S. has never recognised Soviet authority over Lithuania, Estonia or Latvia. The Baltic states were incorporated into the Soviet Union in 1940 after 22 years of independence.

"We call upon the Soviet Government to address its concerns and interests through immediate constructive negotiations with the government of Lithuania," Mr. Fitzwater said.

Mongolian politburo resigns: The Soviet news agency, Tass reported from the Mongolian capital of Ulan Bator that the entire Mongolian communist party politburo resigned today during a meeting in which the country's leader, Mr. Jambyn Batmonh, said the party must renew itself to keep faith with the masses.

Mr. Batmonh announced the resignation of all voting and candidate members of the country's ruling body at a plenary meeting of the party's policy-making central committee, Tass said.

Dissolution of party: Meanwhile, an AFP report from Bologna in Italy says that the Italian communist party voted to dissolve at an extraordinary congress here this weekend and transform later this year into a "democratic, socialist and progressive" organisation.

The motion to change Western Europe's largest communist party, approved by 726 votes, or 67 per cent, was introduced overnight by Mr. Achille Occhetto, who was re-elected on Sunday as the party's general secretary.

Hope keeps him still alive

NEW YORK, March 12.

Five year time is enough for a world to change. Years enough for a newborn to sprout into girlhood. Nights enough for a man, caged, to sink into dark despair, and then sink deeper still.

Five years ago on March 16, 1985, the Associated Press Correspondent Mr. Terry Anderson was shoved into the back seat of a Mercedes and driven off into the black hold of Beirut. He remains a hostage today, longest-held to eight American and 10 other western hostages in Lebanon.

Mr. Anderson, now 42, last spoke to the world 16 months ago in a videotape released by the Muslim extremists who hold him. In a gray track suit, clean-shaven, he looked stronger than in the past. But the spirit was bleak.

"As the end of my fourth year approaches," he said, "I find it difficult to keep my hopes and my courage high."

Now the end of his fifth year approaches.

Rising hopes: **Hopes so often crushed are rising again.**

Mr. Anderson's tireless sister, Ms. Peggy Say, recently returned from a West Asia journey with AP officials and spoke of a "feeling of hope."

Rumours of secret talks are flying through Europe. The President of Iran, the nation believed to hold sway over the Lebanese kidnappers, says he feels the hostage crisis "is moving toward a solution."

Somewhere in Lebanon,

Mr. Anderson and the 17 others are imprisoned, apparently held in small rooms, chained, often blindfolded, deprived of sunlight lost in a hopelessness that at one point drove Mr. Anderson to pound and make bloody his head against a wall.

The meaning of five years of inhuman captivity, each year a near-eternity, is beyond imagining. But a simple measure of time can be taken.

On the day Mr. Anderson was kidnapped, Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev was in his first week of power in Moscow. The then U.S. President, Mr. Ronald Reagan had not yet met a Soviet leader. Marcos and Duvalier still drilled for their fateful flight.

While Mr. Anderson endured his pains, wars yielded to peace, enemies embraced as friends, history remade the world's landscape. While Mr. Anderson lay in chains, his second daughter, Sulome, was born and grew into a lively four-year-old, a girl deprived of a father's warmth. — AP

Chinese Govt. acts to pacify striking workers

From K. V. Narain

TOKYO, March 12.

China experienced largescale labour unrest in the latter half of last year, including strikes, demonstrations and rallies, triggered by rising unemployment and decreasing salaries and the Chinese authorities are pacifying workers to prevent the labour unrest from turning into social unrest, the newspaper, *South China Morning Post* of Hong Kong reported.

Quoting Chinese sources, the newspaper said China had experienced more than 600 cases of industrial unrest during the period. As a result, urban unemployment is said to have reached four per cent and that almost two-thirds of factories are operating at less than full capacity, resulting in reduced wages for workers.

The report said both employment and industrial productivity have been hit by Beijing's economic austerity programme first introduced in late 1988 to curb soaring inflation and heavy financial deficits.

It said largescale strikes and demonstrations broke out in Luoyang, Henan Province and in Zhuzhou, Hunan Province, in late 1989, according to the Chinese sources quoted by the newspaper. In Beijing last January, hundreds of worker-representatives from the Ministry of Water Resources construction sites throughout the nation had staged a sit-in at the Ministry's headquarters. They demanded new jobs or adequate compensation for thousands of workers who had been laid off because of falling production.

However, the report said that in many cities, factories had resumed paying full wages, to workers — even to those reporting for work only for two or three days in a week. It added that the local branches of the People's Bank of China have been asked to provide credit to factories for paying wages.

Malaysia condemns resettlement of Soviet Jews in W. Asia

KUALA LUMPUR, March 12.

Malaysia has condemned the resettlement of the Soviet Jews in occupied territories in West Asia, which it said, was in contravention of the Geneva convention.

The Israeli move would change the demographic composition of the occupied territories and Jews would outnumber Palestinians, the Malaysian Foreign Minister, Mr. Abu Hassan Omar, told newspersons here before leaving for New York today to attend a special session of the UN Security Council on Soviet Jewish emigration.

Warning against creation of Islamic state

KUALA LUMPUR, March 12

The Malaysian Chinese Association has warned against a call by one of the opposition parties to support the creation of an Islamic state as an alternative to the democratic Barisan Nasional.

The call by the Angkatan Perpaduan Ummah Party was dangerous, mischievous and disastrous for Malaysia's multi-racial, multi-religious and multi-cultural society, the president of the MCA, Dr. Ling Leong Sik, has said. — PTI

World media urged to boycott Iraq

LONDON, March 12.

World news media were urged to boycott Iraq as the British Government prepared a diplomatic offensive to overturn the death penalty passed on a British reporter by an Iraqi military court for alleged espionage.

The British Prime Minister, Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, said she was "horrified and taken aback" at the verdict handed down on Saturday against Mr. Farzad Bazoft (31), a correspondent for the British weekly newspaper *Observer*.

Mrs. Thatcher sent a personal message to the Iraqi President, Mr. Saddam Hussein, asking for mercy for Mr. Bazoft. The Foreign Office planned to dispatch a special envoy to Baghdad.

The *Observer* Editor, Mr. Donald Trelford, called on international media yesterday to boycott Baghdad until it reverses the "barbaric and unjust" sentences against Mr. Bazoft and two others, a British nurse and an Iraqi man, Rahim, for allegedly aiding Mr. Bazoft.

Mr. Bazoft, who was in Iraq at the Government's invitation to cover parliamentary elections, is an Iranian exile with British travel papers. He reportedly confessed to spying for Israel after seven weeks of interrogation and isolation detention in Iraq. — DPA

Khost may become target of Afghan rebels

MOSCOW, March 12.

The strategic Afghan city of Khost is likely to become the target of future rebel attacks, according to the Soviet Government daily, *Izvestia*.

It said on Saturday that Gen. Shahnawaz Tanai, who led an unsuccessful coup to topple the Afghan President, Dr. Najibullah, has arrived in the vicinity of Khost where his tribesmen live.

For more than a year Afghan rebels have been trying to capture Khost because of its aerodrome and have suffered heavy casualities. A fresh attempt is likely to be made by the renegade air force general to capture the city to that the rebels could use the city airport to launch air attacks on Government controlled territories, the daily said.

On the forces behind the attempted coup, the daily said there was little evidence to show that Gen. Tanai was backed by Gulburldeen Hekmatiyar, leader of the most powerful Mujahideen group based in Pakistan. — UNI

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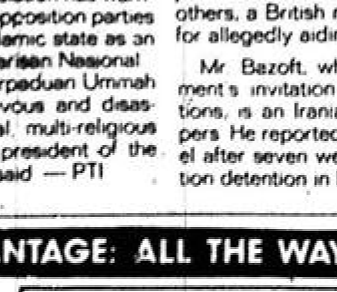

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