



World beat

International

Cease-fire begins

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — The communist government began a unilateral cease-fire today in hopes of ending the long war with Moslem guerrillas and enticing them to its program of amnesty and reconciliation.

Leaders of the main insurgent groups have publicly rejected the cease-fire. Afghan leader Najibullah says it will last for six months if the guerrillas observe it, and can be extended.

Offensive launched

NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP) — Iran said it recaptured 14 strategic hills from Iraqi troops in a new offensive northeast of Baghdad on Wednesday, but Iraq said it

repulsed the assault and inflicted "immense losses" on the Iranians.

Iraq said its planes bombed Iranian cities for the fifth consecutive day.

Fierce fighting was reported in both sectors in the 6-year-old Persian Gulf war Wednesday, and an Iranian missile exploded in Baghdad shortly after noon, the third to hit the capital in five days.

National

Trials possible

WASHINGTON (AP) — A civil rights lawyer says the Supreme Court's latest ruling that restrains prosecutors from disqualifying potential jurors based on race could mean new trials, or freedom, for hundreds

convicted of crimes.

Barry Sullivan of Chicago, with the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, estimated the decision could lead to hundreds of guilty verdicts being overturned.

The high court, by a 6-3 vote Tuesday, said fairness demands that its decision last April 30 barring race-based jury disqualification applies retroactively to convicted defendants who had not exhausted appeals by that date.

Crew smoked pot

WASHINGTON (AP) — Both crewmen of the Conrail locomotive that ran a stop signal and slid into the path of a speeding Amtrak passenger train last week were found to have marijuana in their system at the time of the accident.

federal investigators said Wednesday.

One source close to the investigation said the amounts of marijuana in blood and urine samples taken from the two men within hours of the Jan. 4 accident near Baltimore were "substantial" and indicated possible chronic or recent use of the drug.

Regional

Women like Court

PORTLAND (AP) — Women's rights activists in Oregon are pleased by a U.S. Supreme Court decision that upheld laws allowing special benefits for pregnant workers.

They said the ruling on California statutes could influence passage of similar

legislation in Oregon concerning maternity leave and job reinstatement.

The court decision Tuesday sent employers a message that it was not discriminatory to offer longer disability leaves for pregnancy than for other medical reasons, said state Labor Commissioner Mary Wendy Roberts.

Nuke bill introduced

SALEM (AP) — The chairman of the Oregon House Environment and Energy Committee on Wednesday introduced a bill to regulate shipments of radioactive materials in three Northwest states.

Rep. Ron Cease, D-Portland, said measures also were being introduced in the Washington and Idaho legislatures to create a three-state compact.

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