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## International Roundup

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### **Radiation leak worse than feared**

Japan's nuclear industry was embarrassed yesterday by reports that a radiation leak at one of its reactors earlier this week was 11,500 times greater than the safety limit - and almost 50 times greater than the original estimate.

In one of the worst leaks of primary coolant in Japan since 1979, tens of tonnes gushed out of a cracked pipe at the Tsuruga plant on Monday, forcing engineers to shut down a reactor.

Japan Atomic Power, which operates the plant, played down the accident, although coolant leaks have been responsible for some of the world's worst nuclear disasters, including the one at Three-Mile Island.

After two days of analysis at the site, however, the company admitted that the levels of radioactivity were significantly above its initial estimate. A spokesman said the leak was contained within the reactor building, so neither the plant's workers nor the outside environment were affected.

According to the Japanese media, faulty welding is to blame rather than a design fault.  
Jonathan Watts, Tokyo

### **S Africa prepares to ban guns**

The South African government plans to ban almost all guns in an attempt to cut the country's appalling murder rate. But gun-owners associations have protested that the legislation will require about nine out of 10 legally owned weapons to be surrendered, leaving law-abiding citizens defenceless.

There is estimated to be at least one gun for each of the country's 40m citizens.

Under the legislation, gun owners will have to reapply for licences. Most will be turned down. No one will be entitled to more than one handgun, and ordinary individuals will not get licences for machine guns.

Applicants will also have to undergo psychological tests to determine whether their "main character traits and behaviour patterns" preclude them from owning weapons.

South Africa is awash with Kalashnikovs and other illegal weapons, which can be bought for less than £10. Chris McGreal, Johannesburg

### **Radio battle played out on airwaves**

Listeners heard a presenter on America's oldest public radio station dragged screaming from his seat as a four-month battle for control of the station between its management and journalists intensified.

Hundreds of listeners have also got involved, staging a sit-in protest on Wednesday and

yesterday at KPFA-FM station, based in San Francisco's borough of Berkeley. So far 53 have been arrested.

The dispute over the station, part of the Pacifica network set up by pacifists 50 years ago, began in April when the station manager, Nicole Sawaya, was sacked. That night shots were fired through the windows of Pacifica's headquarters next door.

Two presenters were then sacked for mentioning the dismissal on air. On Tuesday presenter Dan Bernstein was placed on "administrative leave" after playing a tape of a news conference given by the protesters. When he refused to leave, security guards removed him.

Staff have now been locked out and archive tapes are being played by the management.  
Duncan Campbell, Los Angeles

### **Megawati party wins elections**

Megawati's Indonesian opposition party was declared the winner of the country's June 7 general election yesterday. The complex electoral system had added to the long wait for the result.

The Democratic Party of Struggle (PDIP) won 33.7% of the 120m votes cast, and the ruling Golkar party, which in the six previous elections under General Suharto never won less than 70% of the popular vote, came second with 22.4%.

Before the results become official, they must be approved by the 48 competing parties and then ratified by the General Election Commission next week.

In Indonesia's first democratic election for 44 years, the National Awakening party, a moderate Islamic party, came third with 12.6%, followed by the more orthodox United Development party with 10.7% and the National Mandate party with 7.1%.

These figures do not translate directly into seats in the 500-member house of representatives: the distribution of seats is based on a combination of PR and first-past-the-post. Weighting is also given to the country's more sparsely populated outer islands, which favours Golkar. But the PDIP is expected to have about 153 seats to Golkar's 120.  
John Aglionby, Jakarta

### **Divorced daughter locked up**

A 22-year-old Egyptian woman was rescued by police from a tiny windowless room after she had spent 108 days locked inside by her father, who wanted to kill her for divorcing her 80-year-old husband.

Madiha Eid Ali said she had survived because her little brother had smuggled food and water in to the room.

She was found in the southern town of Akhmim, 240 miles south of Cairo, when police heard her faint cries as they were searching a nearby house for weapons.

Local newspapers said Ms Ali told police that her father, under pressure from her stepmother, decided to kill her so that neighbours would not talk. Divorce is a big stigma in many parts of Egypt. Ms Ali's father was reported to have fled. Mona Eltahawy, Cairo

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