

9.00AM WORLD NEWS DIGEST

15 JAN 97

1. RIYADH: Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad was one of seven winners of Saudi Arabia's King Faisal prizes for 1997 that were awarded on Tuesday.

2. EREZ CROSSING, Gaza Strip: Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat started a summit here aimed at sealing an accord on an Israeli pullback from the West Bank town of Hebron.

3. WELLINGTON: New Zealand is "extremely disappointed" that a shipment of high level nuclear waste will pass through the South West Pacific next month, Foreign Minister Don McKinnon said.

4. WASHINGTON: The United States voiced skepticism after Serbian authorities pledged to recognize opposition wins in Belgrade and another town, and called for concrete steps towards reinstating the elections.

5. NICOSIA: Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot leaders played down the results of a mission by US envoy Carey Cavanaugh to defuse the missile on this divided island.-more

6. ANKARA: A third round of US-sponsored talks between rival Iraqi Kurd factions aimed at strengthening their ceasefire has made good progress and negotiations will resume on Wednesday, a US official said.

7. WASHINGTON: Assistant Secretary of State Winston Lord blamed poor public relations for the common perception that US-Japanese relations are in trouble, saying they are "stronger than ever."

8. UNITED NATIONS: Two options are under discussion at the United Nations to save a UN peace mission for Guatemala vetoed by China over the central American country's links to Taiwan, diplomats said.

9. UNITED NATIONS: The Security Council voted to extend for six months a UN observer mission in Croatia's Prevlaka peninsula, which is the object of a dispute with Montenegro.

10. SOFIA: Thirty thousand opposition demonstrators marched through central Sofia, vowing to keep up pressure on the ex-communist government until it bows to demands for early elections.

Bername