

WORLD in brief

Combat women ban outlawed

GERMANY: The European Court of Justice has outlawed Germany's ban on women performing combat duty in the armed forces as a violation of the EU's equal treatment of sexes legislation. The court sided with an electronics engineer, Tanja Kreil, who was refused an army job working on weapons systems because she was a woman. The EU court said that violated the union's 1976 equal treatment in the work place legislation.

By contrast, in Britain the majority of armed services jobs are open to women. The figure goes as high as 96 per cent for Royal Air Force jobs.

Hillary in the running

UNITED STATES: Hillary Clinton says she will formally announce her Senate candidacy in early February and hopes to have the president and daughter Chelsea at her side.

In this year's Senate race, Mrs Clinton is expected to face New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani. The mayor has yet to say when he will formally announce his candidacy.

Hopes fade for miners

SOUTH AFRICA: Rescue teams toiled to rescue 15 miners trapped more than one mile underground, but hopes for their survival began dimming a day after an earth tremor caused a rock fall.

Rescuers removed at least 140 tons of broken rock in the effort to save the miners, who were trapped in the African Rainbow Minerals gold mine in Orkney, 110 miles southwest of Johannesburg.

It is believed the miners are trapped in a ventilated area.

US bombs Iraqi site

IRAQ: US warplanes have bombed an Iraqi air defence system, responding to artillery fire during routine patrols of the no-fly zone over northern Iraq. The planes, based in Turkey, attacked an integrated air defence system after the Iraqi forces opened fire from sites 250 miles north of Baghdad.

Human cargo dead

UNITED STATES: Three people have been found dead inside a container shipped to Seattle from Hong Kong, the first known deaths in a series of similar attempts by immigrants to illegally enter the United States.

Fifteen people who survived the journey, all men in their 20s and 30s from China, were inside the same container on the freighter Cape May.

Anger over tycoon

NEW ZEALAND: Justice Minister Phil Goff has called for an inquiry after a US billionaire who smuggled cannabis into the country was released and his name ordered to be kept secret by a district court judge. The insurance tycoon has been named in US media as Peter Lewis, 66, an insurance company boss. He was arrested when he flew into Auckland to watch the America's Cup races and admitted possessing a small amount of cannabis.

Space station setback

RUSSIA: In a major setback for the International Space Station, the launch of a key Russian module will be delayed yet again after flaws were detected in a booster rocket.

The launch of the module will not be possible until August, said a spokesman for the Energomash Company which built the module.

Aherm learns lessons

SOUTH AFRICA: Irish Prime Minister Bertie Aherm said he had learned lessons from a trade delegation and turned his attention to the racially divided nation's attempts at reconciliation and its potential lessons for Northern Ireland.

He met President Thabo Mbeki and planned visits to Irish-funded aid projects.



Mother's triple joy... Arcelia Garcia, 54, holds her three new daughters, from left, Arianna, Brianna and CeCelia at Memorial Hospital in Yakima, Washington State, USA.

My love for my triplets - mum, 54

PROUD mother Arcelia Garcia cuddles the triplets that have made her famous across the world.

For at 54, when most women are going through the menopause, she is once again dealing with nappies and night feedings.

"No woman is too old to receive a child," said the American mother of eight, who now has 11 children.

Garcia gave birth by caesarean section to the three girls 16 years after her last child was born.

She and her husband Guillermo, aged 60, of Sunnyside, Washington, have 13 grandchildren, with two more on the way. She said: "My love for my children that have just arrived is the same as for the first one."

Arianna, the first born and smallest at 3lb 7oz, is in an incubator. Brianna, the second born, is in a cot and taking a bottle. She weighed 5lb 12.5oz at birth. Third-in-line CeCelia, 5lb 1.5oz, is also in an incubator.

Outcry as Pinochet is declared unfit for trial

By PA News reporter

A DECISION by Home Secretary Jack Straw declaring General Augusto Pinochet too sick to stand trial drew praise from the former Chilean dictator's supporters today.

But there was criticism from opponents, who promised to continue efforts to try Pinochet for alleged human rights abuses.

The 84-year-old has been in Britain since he was arrested on a Spanish warrant for violations committed during his 17-year rule in Chile.

The governments of Chile and Spain both appeared unlikely to get involved in the ruling, which could bring an end to Pinochet's 15-month battle against being extradited.

But in Chile, lawyer Enrique Santiago said he would request that



Dictator's reign condemned by the world

THE horrific human rights abuses of General Augusto Pinochet's regime have been widely condemned by the international community over a long period. In 1975, two years after the career soldier came to

power in a bloody coup, the United Nations passed Resolution 3448. This recognised a deliberate policy of torture, ill-treatment and arbitrary arrest by Pinochet's security services.

The following year a UN working committee concluded that the cases of torture should be prosecuted by the international community as crimes against humanity.

the Spanish National Court ask British prosecutors for a new medical examination if Pinochet was released on health grounds.

Pinochet's younger daughter, Jacqueline, said the family were "extremely happy".

She added her father had been in bed in recent days, and upon returning to Chile "he will go straight to the Military Hospital."

But Mireya Garcia, vice president of the Organisation of Relatives of Missing Detainees, a group dedicated to dissidents who disappeared after being arrested under the Pinochet dictatorship, called the ruling "a terrible blow".

"We believe that although Pinochet is indeed very old and has problems, he was in shape to stand trial," she said.

The British Government said a medical team which examined Pinochet unanimously agreed that he was too ill to face trial, and that Mr Straw felt he should not allow Pinochet to be extradited.

But it said he would not make a decision until hearing arguments from parties to the case.

Supporters at the private Pinochet Foundation were joyful, but cautious.

War historian 'a liar', court told

CONTROVERSIAL historian David Irving has been branded a liar as he launched his High Court libel action over a claim he was a "Holocaust denier".

The 62-year-old author of *Hitler's War* and *Goebbels: Mastermind of the Third Reich* claims Penguin Books and academic Deborah Lipstadt were part of "an organised international endeavour" to destroy his career and

"vandalise" his legitimacy as a historian.

He says that the "waves of hatred" generated by their book, *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory*, had robbed him of financial security for the future.

Penguin and Professor Lipstadt deny libel and plead justification.

The case continues.

French truckers call off protest

FRENCH hauliers this morning called off their protest which stranded thousands of British lorry drivers at French borders for two days.

The move follows progress in talks on fuel prices and working hours with government officials in Paris.

The breakthrough will be welcomed at the blocked border crossings where British and other foreign vehicles have been stuck in long, stationary lines.

It will also soothe France's neighbours.

The European Union's executive arm, the European Commission, had threatened France with legal action if it did not take sufficient measures to ensure the free flow of goods across borders.

The truck owners were protesting against a 30 per cent rise in diesel prices over the last year.



Murdered...

Vicky held murder

A MAN was questioned over the suspicion of a sixth-former who vanished after a night club.

The 22-year-old man was one of three un-

A 21-year-old man disappeared from a nightclub in Suffolk, to be found in Trimley St Mary, hours of September.

Her naked body was found in a water-filled ditch at Creeting St Mary, days later. She was asphyxiated, police said.

Residents where she was living heard a woman also said she was accelerating away.

Dome for visit

THOUSANDS took hours of Millennium party on New Year's Eve to receive compensation.

All 6,500 travellers from in east London free Dome vouchers for merchandising.

Chaban entered

BOXING Warren is champion Mike Tyson fight sell-out fight this month.

The former champion's fight was doubted after it was warned he was because of his

The promoters of the fight for the end of the given the chance to allow the box-

They must show compassion