

# Probe into White House aide's link with BCCI

WASHINGTON, Oct 27: President George Bush's Chief Legal Adviser has launched a probe into a former White House aide's ties to a leading figure in the Bank of Commerce and Credit International (BCCI) controversy, the White House confirmed Saturday, reports AFP.

White House Counsel Boyden Gray has begun investigating former aide Edward

Rogers' employment by former Saudi intelligence official Sheikh Kamal Adham following a complaint to Bush by Democratic Congressman Charles Shumer of New York.

Shumer told Bush he was "very disturbed" about the former White House staff member's ties to the scandal-plagued BCCI.

The President has asked Boyden Gray to review the matter and to respond to Congressman Shumer, Roman Popadiuk, a White House spokesman, said Saturday.

Rogers, 33, was White House Political Director and top personal aide to White House Chief of Staff John Sununu until August.

Less than one month after departing the White House, Rogers signed a contract worth 600,000 Dollars to serve as Counsel to Adham, whom U.S. justice officials suspect aided BCCI in taking control illegally of First American Bank Shares, the largest bank holding company in Washington.

Rogers, who had not practiced law prior to leaving the White House insisted in a statement there was nothing in appropriate in his employment by Adham, stressing it was "entirely consistent with and allowed" by federal law.

"Neither nor my law firm have had a contact with any one at the White House about this matter," Rogers said.

# French farmers besiege police station

TOULOUSE (France), Oct 27: Nine French riot police were injured on Saturday in a clash with winegrowers that ended a brief truce in weeks of protests over farmers' declining income, reports Reuter.

Two of the policemen were seriously hurt in a hall of stonies as they tried to break up with tear gas a group of farmers besieging a police station in the southern city of Carcassonne.

They were demanding the release of four of their leaders detained after protesters halted a truck carrying imported wine and set its load of 10,000 bottles on fire overnight.

Farmers have been protesting for weeks about falling prices for their products and competition from cheap imports from Eastern Europe.

President Francois Mitterrand has taken a tough line on violence and asked police to crack down on protesters. He also announced measures to help farmers, prompting farm leaders to call a halt to violence last Thursday.

Mitterrand said he would further reduce a tax on farm land, extend an early-retirement scheme to all farmers over 55 and keep controls on meat imports.

Earlier this month the government produced an emergency aid plan worth 1.3 billion Francs (225 million Dollars) for hard-hit farmers.

# Tk 46.62 cr farm loan exempted by Agrani Bank

Star Economic Report

Agrani bank has exempted agricultural loan to the tune of Tk.46.62 crore upto October 15, 1991. It may be mentioned here that 98,209 farmers have benefited under this programme. The waiver of agricultural loans under this programme is still continuing.

# WB asks PDB to buy foreign electric poles

The World Bank has finally instructed PDB to buy electric poles from a foreign company for a WB-financed power project in Bangladesh depriving local suppliers, reports UNB.

Local manufacturers alleged Sunday despite opposition from the Power Development Board, the executing agency of the proposed Sixteen-Town Project, the Bank had reiterated its preference for the Indian company, Jindal.

The Bank repeated its dictate in a letter to PDB on Oct 23. A similar instruction was first given in July.

"World Bank's instruction is one-sided, unlawful and motivated," one of the local manufacturers told reporters at a press conference.

The Indian company was totally "non responsive" as its supply offer was not as per specifications of the tender in many respects, including pole type, base plate, fittings, painting and corrosion protection, he said.

Moreover, he added, if the work is given to the Indian company, PDB would have to bear an additional Tk 9 crore.

The manufacturers said as the government was the lone buyer of heavy engineering products, such "deprivation" of supply to government projects would lead to extinction of local industries.

# NASA against buying Soviet space station

WASHINGTON, Oct 27: Two Congressmen who tried to stop the building of a 30 billion Dollars plus US space station are suggesting the US government should buy a Mir station the Soviets reportedly want to sell cheap, reports AP.

The National Aeronautics and Space station's reply: America's aerospace industry wouldn't like it.

"The administration is intensely concerned about the health and capabilities of the US aerospace industry," said NASA Administrator Richard Truly in a letter to the congressmen.

"Depending on the specific case, procuring a Soviet system or technology in place of a procurement from US industry may or may not be in the overall national interest," he wrote.

The idea of buying Soviet space hardware has been raised frequently in light of the USSR's economic straits. The Soviets have 20 years experience with manned space stations, the last five years with Mir.

# US agri sector continues to attract illegal workers

WASHINGTON, Oct 27: American agriculture is still a magnet for illegal aliens seeking work in the United States, despite immigration reforms that made it illegal for employers to knowingly hire them for ranch and farm jobs, analysts say, reports AP.

Backers of the sanctions in the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act had hoped that by drying up the supply of cheap, foreign labour, farm employers would be forced to mechanize or improve working conditions and wages to recruit a legal workforce.

While it's debatable whether that has happened, government and private analysts believe the law has failed to stop illegal aliens from finding work on the nation's farms and ranches.

Some officials say the widespread availability of phony documents is to blame. Others say it's a lack of strong enforcement on the border or the law's requirement that the Immigration and Naturalisation Service obtain a warrant for open field searches.

They said, "In many areas, they were not interested in (employer-provided) housing because they regarded it as a trap, they knew the Border Patrol would look there first for them, so that's why they would sleep in the desert."

But the 1986 law, analysts said, created a high level of concern among employers who feared they would not be able to attract and maintain an adequate labour force.

# Bush sees no need for recession relief

WASHINGTON, Oct 27: President Bush acknowledged Friday that "people are hurting" from the sluggish economy but said there's no new recession or need to spur revival with "outrageous congressional spending," reports AP.

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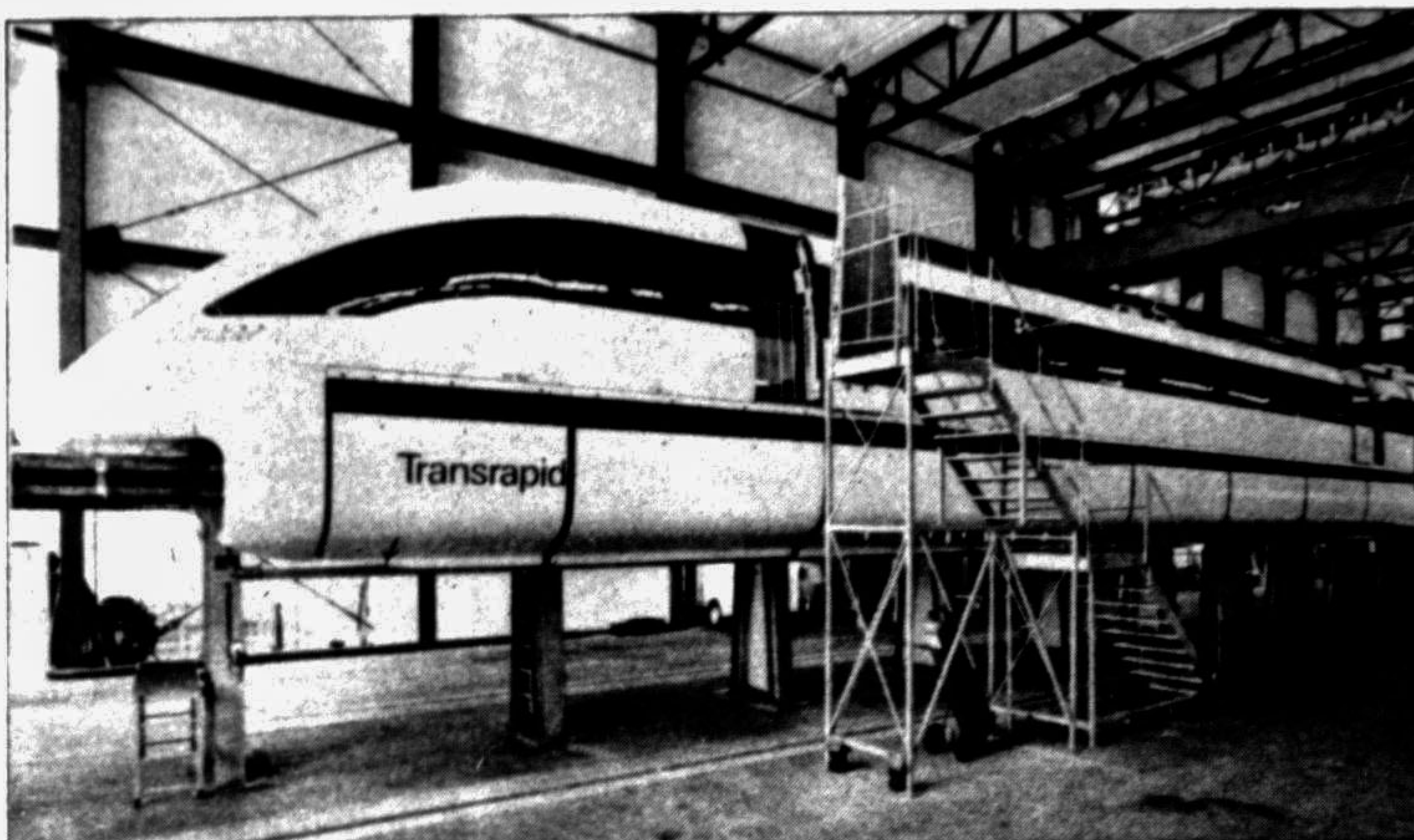
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The "Transrapid 07" has been built in Germany as the means of transport for the next millennium. The manufacturers claim their super train, which runs at 500 kmh over a track mounted on concrete pillars, as the fastest of all transport systems. There is a possibility that such a system might be set up between Bonn and Berlin. —Photo: IN-Press/DPA

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# Foreigners refusing food supply to Soviet Union

MOSCOW, Oct 27: The Soviet Union's foreign trade partners have been refusing to supply food for two months because of Moscow's liquidity problems, the deputy head of the Russian government said on Saturday, reports Reuter.

The problem meant the country could import only 10 percent of the butter, half of the milk and a third of the dried milk it had planned to buy this year, the independent Interfax news agency quoted Gennady Kulik as saying.

Soviet foreign partners have for two months been refusing to supply the pledged food because of the insolvency, he was quoted as saying.

Kulik was speaking at a meeting of Republican leaders before talks this weekend on economic reforms and aid requirements with Deputy Finance Ministers from the Group of Seven (G-7) leading industrial nations.

He said 11 of the 12 republics, excluding Molodova, had signed an agreement that envisages using credit to import eight billion Dollars worth of food.

Acting Soviet Prime Minister Ivan Silayev told Soviet television later all 12 had signed and the three newly independent Baltic states were associate members.

"We agreed on a series of documents aimed at implementing the food agreement," Silayev said, without giving details.

Interfax said Kulik had spoke of the need to speed up implementation of the food supply agreement, which also calls on republics to guarantee mutual supply contracts.

Tass news agency earlier quoted him as saying food shortages could worsen in the near future and there was only enough bread to last until the end of the year in several regions of Russia.

The West would supply seven million tons less grain than required and meat supplies would be only half the planned level, he said.

put the broken-down Soviet economy on the road to recovery and free market system.

Other Soviet officials said they did not expect any aid package to be announced. But they believed that maintaining the country's creditworthiness and ensuring the stability of its main financial institutions would be high on the agenda.

Silayev said heads of government, finance ministers and leading bankers from all 12 Soviet republics had been invited to the talks with the G-7.

The group, which comprises the U.S., Germany, Japan, Britain, France, Italy and Canada, has expressed concern that republics breaking away from central Soviet jurisdiction could undermine servicing the country's foreign debt of about 68 billion Dollars. It is also worried that food and fuel

shortages this winter could trigger unrest and jeopardise the fledgling democracy and market reform process.

Credits to finance food imports would be discussed at the talks from October 26-28, Silayev said.

But humanitarian aid worth billions of Dollars has already been offered and the G-7 experts are likely to concentrate more on liquidity problems.

Soviet officials said hard currency and gold reserves were running dangerously low.

They said there was an understanding among the G-7 that something had to be done to preserve the confidence of foreign financial institutions in Vnesheconombank, the bank responsible for debt servicing.

"We are not asking for help. We just want the situation existing before the August coup to be restored," said one.

# G-7 to assess Soviet needs

MOSCOW, Oct 27: The Group of Seven (G-7) industrialised nations are sending experts to the Soviet Union at the weekend to discuss how to help the country survive this winter without going cold, hungry or bankrupt, reports Reuter.

The G-7, referred to in Russian as "the big seven", want to study the state of the economy and relations between republics before committing itself to financial aid.

The mission springs from talks between Soviet officials and G-7 finance ministers during last week's annual meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank in Thailand.

Acting Soviet Prime Minister Ivan Silayev told Tass news agency that G-7 deputy ministers would discuss conditions for future credits to help

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LONDON, Oct 27: Gold prices reached a ten-week high at the beginning of the week because of reduced fears of Soviet selling, reports AFP.

# Jeddah Bride costs \$ 7 m