Preparations for SAARCs ummit under way

Blanket of security in

Colombo: 1,000 rounded up

## 12,000 Palestinians jailed in Kuwait

TUNIS, Nov 4: Some 12,000 Palestinians are jailed in Kuwait a punishment for Palestinian support of Iraq during the Gulf war, PLO leader Yasser Arafat charged yesterday, reports Xinhua.

In a speech to the three-day Palestinian human rights that Liberation Organisation leader ported missing since the war ended last February.

billion US dollars as a result of the massive expulsion of an estimated 280,000 Palestinians from Kuwait and other Gulf states, Arafat

and police today threw a blanket of security over the Sri The Palestinians, with the Lankan capital Colombo, ban PLO as their leadership, sided on trucks and stray cattle with Iraq when the United ahead of a seven nation south States and its allied troops un-Asian leaders summit, officials leashed the Gulf war triggered said, reports AFP. by the Iraqi invasion on Kuwait Hundreds of soldiers and

in August last year. police armed with automatic assault rifles searched cars and The current international buses at virtually every street conference on Palestinian hucorner causing traffic snarls man rights was sponsored by during the morning rush hour, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and Mauritania.

witnesses said. The measures were taken ahead of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) summit to open here Thursday, police

COLOMBO, Nov 4 : Soldiers

in a major crackdown over the weekend, police rounded up over 1,000 street urchins and beggars as the authorities began a campaign to spruce up the capital for visiting lead-

Police banned container

trucks and heavy lorries for a weck to prevent damage to overhead structures, flags, buntings and banners greeting leaders from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Pakistan.

Several government building along the ceremonial drive have been freshly painted and residents have been told to

colour wash their homes and illuminate their compounds with coloured bulbs.

Local authorities along a 35 kilometer (20 mile) drive from the international airport to the city centre have been asked by police to prevent stray cattle crossing the high-

way during the summit. Parking has been prohibited

#### 'Ratsiraka can't control Army'

ANTANANARIVO (Madagascar), Nov 4: Threatening to scuttle an accord aimed at ending a political deadlock, an opposition leader Sunday refused to allow President Didier Ratsiraka to control the military, reports AP.

The arrangement would allow Ratsiraka, who has ruled this island of southeastern Africa for 16 years, to share power with Albert Zafy, the top opposition leader.

But after an hour of talks Sunday with French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas, Zafy said Sunday that he would reject the agreement if it allows Ratsiraka to remain head of the armed forces.

The arrangement was announced Friday after two days of negotiations between in a Sept 30 military coup, re-Ratsiraka, opposition leaders | ports AP.



YUGOSLAVIA: A Croatian National Guard examines an unexploded mortar shell buried in the ground. Overnight Dubrovnik suffered one of the heaviest shellings and the ancient Dalmatian port city which had been spared by foreign invaders in past wars, now risks to be destroyed by its own people. - AFP/UNB photo

# No unusual activity in Suu Kyi's residence

as saying. He spoke on condi-

Rangoon said there was no

sign of unusual activity at Aung

San Suu Kyi's lakeside resi-

surprised that anyone outside

of Burma can claim to have in-

formation about Aung San Suu

Kyt. All we can say is that there

is no evidence that she is on

hunger strike, said one who

was contacted by telephone

Everyone here is extremely

Western diplomats in

tion of anenymity.

dence in the capital.

from Bangkok.

BANGKOK, Nov 4: Reports that Nobel Prize-winning dissident Aung San Suu Kyi is critically ill on hunger strike appear aimed at forcing Burma's military government to prove she is alive and well, diplomats said yesterday, reports Reuter.

Diplomats in Rangoon were extremely sceptical about the reports, which originated from an opposition group based on Burma's border with Thailand.

The opposition national coalition government of the Union of Burma said Aung San Suu Kyi began her fast on October 25 after being refused permission to see a United Nations Human Rights investigator visiting the country.

Aung San Suu Kyi , 46, was put under house arrest in July 1989 for her outspoken attacks on military rule. She emerged as the leading opposition figure during a mass uprising for democracy in 1988 which the army crushed.

Rangoon has not responded formally to the reports that she is critically ill, but diplomats there said government officials had told them the reports were false.

In a dispatch from Rangoon, Japan's Kyodo news agency quoted a senior Foreign Ministry official as saying they

"It is very difficult to find were "baseless". out anything about her condi-"It is the usual western metion as she is held virtually india sensationalism and foolish communicado and anyone who reliance on unreliable sources, has tried to gain access to her the agency quoted the official has been denied it.

> Diplomats doubted the reports would force the military government's hand.

"You would certainly hope that they would have a conscience and would prove to the world that she is all right, but past evidence has shown they are totally impervious to out side pressure, one said.

Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy won the May 1990 general election by a landslide. But instead of allowing it to govern, the junta has arrested most of its leaders.

Aung San Suu Kyi won this year's Nobel Peace Prize for standing up to what the awarding committee called a regime characterised by bru-

When first detained, she staged a 12-day hunger strike to demand to be put in jail with arrested supporters. She ended it after receiving assurances from the junta that they would not be tortured.

Her British husband and two teenage sons were with her during that protest. They have been barred from Burma and have not heard form her since mid-1990.

in several areas in the city and the hotel where the visiting leaders would be accommodated has been shut to other guests.

Defence Secretary Cyril Ranatunga has warned that Tamil Tiger guerillas may try to set off bombs to disrupt the summit and has called for public cooperation to prevent sabotage.

#### Haitian PM starts election process, slates foreigners

PORT-AU-PRINCE (Haiti), Nov 4: The interim prime minister is urging parents to send their children to schools, which are opening for the first time since President, Jean-Bertrand Aristide was ousted

The prime minister, Jean-Jacques Honoral, also told Haitians in an interview broadcast Sunday that he was preparing elections.

Student organizations have called for a boycott of schools to push for Aristide's return. Some groups also called for general strike.

The army and the new government saw the opening of schools as a test of public confidence in them. For several days, officials have gone on radio and television to urge parents to send their children to class Monday.

#### 150 arrested in Karachi

ISLAMABAD, Nov 4: About 150 suspects have been arrested in Karachi by police following explosions in the city, reports Xinhua.

Local press reports today quoted the crime investigation agency as announcing that most of the persons arrested were suspects belonging to the jeay sind Taraqqi Pasand Party.

A three-day strike was called by the party in protest against the appointment of a non-Sindhi to be the acting Chief Minister of the province in the absence of Chief Minister Jam Sadiq who went to London for medical treat-

Nine bombs reportedly exploded in different parts of the biggest city in Pakistan on Saturday injuring at least 24 people.

According to reports reach ing here today, a nearly total strike was observed in Karachi on Sunday following the explosion. People preferred to stay indoors. Shops remained partially opened with fewer buyers and traffic was scant on roads.

#### 'No Indo-Pak war in near future'

NANDED, Nov 4: The Defence Minister, Sharad Pawar, has said that there would be no Indo-Pak war in near future, reports PTI.

Pawar, who recently toured the town for two days to newsmen that "directions had been issued to shoot intruders to avoid infiltration from across the borders."

However, the issue of intruders who were creating disturbances had to be solved. Pawar said.

"Bilateral discussions at higher level are always satisfactory but attempts should be made to smoothen relations on ground level", he added.

## Off the Record

#### Disney fantasy meets cruel financial reality

PARIS: Like Mickey Mouse himself, staff at Euro Disney the 5,000-acre theme park east of Paris, due to open next April - are condemned to wear a fixed smile. By the time the first paying customers arrive, the smile may be somewhat strained, after predictions of two million British visitors in the first year were not borne out by the travel industry,

At Disneyland in California and Disney World in Florida, attendances have dropped by 20 per cent, despite a reduction in entry fees. Disney shares have also fallen on the stock market.

Deals have been struck between large travel companies for what was seen as a lucrative slice of the European market, but figures for confirmed bookings are scarce. "I cannot tell you how many bookings we have," said a spokesman in the Euro Disney office in Paris.

Regardless, the collective staff grin became rigidly joyous

at the weekend for the unveiling of Sleeping Beauty's castle. In deference to the host nation, the 15-storey edifice is also called Le Chateau de la Belle au Bois Dormant.

be Euro Disney

Smiling through: Mickey Mouse

floats over the building site that will

Euro Disney staff from the United States, or cast members as they as they are known, had some difficulty smiling and speaking French at the same time. At the weekend unveiling ceremony, security for Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck, Goofey and three leading members of the Disney board was tight. Large men in what appeared to be Afrika Korps uniforms and high boosts patrolled in site accompanied by matching sandycoloured alsatians. The guards smiled; the dogs just looked

At first sight Davy Crockett's Camp, just one among many fantasies being brought to life at Euro Disney, had the sinister look of a German prison camp. Sandrine ("I am the cast member chosen to guide you round this fantasy resort") seemed to lose her smile just for a moment when it was suggested the sign at the camp gates should read "Stalag Luft Disney."

#### Sea wins this round, says Bush

KENNEBUNKPORT (Marine): President Bush surveyed the devastating damage that a fierce Atlantic storm dealt his turnof-the-century oceanside home on Saturday and proclaimed: "The sea won this round," reports AP.

But as he stood in a yard littered with stones, mud, broken glass and overturned furniture, the president vowed to rebuild the three-story home that has been in his family since

He said he had some insurance, but it wouldn't come close to the amount needed to restore the house and its furnishing. The home was assessed last year at dlrs 2.2 million. Local Realtors, however, have said it is worth considerably more.

Bush said many years' accumulation of books and personal belongings had destroyed or washed out to sea in the storm that ravaged the Atlantic coast on Wednesday and Thursday.

At the height of the storm, 30-foot (10-meter) waves crashed over the house and the rocky point on which it sits, the president said.

"The main part of the house is severely damaged," Bush said as he and a group of reporters stepped gingerly over broken glass and twisted pieces of wood and metal that had once been the Bush's living room.

"All that nice living room went out to sea," an obviously pained Barbara Bush told reporters.

But, she added philosophically: "We are very lucky, we Bushes. A lot worse things happen in life."

Bush said his "heart went out" to others up and down the East Coast whose homes were also damaged by the storm.

#### An affair indeed

NEW YORK : Singer Bette Midler says talk show host Geraldo Rivera forced her to inhale a drug in an encounter she calls "interview rape", reports AP.

Rivera has described their 1972 meeting in her apartment bathroom as the start of an affair and a spokesman on Saturday strongly denied Midler's charge.

Midler gives her account in a profile of her in December's Vanity Fair. "You call that little thing an affair? He's such a toad. He has

the nerve . . . He's such a user," Midler told the writer, Kevin Scssums.

In his memoir, "Exposing Myself," Rivera described a month-long affair with Midler, including a bathroom liaison. Midler, however, told Sessums that Rivera and an unidentified producer shoved her into the bathroom and forced her to inhale amyl nitrite, a stimulant sometimes

her, she told Sessums. Jeff Erdel, a Rivera spokesman, accused Midler of making the claim to promote her new movie, "For The Boys."

called "poppers." Soon Geraldo was grouping and molesting

"For her to claim Geraldo had to force her to have sex is preposterous," Erdel said from his home in Island Park. "This relationship was consummated many, many, many times in several states."

A spokeswomen for Midler was not available for comment.

## Americans wanted to forgive Nixon, but he won't let them

WASHINGTON, Nov Historian Stephen Ambrose says Richard Nixon rehabilitated himself from the disgrace of Watergate by waging a calculated comeback campaign as skillful as any in his political career, reports AP.

But it would have been easier, Ambrose says, if Nixon - the only president to resign his office, the only one forced to accept a pardon to avoid indictment and trial - could have allowed himself to speak eight words: "I covered up. It was wrong. I'm sorry."

himself much sooner, become the elder statesman earlier, had he admitted his wrongdoing in the coverup and apologized for it," Ambrose said in the concluding book of his three-volume Nixon biography.

"The American people wanted to forgive him, but he would not let them. His pride kept him from saying what he

insisted was not true, that he had committed acts for which he needed forgiveness. He did not want forgiveness, nor sympathy, nor understanding; he wanted respect," Ambrose wrote.

In "Nixon: Ruin and Recovery 1973-1990. Ambrose provides his own an swer to a question that has intrigued generations of Nixon watchers: What caused his ruin?

A lack of character, said Ambrose. Nixon had gifts in abun-

dance - brains, acceptably nice looks, stage presence, a faithfully family, awesome will power, among others. Indeed, he had nearly every gift that the gods could bestow. The one that he most lacked was character."

Other flaws, Ambrose concludes, were that Nixon lacked an ability to respect others, that he put himself "first, last

and in between," and that he was, "infected with self-pity." He was the angriest American president," Ambrose said. "He was a man who could

not trust others, and had no

real friends." He once told Bill Gulley, director of the White House Military Office: "The minute people, they start taking ad vantage." Dwight Eisenhower

you start getting familiar with once commented to his secretary, Ambrose said, that he couldn't understand how a man could go through life without friends. Nixon's foremost hero. Ambrose said, was Charles de

Gaulle, the prickly leader of the resistance who rose from post-war political defeat to become president of France. Writes Ambrose: "In describing his hero as a self-cre-

ated man, a man of self-disci-

who underwent perpetual in-

giving us an excellent selfportrait." Nixon was a candidate for

ner struggle, Nixon was surely

national office five times winning four of those races but no campaign was better plotted than his comeback after his August 9, 1974 resig-

In the first weeks, in exile in his California home, La Casa Pacifica, he was so depressed that Benton Becker, an emissary from President Gerald R. Ford, recalled 10 years later that he found Nixon to be "an absolute candidate for suicide, the most depressed human being I have ever met, and didn't think it was an act." Son-in-law David Eisenhower informed Ford that Nixon "might go off the deep end."

Along the way, he managed to block access to his 42 million documents and the great pline, a risk take, an aloof man bulk of his tapes.

"His own writing was the

most important ingredient is his comeback," Ambrose writes "He concentrated on foreign affairs, past, present and future. He had much to say and some of it he said well. Nixon was respectable, even honored, certainly admired. As with his earlier comebacks and successes, there was no mystery or miracle involved. He had planned the campaign and executed it, carefully and

He always drew a laugh by saying his biggest mistake in Watergate was not burning the tapes. By 1990, Ambrose said, people born after 1965 asked of Nixon, "What did he do that was so terrible ?"

wisely."

Nixon, he said, had managed to create the impression "that Watergate was not much more than an inexplicable break-in followed by a badly managed but completely understandable attempt to cover

#### Fire kills 29 in India **NEW DELHI, Nov 4: Twenty**

nine people were killed at the weekend by fires set off by exploding fireworks being made or sold for India's major festival season, domestic news agencies reported, says Reuter. They said 14 people includ-

ing two children, were killed and at least nine people seriously injured in fire at a market in Faridabad, near New Delhi. Fire-fighters took two hours to quell the blaze on Sunday evening.

About the same time six people died in the central state of Madhya Pradesh when fire swept through 19 fireworks shops, the agencies

On Saturday, they reported that nine people were killed in the southern state of Kerala in an explosion at a fireworks factory.

Fireworks kill scores of people each year but remain an integral part of the festival season, which peaks on Tuesday with Diwali, the festival of

# claimed.

international conference on opened here, the Palestine said another 2,000 Arabs remain in Kuwait prison, with about 2,500 Palestinians re-

The Palestinians had lost 12

Shujaat Hussain and a multi-

million dollars financial scan-

leader of the Pakistan People's

Party (PPP), told reporters the

one of several financial cooper-

atives that collapsed this year.

He alleged Hussain secured

another loan for his family in-dustrial empire by mortgaging

state land and that the family

had defaulted on its bank bor-

rowings in the past.

Farooq Leghari, deputy

dal, reports Reuter.

involved in loan scandal The opposition led by ISLAMABAD, Nov 4: former Prime Minister Benazir Pakistan's political opposition Bhutto have made Hussain and released documents on Sunday Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif it said proved a connection bethe targets of their anger over tween Interior Minister

Pak Interior Minister

they were unable to repay their mostly small investors. Businesses owned by both men borrowed money from the cooperatives, but they have

the collapse of the coopera-

tives earlier this year when

documents showed Hussain denied any wrongdoing. had got a bank loan against Leghari said the only solugovernment bonds owned by tion to the present mess was to form a national government

of all political forces. Bhutto and her PPP government were dismissed last year by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan on disputed charges of corruption.

### French engineers in Kashmir stop work

JAMMU, Nov 4 : French engineer at a hydro-electric project in Kashmir wave declared three months' mass leave to protest the kidnapping of a colleague by Muslim militants, a spokesman for the engineers said here today, reports AFP.

One hundred and fifty engi-

neers stopped work Saturday

afternoon at the Dulhasti pro-

ject, 150 kilometres (93 miles) from Jammu, Kashmir's winter capital, the spokesman Their action came a day after the Al-Fatah separatist group released a picture of Frenchman Antonio Silva, who

went missing on October 14

be holding hostage.

and whom the group claims to

The engineers have threatened to launch a formal strike to protest Silva's abduction and the failure of police to find Officials from the Dumez-

based in New Delhi, were unavilable for comment Sunday. Work had previously slowed on the 300-Million-Dollar project when night work stopped

Sogea-Boris-Saf consortium,

following Silva's disappearance. Al-Fatah, one of a number of groups campaigning for Kashmir's secession from India, has demanded the release of 11 jailed militants and a visit to Kashmir by the London-based human rights group Amnesty International in

return for Silva's freedom.

# BRIFFIY

Baker to visit China: Us Secretary of State James Baker said on Sunday he would visit China later this month, reports Reuter from Madrid.

Baker will be the most senior US official to visit Beijing

"We can't expect to make headway unless we discuss

down on a pro-democracy movement. He told a news conference in Madrid, where he was attending the Middle East peace conference, that Washington still had real problems with China.

since the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre and the crack-

them," he declared. 10 killed in S Africa: Ten people died in clashes on Sunday evening at a gold mine near Welkom in South Africa's Orange Free state province, marking a bloody start to a two-day general strike called over an unpopular new

tax, reports Reuter from Johannesburg. A spokesman for the mine's owners, Anglo American Corporation of South Africa Ltd, said the violence erupted when a group of employees tried to prevent others from

starting the night shift at the President Steyn mine. Police earlier reported that seven people died in sporadic outbreaks of violence over the weekened in black townships around Johannesburg.

Gulf war costs \$100b : Kuwait will pay of its

22-billion-dollar debt for Operation Desert Storm, the US-led

campaign to drive Iraqi forces out of the Emirate, by the end of December, a Kuwaiti official was quoted today as saying, reports Reuter from London. Abdullah al-Gabandi, Managing Director of the Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA), told the Financial Times Kuwait had paid most of the debt to its coalition allies and only negli-

gible amounts remained to be paid in November and December. The newspaper said the total cost of the war was uncertain but it was estimated at about 100 billion dollars, with most

paid by Kuwait and Saudi Arabia Japan, Germany and the United Arab Emirates had also agreed to make substantial contributions towards the costs incurred by allied forces.

The Financial Times said the news that Kuwait was close

to paying its war debt by disposing of assets caused concern in European stockmarkets where it si a major shareholder. India's new missile "Trishul" Indian defence scientists have announced the successful testing of the short range Surface to Air Missile (SAM) Trishul' in its triple battlefield roles for the Army, Air Force

and Navy, reports Xinhua from Delhi. The scientists made this announcement in the October issue of 'Astra,' a journal of the defence research and development laboratory, according to local press reports.

The latest series of test flights between August 24 and September 10 at the interim test range in Chandipur-on-sea in the eastern state of Orissa have demonstrated Trishul's capability as a deadly weapon against aircraft and as a shipaunched anti-aircraft missile. The test flights also proved a new gathering system,

scientists said. The missile uses radar guidance and is powered by a two stage solid propellant system. Its quick reaction and delivery. difficult to jam microwave frequencies and high manocuvring capability make it very versatile and comparable to state of the art missile systems in this class, the scientists said.

which accurately guides the missile towards its target, the

He could have resurrected