

Afghan prayer for SAARC membership rejected

COLOMBO, Nov 5: The foreign secretaries of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) meeting here, on the eve of the sixth summit, have decided not to take up Afghanistan's application for membership due to differences of opinion, the Daily Observer reported yesterday, reports Xinhua.

discussions during their retreat. However, it is unlikely that they will take a decision this year as India and Pakistan will have to agree on the issue, the paper added.

Asylum-seekers flee East German city

BERLIN, Nov 5: Scores of asylum-seeking foreigners were escorted back to a church in western Germany on Monday after about 200 hooligans attacked their refuge in the east, authorities said, reports AP.

ally extreme rightists, threw stones and firebombs at the building, smashing windows and trying unsuccessfully to break down doors, before police managed to stop the assault.

Police said 35 people were injured in several Sunday night clashes that started after a soccer match in the Baltic Sea town of Greifswald between a local club and a Berlin team.

The attack was the most serious recent incident of violence directed at foreigners, many of whom are from Africa or Third World countries.

About 200 hooligans from Berlin attacked local spectators and then went on a rampage at a former military hospital now used to house foreigners seeking asylum in Greifswald, police said.

Before dawn Monday, the asylum-seekers decided to return to Neumuenster in a bizarre caravan organised by ultra-leftists known as 'Autonomen' who have carried out several attacks on rightists recently.



COLOMBO: Traffic grinds to a halt as Sri Lankan mounted police perform a routine patrol in preparation for the upcoming SAARC meet to take place on November 7. —AFP/UNB photo

Nepalese CP to use parliamentary methods

KATHMANDU, Nov 5: The Communist Party of Nepal (United Marxist and Leninist) has decided to use the parliamentary methods as the Himalayan Kingdom has introduced he multi-party system since April, 1990, reports Xinhua.

After a 12-day close-door central committee meeting which ended on Sunday, the party made a decision to follow the policy of multi-party people's democracy through parliamentary methods under the multi-party democratic set-up.

The decision is yet to be approved by the party conference to be held from April 2, 1992.

The party, which was founded four decades ago, bagged 69 seats in the election of the 205-member house of representative last May to become the largest opposition.

Y'slav Army Commander killed in fierce fighting with Croats

BELGRADE, Nov 5: The Yugoslav army commander in northern Serbia, General Mladen Bratic, one of the planners of the federal siege of the Croatian city of Vukovar, was killed in action on Monday, the Defence Ministry announced, reports AFP.

Another report adds: The Yugoslav Air Force carried out 65 missions against Croatian targets Monday as the Serbian dominated armed forces stepped up their offensive on the eve of a critical peace conference meeting in The Hague.

Mihajlo Markovic said quoted by the official Tanjug news agency. Serbs in Croatia could not be part of a 'sovereign Croatian state' as Zagreb was 'guilty of genocide', he said.

The ministers would also consider ways to compensate Yugoslav republics which accepted the EC plan for the hardship they would suffer from the sanctions.

Bratic, 58, who was with a tank unit, was killed in a bombardment by Croatian forces, a Defence Ministry statement said. He was the highest-ranking federal army officer to be killed in more than four months of fighting in Croatia.

European Community (EC) and Serbia appeared to be headed on a collision course as a top Serbian party leader ruled out acceptance of a peace plan for resolving the four month bloody conflict.

In Brussels EC Foreign Ministers agreed on a list of sanctions to be imposed on Serbia if it refused to accept the plan, which calls for a loose association of republics with a special status for minorities.

German Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher said the sanctions were long overdue and would be applied even if Serbia accepted the agreement if at the same time the fighting in Croatia had not stopped by Friday.

Bratic was shown at the front outside Vukovar in a Belgrade television report on Sunday with the armed forces chief, General Blagoje Adzic.

Yugoslavia's largest republic cannot accept the new version of The Hague documents, ruling reformed Communist Socialist Party Vice President.

British Foreign Minister Douglas Hurd said the ministers would decide Friday whether to implement the sanctions if no progress was made at today's plenary session.

In Belgrade, the Serbian-dominated federal presidency announced it would attend Tuesday's conference.

On Friday, the presidency which boycotted the last meeting in The Hague on October 25, had said the autonomous status offered under the EC plan for Serbs in Croatia was fundamentally acceptable although the guarantees offered were absolutely unsatisfactory.

New Zealand to admit 25,000 immigrants annually

WELLINGTON, Nov 5: The New Zealand government said on Tuesday it aimed to attract 25,000 immigrants a year with a new points system targeted at highly qualified people under 35 years old, reports Reuter.

Applicants in the general category would receive points based on education, age, work experience and financial backing.

vestment policy, applicants would have to show that their investment funds came from their own business or professional record for at least three years. Minimum investment required was 500,000 dollars (280,000 US dollars), but this was subject to investment intentions.

In fighting that left at least 12 Croats dead, the federal army mounted its final offensive on the eastern Croatian city of Vukovar, while attacks were also launched against the historic city of Dubrovnik and numerous other targets across the breakaway republic.

Immigration Minister Bill Birch unveiled two categories—general and business investment—under which immigrants could settle in New Zealand, which has less than 3.5 million people.

The top scorers would be picked to meet a specific number of approvals in a set period.

There was no age limit in the business category, and the residence permit could be revoked if the money was withdrawn in less than two years.

The ruling Serbian Socialist Party on Monday rejected the European-community peace plan to resolve the Yugoslav crisis, the official Tanjug news agency said.

US assistance to Ukraine discussed

MOSCOW, Nov 5: US Assistant Secretary of Defence Donald Atwood held talks in Kiev Monday on possible American assistance in helping the Ukraine convert military production lines to civilian output, Tass news agency reported, says AFP.

AIDS scandal rocks top political circles in France

PARIS, Nov 5: Accusations that health authorities knowingly gave blood contaminated with the AIDS virus to haemophiliacs is fueling an emotional scandal that has rocked at the top political echelons of France, reports AP.

40 mutilated bodies of Iraqi soldiers found

NICOSIA, Nov 5: Iraq has found the mutilated bodies of more than 40 of its soldiers buried alive by US forces in the Gulf war, Baghdad Radio said on Monday, reports Reuter.

UN chief upset by Burma's blocking of visit to Suu Kyi

UNITED NATIONS, Nov 5: UN Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar on Monday criticised the Burmese military junta for refusing to allow a UN envoy to visit opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi, reports AP.

He talked with Ukrainian Defence Minister Viktor Morozov and with Defence Industry Minister Viktor Antonov, Tass said.

Two senior medical officials have been charged with failing to alert recipients in 1984 and 1985 that the blood they received may have been contaminated with acquired immune deficiency syndrome. Two others, including one charged Monday, have been charged with failing to stop the transfusions.

The medical officials assert they are being unfairly persecuted. They blame politicians who failed to take measures to assure that only non-contaminated blood was used in transfusions.

The grave contains bodies of more than 40 martyrs, most of them completely mutilated, and others whose corpses were torn apart, the radio said.

Haiti's students boycott schools:

Most of Haiti's students boycotted the reopening of schools on Monday to protest against the overthrow of President Jean Bertrand Aristide, reports Reuter from Haiti.

UN chief upset by Burma's blocking of visit to Suu Kyi

Norway, said Friday. Rumours circulated over the weekend that she was seriously ill, but the Burmese Foreign Ministry called them 'baseless.'

US assistance to Ukraine discussed

Only a few weeks ago, Burmese diplomat U Mya Than had told a General Assembly committee dealing with human rights issues that Burma's government would cooperate with the UN envoy's visit.

An Iraqi news agency correspondent who visited the site said the bodies were subjected to "the ugliest forms of inhuman crimes", the radio added.

The loss of the Sebastopol base, where the Belbek military base is also located, would "weaken the southern frontiers of Russia," Tass said.

Perz de Cuellar said he was "deeply disappointed and disturbed" by the Burmese government's action. His statement was issued by his spokesman, Francois Giuliani.

Neither Iraq nor the United States has provided any official estimate of Iraqi deaths during the six-week war.

The day a prince sported a frock on the high seas

LONDON: King Edward VIII's youthful frolics in a frock with officers of HMS Repulse have come to light in photographs to be sold at Christie's, south Kensington, this month.

Najibullah calls for ceasefire

MOSCOW, Nov 5: Afghan President Najibullah has called for a ceasefire in Afghanistan, urging in an interview published yesterday in Pravda that weapons should be laid down prior to organising general elections under United Nations supervision, reports AFP.

Imelda building power base in Philippines

MANILA, Nov 5: Imelda Marcos flew today to her family's political stronghold in the northern Philippines in a campaign to rebuild her power base after a triumphal return from exile in the United States, reports Reuter.

400 km (250 miles) north of the capital, is expected to boost her bid for leadership of the political opposition six months ahead of the Philippine presidential election.



Manila newspapers have billed Marcos as a possible candidate in next May's election to choose the successor to President Corason Aquino, the widow who ousted the Marcoses from power in a 1986 popular revolt and drove them into exile.

hero's welcome in a nation the Marcoses are accused of plundering.

The ceasefire proposal comes ahead of a visit to Moscow on Wednesday by a delegation of Afghan Mujahideen, according to reliable Soviet sources. The visit was originally due Sunday but was postponed.

Imelda Marcos, 62-year-old widow of the late president Ferdinand Marcos, received a tumultuous welcome in Manila on Monday upon her return from nearly six years of exile in the United States to face trial on tax evasion and corruption charges.

Aquino has said she will not seek a second term. Marcos denied she had any political agenda, but asked if she would be a political king-maker, she told reporters: "When the people speak, Imelda listens."

The surging crowds of thousands that welcomed the exiles' return on Monday suggested she still had the drawing power that could make her a major player in Philippine politics, analysts said.

Imelda Marcos sang, wept and talked her way back into the hearts of many Filipinos on Monday when she received a

More than 100 years imprisonment.

Off the Record

Reagan reclaimed

SIMI VALLEY (California): President George Bush and four of his predecessors got together for a historic gathering Monday to inaugurate former President Ronald Reagan's Presidential Library, reports AFP.



The library-museum northwest of Los Angeles already contains 47 million documents and the archive could grow to 55 million part of the permanent exhibit is dedicated to Reagan's youth and his Hollywood years.

One exhibit contains a larger-than-life size exhibit of the White House Oval office hundreds of videos and photos show the highlight of his administration, such as summit meetings and the low points especially the 1981 attempt against his life by a deranged gunman.

Amidst thousands of Hollywood dignitaries Bush and his predecessors, Richard Nixon (1969-1974), Gerals Ford (1974-1977), and Jimmy Carter (1977-1981) took turns praising Reagan, who was first elected in 1980 and won reelection in 1984.

Thanks in great part to the strong idealistic leadership of President Ronald Reagan (Soviet ruler Nikita) Khrushchev's grandchildren now live in freedom, said Nixon, despite a hoarse voice.

Ford seconded the praise saying that Reagan was able to articulate the highest hopes and deepest beliefs of the American people.

Jimmy Carter, the only Democrat in the group added, under President Ronald Reagan, our nation stood strong and resolute.

Jackson's altered looks under fire

NEW YORK: Jermaine Jackson wrote a song attacking his brother Michel Jackson for altering his looks then softened the lyrics for a new album. The first version is airing, however, on New York and Los Angeles radio stations, reports AP.

The timing seems apropos: Michael Jackson's new single "Black and White" from his upcoming "Dangerous" album also was apparently leaked to radio stations last weekend.

It comes on the heels of sister LaToya's poison pen book about the Jackson family, in which she accuses her father of sexual abuse.

The original version of "Word to the Badd" was never officially released but it began playing last week on WQHT-FM in New York and its companion station KPWR-FM in Los Angeles.

Michael Jackson's song is about the irrelevance of skin color. Jermaine Jackson's tune accuses his superstar sibling of being ashamed of being black.

The softer version of Jermaine Jackson's song appears on his new album, "You Said," produced by LaFace and distributed by Arista records.



ROME: An Italian policeman presents the paper knife used in the attack against the former King Zahir Shah of Afghanistan. The King was not mortally wounded in the attack. —AFP/UNB photo

The day a prince sported a frock on the high seas

LONDON: King Edward VIII's youthful frolics in a frock with officers of HMS Repulse have come to light in photographs to be sold at Christie's, south Kensington, this month.

They show the king with wig and women's shoes in a ship-board one-act farce entitled A Bathroom Door staged as a private entertainment during his tour of West Africa and South America in 1925. The king, then Prince of Wales, played a young woman and four officers from the ship's company took supporting roles, with George Ward-Price, a journalist from the Daily Mail, who accompanied the royal party.

The trip was immensely successful. Repulse sailed down the west coast of Africa stopping at various colonies en route, arriving in Cape Town in April. The prince then toured South Africa and sailed on to Argentina before returning home in October. The prince visited 45 countries and travelled 150,000 miles on what was described as his last official overseas tour.

The photographs, which have the air of informal snaps taken when Edward was "off duty", are being sold with a programme autographed by the actors printed on stationery bearing the Prince of Wales leathers. The king signs as "Edward P".

They come from woman in Essex whose family has owned them for many years. They are expected to make up to \$400 at auction on November 15.

There is a growing market in royal memorabilia, at present much bigger outside the saleroom than inside. Beatrice Boyle of Christie's said: "Collectors will love these pictures because they are so unusual."

Bao Bao to meet Ming Ming in UK

BERLIN: Bao Bao, Germany's only male panda, will soon be off on a two-year honeymoon in Britain to mate with Whipsnade Park Zoo's Ming Ming, reports Reuter.

The mates of both pandas died recently, west Berlin Zoo Director Hans Fraedrich said, adding that the first panda born of the union would belong to Berlin.