

Israel erects new army camp in West Bank

JERUSALEM, Dec 4: The government Tuesday erected a new Military Camp on a road South of Nablus in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, under pressure from settlers after the killing of a fellow Jewish resident of the territory, reports AFP.

"Murders won't prevent us from pursuing and bolstering our settlements policy. In keeping with the testament handed down by our ancestors," Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir said.

He was referring to the death Monday of Zvi Klein, 44 from the Northern settlement of Ofra, who was shot in the head Sunday by an unidentified assailant near the Palestinian town of El-birch.

Hundreds of Israelis protested South of Nablus late Sunday, hauling with them mobile homes, and demanded the immediate building of a settlement on the spot where an Israeli woman and bus driver were shot dead a month ago.

The settlers decided to call the location Rahalim in memory of the dead woman, Rahel. The settlers' spokeswoman, in a Viniarsky, told AFP on Tuesday that Defence Minister Moshe Arens had promised to replace the Military Camp with a civilian settlements "as soon as possible."

The Minister has also given the green light for some 15 settlers in the three mobile homes to stay put, the Spokeswoman said.

"They'll form the seed of a future settlement of 150 families".

She said that since minister Yuval Neeman had visited the location and "told us the news after a meeting with Arens".

The Defence Minister himself told Israeli Radio that for the time being the camp was meant for the army corps charged with agricultural development, but declined to be more specific.

"I can't predict the future, but there are many (military) positions that become civilian settlements," he said.

His spokesman Danny Naveh said the presence of the 15 settlers was "only temporary" but did not say when they would leave.

More than 100,000 Israelis live in 146 settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip which are home to 1.7 million Palestinians. Arab States say the settlements amount to illegal seizure of their land.

Hanan Ashrawi, spokeswoman for Palestinian peace negotiators, said on Tuesday that the time had come for the United States and Soviet Union to intervene and hold Israel accountable for delays in Middle East peace talks, reports Reuter.

Ashrawi, at a news conference on the eve of a meeting Israel has said it will boycott, accused the Jewish state of playing for time in the hope of driving the peace process off course.

White House Chief of Staff resigns

MERIDIAN, Mississippi, Dec 4: White House Chief of Staff John Sununu, under increasing fire for the big slump in President George Bush's approval rating, tendered his resignation Tuesday, reports AFP.

"It is with reluctance, regret and a sense of personal loss that I accept your resignation as Chief of Staff," Bush said in a written reply to Sununu's letter of resignation.

The announcement of Sununu's departure came as Bush toured Florida and Mississippi to promote his domestic policies.

Sununu said in his letter to Bush that he believed it was in President's best interest that he resign, though until recently he had been convinced he could be an asset to the White House.

Later, en route to Washington abroad air force one, Bush spoke to reporters with Sununu at his side, praising his embattled aide and saying he had not asked for his resignation.

"It's a very compatible parting of the ways," Bush, appearing upbeat, said. "It was his decision," Bush added.

"The man has been my friend. He still is. He will be."

Sununu, speaking to reporters before air force one left, said his departure was in the interest of the President's plans to run for a second term next year. "He is going into a political campaign and he doesn't need an extra political target folks will be shooting at," Sununu said.

The resignation takes effect on December 15 but Sununu will stay on as an adviser until March 1, according to the White House.

No successor has been named, though sources have frequently mentioned transportation secretary Samuel Skinner as a likely candidate.

Sununu's troubled tenure as White House top aide faced its most difficult period recently amid mounting criticism of the administration's domestic policies.



CAPE TOWN: Four Miss World hopefuls add colour to the Cape point posing Tuesday for pictures during the runner-up to the final in Atlanta, USA later this month. From left to right, Miss Brazil Catia Kupssinsky, Miss Singapore Jasheen Jayakady, Miss Argentina Marcela Chazarreta and Miss Hungary Onsolya Anna Michina. —AFP/UNB photo

Dhaka seeks interaction among Muslim states

DAKAR, Dec 4: Chances for peace in the Middle East and Afghanistan and the aftermath of the Gulf War are to top an agenda debated here by Islamic heads of states starting December 9, reports AFP.

The sixth summit of the 42-member Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) will be preceded by a two-day meeting in the Senegalese capital of OIC foreign ministers beginning tomorrow.

Officials at the Jeddah-based OIC said the summit would also focus on the 17-year-old division of Cyprus, the Indian-Pakistani conflict over Kashmir and the status of Muslims in the southern Philippines.

Muslim leaders will tackle

developments in South Africa, the situation in war-stricken Somalia and a sovereignty dispute involving the Comoros island of Mayotte.

"The thrust of this summit will be greater interaction among the Muslim states", Bangladesh Foreign Minister Mustafizur Rahman declared before heading for Senegal.

US President George Bush last month urged the OIC to "use its influence in favour of the Middle East peace conference that Washington and Moscow are co-sponsoring."

Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990 — which prevented an OIC summit from taking place last December — will also be a focal point for discussion.

Kuwait, which hosted the

last OIC summit in 1987, and its Gulf partners will seek Islamic condemnation of Iraq.

Kuwaiti authorities are in addition insisting that Baghdad comply with three demands: war reparations, the return of more than 2,000 prisoners of war and the demarcation of the Iraq-Kuwait border.

Baghdad is expected to plead for compassion for its beleaguered population, suffering from food and medicine shortages as a result of an international trade embargo against Iraq that is now in its 17th month.

Press reports from Baghdad said a senior Iraqi delegation would attend the four-day summit but have not revealed if President Saddam Hussein would head the team.

Mujahideen unity a must for political settlement: Sharif

ISLAMABAD, Dec 4: Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has urged Afghan mujahideen leaders to cooperate with the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Conference to reach an early political settlement, reports Xinhua.

Local press reports said today, during his meeting with mujahideen leaders in Prime Minister's house on Tuesday, Nawaz Sharif said complete unity among the mujahideen was essential for the purpose.

The Afghan leaders briefed Nawaz Sharif of their recent visit to Moscow and said it was

successful.

Pakistan Prime Minister lauded the efforts being made for a political settlement of the problem. He asked the mujahideen leaders to go with him to Dakar, Senegal, where they have been invited to meet heads of states and governments of Muslim countries. They will be there to attend the summit of the Organization of Islamic Conference.

The Afghan mujahideen leaders at the meeting were Sibghatullah Mujaddedi, President of the the Afghan Interim Government of mujahideen (AIG) based in

Pakistan, Burhanuddin Rabbani, Acting Foreign Minister of AIG, Maulvi Mohammad Nabi, Chief of the National Islamic Front of Afghanistan, Syed Ahmed Gailani, head of the Afghan National Liberation Front, Gulbuddin Hikmatyia, head of Hezb-I-Islami of Afghanistan and several other leaders of mujahideen groups.

The same group of mujahideen leaders met Pakistan President Golam Ishaq Khan on Tuesday. The president also urged them to seize the opportunity, to work for a political settlement that would bring peace to their country.



DILI (East Timor): East Timorese youths seen learning skills at a technical institute set up by the New Order Government of President Soeharto. The Indonesian President has directed different Ministries to undertake projects to develop East Timor.

Men behind East Timor violence to be punished

JAKARTA, Dec 4: Indonesia will punish the instigators of East Timor violence in accordance with the rule of law and Pancasila upon which the Republic is based, Minister and State Secretary Moerdiono has said, reports Antara.

The Indonesian government regretted that the incident took place, which has caused casualties both among civilians and members of the security apparatus. Aside from the victims, the Government also noted with deep concern the evidence of pre-mediated provocations by certain elements which sparked the bloody incident.

President Soeharto has instructed that the investigation on this matter be conducted meticulously and that it be co-ordinated in the best possible way. For this purpose, a National Investigation Commission has been established, chaired by a Supreme Court Judge, with members from the Department of Home Affairs, Department of Foreign Affairs, Department of Justice, Armed Forces headquarters as well as from Parliament and Supreme Advisory Council. The Commission is to conduct a thorough investigation on all aspects of the incident and the results would be announced in due time.

Israel uses electric shock to extract confession from prisoners

JERUSALEM, Dec 4: Israeli interrogators have used electric shock torture to extract confessions from prisoners in the occupied territories, a Palestinian human rights group charged on Tuesday, reports Reuter.

The Palestine Human Rights Information Centre, a group linked to leading Palestinian nationalist Faisal Al-Husseini, said it had documented eight cases this year, all in the occupied West Bank city of Hebron.

Israeli secret police have been officially authorised to use "moderate" physical pressure to extract information. Most Palestinian prisoners are convicted on the basis of confessions.

27,000 Yugoslavs seek asylum in Germany

BONN, Dec 4: More than 27,000 Yugoslavs have applied for political asylum in Germany in the past two months, according to figures published Tuesday by the office for the recognition of foreign refugees, reports AFP.

The number of refugees fleeing the four-month civil war was given in statistics on applications for political asylum here over the past 11 months.

The figure for that period — 232,487 — is already higher than the total for 1990, which was 193,063.

However, only 7.2 per cent (10,867 persons) of the 152,013 cases adjudged so far have been granted asylum the office said.

The issue of asylum-seekers has become a hot potato in German politics, amid increased public concern over immigration and highlighted by right-wing mob attacks on immigrants.

In response, the ruling coalition and opposition parties have agreed on new measures to cut to six weeks the period whereby an asylum application is accepted or rejected.

Mujahideen reject proposal of coalition govt

ISLAMABAD, Dec 4: Rasool Sayyaf, Prime Minister of the Afghan Interim Government (AIG) of Mujahideen, has rejected the proposal of setting up a coalition government in Kabul, reports Xinhua.

In a press statement published here today, Sayyaf alleged that in such circumstances both Washington and Moscow would have a free hand in nominating their own people on the basis of mutual consultations.

Sayyaf said that the United States for obvious reasons could not tolerate the formation of an Islamic government in Afghanistan. He charged that the recent trip of Afghan mujahideen delegation to Moscow was undertaken as a result of American pressure.

Top Sikh leader killed in shootout with police

NEW DELHI, Dec 4: A top Sikh militant wanted for involvement in scores of separatist attacks in Punjab was killed in a shootout with police in the northern Indian state, the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported today, says AFP.

Balwinder Singh, identified as Deputy Chief of the Khalistan Liberation Force (KLF), was travelling on a truck packed with weapons when he was intercepted by a security patrol on a highway in the Amritsar region late Tuesday, PTI said.

Militants riding with Singh on the truck did not stop and opened fire on the police patrol, sparking the shootout which resulted in his death, PTI said.

His body was later found in the truck, but there was no word on whether his associates escaped or were arrested. Security forces also discovered 10 AK-47 assault rifles and several other weapons and ammunition on the vehicle.

Singh, who was known by the alias Ghora(horse), was wanted for scores of separatist strikes in the rural district centred on the Sikh holy city of Amritsar, PTI said.

His group is one of the most active in the militant fighting for a separate Sikh homeland called Khalistan (land of the pure) in Punjab, a rich farming state bordering Pakistan.

Off the Record

What can we learn from Elvis?

CHICAGO: Who are we? Why are we here? Where are we going? And what can we learn from Elvis?

A philosophy professor is taking up such age-old questions in The Meaning of Life, a quarterly newsletter to help others think deep thoughts, reports AP.

"I'm hoping that by writing about it, I'll keep people's interest alive... and they'll find some help for themselves, and make the most out of their short, brief lives," said Loyola University Professor Robert Lichtenbert, who has been publishing the newsletter for almost four years.

About 50 people subscribe to the 10-a-year newsletter, including other educators, libraries, students and philosophy buffs, Lichtenbert said Thursday.

In 16 pages they get essays on such topics as "abstract art and the meaning of life," "values and meaning" and "finding meaning in love."

Each issue closes with "nuggets of meaning," a selection of one or two-sentence thoughts.

The 45-year-old professor conceded Elvis Presley "seems like an unlikely philosopher."

"He is nevertheless, in a strong sense an existentialist because he was very alienated from society and did feel a sense of the absurd and anxiety in his dark side," Lichtenbert wrote in his summer 1991 issue.

Lichtenbert started the newsletter during a slow period in his academic career. It's now a break-even proposition, with his wife producing the copies on equipment at the law firm where she works.

Subscriber Frank Agutlar, 54, said The Meaning of Life has been a boon since he lost his engineering job several months ago.

"To listen to Bob Lichtenbert has been very helpful in keeping my emotional mind working and challenged," Agutlar said.

Hugh Moorhead, chairman of Northeastern Illinois University philosophy department, whose writings have been quoted in the newsletter, said Lichtenbert has "added insight into possible responses to that ultimate question."

So what is the meaning of life, according to Lichtenbert? "In general, the meaning of life is to make the greatest social contribution you can and enjoy your own life fully, too," he said.

Actress arrested for jewel theft

PARIS: Actress Beatrice Dalle, star of the cult film 'Betty Blue,' will appear in court next month on suspicion of jewel theft, judicial sources reported Tuesday, says AP.

Dalle was arrested Friday after she allegedly stole bracelets, necklaces and rings from a jewelry wholesaler and stuffing them down her thigh-high boots, the sources said, declining to be identified.

Police held Dalle in custody for several hours before releasing her on bail, the sources said. The jewels had an estimated value of 25,000 francs (4,540 dollars).

Dalle's performance in Jean-Jacques Beineix's 1985 film as a troubled teenager who has a tragic love affair with an older man won her wide critical acclaim.

She complained about the loss of privacy that accompanied her success. Troubled by her image as a sex symbol, Dalle has made only a handful of films since.

The latest, 'Night on Earth' by American director Jim Jarmush, concerns the trials of a young blind woman.

Elton John tops the British chart

LONDON: Elton John and George Michael's single, 'Don't Let The Sun Go Down On Me,' topped the British Top Ten chart for a second week running, reports AP.

Michael Jackson's hit 'Black or White' held on to its no. 2 spot for the second week running and Diana Ross retained the no. 3 spot on the chart with her single, 'When You Tell Me That You Love Me.'

KLF's single 'Justified and Ancient' moved down one spot to the no. 5 position, swapping places with East Side Beat's single 'Ride Like the Wind.'

This week's top 10 singles, as listed by Our Price Music Ltd, the national music retail chain, with last week's places in parentheses.

- (1) Don't Let The Sun Go Down On Me — Elton John/George Michael — Sony.
- (2) Black or White — Michael Jackson — Epic.
- (3) When You Tell Me That You Love Me — Diana Ross — EMI.
- (5) Ride Like the Wind — East Side Beat — EMI.
- (4) Justified and Ancient — KLF — RTM/APT.
- (6) Dizzy — Vic Reeves and the Wonder Stuff — Sense/Island.
- (10) Activ 8 (Come With Me) — Altern 8 — Network.
- (7) Playing With Knives — Bizarre Inc — Southern.
- (9) Get Ready for This — 2 Unlimited — PWL.
- (-) Smells Like Teen Spirit — Nirvana — DGC.

Elected parliament to rule Mongolia

ULAN BATOR, Dec 4: Mongolian legislators, forging a new constitution to legalise a switch from communism to democracy last year, have decided the country should be ruled by a single-chamber, elected parliament, reports Reuter.

Official Mongolian Television News said late on Tuesday that 82 per cent of the communist dominated Upper House of parliament had voted for the new clause in the constitution.

It will be put to a second vote later, but this is generally considered a formality.

The change means that Mongolia will need to stage elections, widely expected by mid-1992, to fill the new parliament.

It also means that the current bi-cameral parliament, the 427-member Great People's Hural and the 52-member Small Hural, will be disbanded.

The new chamber will have 66 members. Initially several delegates at the Great People's Hural opposed the new single chamber.

BRIEFLY

Sihanouk cancels visit to Vietnam: Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the head of Cambodia's reconciliation body, has cancelled a planned visit to Vietnam, Cambodian and diplomatic sources said here Wednesday, reports AFP from Thailand.

The prince, who is the chairman of the Supreme National Council (SNC) of rival Cambodian factions, was to make an official visit to Vietnam later this month.

He also cancelled a visit to Laos, which was to take place immediately after his trip to Vietnam.

Cheney to visit Hungary, Prague: Defence Secretary Dick Cheney heads for Hungary and Czechoslovakia next week marking the first time a Pentagon chief has visited those countries, officials said Tuesday, reports AFP from Washington.

Cheney will attend Saturday's ceremonies in Hawaii for the 50th anniversary of the bombing of Pearl Harbor and then travel to Budapest, where he will meet with senior officials from December 8 to the 10th, according to spokesman Pete Williams.

The Secretary will then meet with officials in Prague December 10-11, and end his trip in Brussels where he will attend a meeting of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.

Hafez Al-Assad re-elected: Hafez Al-Assad was re-elected to a fourth seven-year term as Syrian President with an overwhelming 99.14 per cent of the vote, Interior Minister Mohammad Harba announced Tuesday, reports AFP.

Harba said 6,726,843 Syrians voted "yes" for Assad, the sole candidate of the ruling Baath Party — out of the 6,786,193 registered voters — 396 voted against him and 753 cast blank ballots.

Syria has a population of 14 million. Assad's third term ends on March 12, elected in 1970 and re-elected in 1978 and 1985, he is already the longest-serving President in the Middle East.

Iraq destroys 32 Scud launchers: UN ballistic weapons experts have supervised the destruction of 32 fixed scud missile launchers in western Iraq and 28 concrete sites designed for the same use, a UN official announced here Tuesday, reports AFP from Baghdad.

Patric Palanqui of France, head of the 11-member ballistics team that arrived in Iraq on Sunday, told reporters on his return to the capital that the work was carried out Monday and Tuesday.

United Nations resolution 687, passed after the Gulf War, calls for the elimination of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction and its long-range missiles that were used to attack Saudi Arabia and Israel during the conflict.

Austria to recognise Slovenia, Croatia: Austria will recognise the independence of Slovenia and Croatia by Christmas, Austrian Foreign Minister Alois Mock announced Tuesday, reports AFP.

Mock told a news conference during a brief visit to Bonn that he was "convinced" that Italy, Germany, Belgium, Denmark and some non-European community countries would take a similar step.

The two Yugoslav republics, which were part of the Austro-Hungarian empire until 1918, declared independence on June 25.

Ghali sees no development without democracy

UNITED NATIONS, Dec 4: Egyptian Deputy Prime Minister Boutros Boutros Ghali was sworn in on Tuesday as UN Secretary-General from January 1 and pledged to work for international peace and security and to foster development and democracy, reports Reuter.

In a speech to the General Assembly, which appointed him by acclamation, the 69-year-old Ghali promised to follow "an active, preventive diplomacy, with a view to monitoring developments of crisis, and devising adequate means to defuse them and prevent their escalation."

He also stressed the UN role in strengthening fundamental freedoms and democ-

different emphases, Ghali declared: "If there is no development without democracy, there can also be no democracy without development."

"Although it is difficult to determine, whether to start with development in order to obtain democracy or to begin democracy in order to achieve development, it is obvious that the guarantee of fundamental freedoms and the protection of human rights constitute a prerequisite that the United Nations must promote."

But, with an eye to the political turmoil attending the breakdown of dictatorship in eastern Europe and elsewhere, he said democracy must not be seen as a magic potion which would cure all ills.