

## Hindu-Muslim riots in 7 Indian cities: 2 killed

NEW DELHI, Sept 24: Two people were killed and scores injured in Hindu-Muslim riots in seven Indian cities during religious festivals of the two communities, reports AFP.

The deaths occurred Monday in Beilgaum and Hyderabad, in the adjoining southern states of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh respectively triggering arson and further violence in the two major cities, newspapers here reported.

Both states are governed by Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao's Congress (I) party, and the historic Muslim dominated Hyderabad city is a known communal flashpoint.

An unidentified youth died of head injuries in Beilgaum while 35 others including several policemen, were injured when Hindus and Muslims attacked each other with stones

and other missiles, The Times of India said.

Mobs also went on an arson spree, damaging some 20 shops and vehicles.

In Hyderabad, three voluntary policemen known as home guards were stabbed when they were in plain clothes, and one died while being taken to hospital, the newspaper said.

Police immediately banned assemblies of more than four people and stepped up security measures as reports of Hindu-Muslim clashes came in from five other places as well.

Communal clashes were reported Sunday and Monday from Gulbarga, also in Karnataka, Jaipur city, in the country's north, and Naswadi and Dabhot towns in the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh.

## Manila shelves plan to convert US base into airport

MANILA, Sept 24: The Philippines has shelved plans to convert a major US air base into Manila's international airport for at least five years because a nearby volcano makes it unsafe to operate, a senior official said today, reports Reuter.

The June eruption of Mount Pinatubo volcano has forced the Manila to scale back a 2.4 billion dollar plan to convert Clark Air Base and near by Subic Bay naval dockyard to civilian use after US forces withdraw.

The United States is abandoning Clark, previously the headquarters of the US 13th Air Force, after ash from the Pinatubo eruption flattened dozens of buildings and made the base unusable.

The United States planned to hand over Clark to the Philippine government by the end of the year, Delfin Lazro, chairman of a special team set up by President Corason Aquino to oversee conversion of the bases, told reporters.

## Israel kills 3 Palestinians

JERUSALEM, Sept 24: An Israeli patrol killed three Palestinian commandos Sunday as they tried to enter Israel from Syria the army announced Monday, reports AFP.

In Beirut, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) claimed responsibility for the attack saying in a statement the one of its commando units had attacked at dawn Monday an Israeli observation post in the border region of mount Hermon, but did not specify if the operation caused casualties.

The Israeli army said there were no Israeli casualties in the encounter, which took place on Syrian territory on mount Hermon near the Syrian-Israeli ceasefire line in an area controlled by the United Nations.

## Journalist stabbed in Karachi

KARACHI, Sept 24: A Pakistani journalist was stabbed and wounded outside his office in Karachi on Monday by attackers who threatened him over recent critical reports he has written about local authorities, reports Reuter.

Kamran Khan, a reporter for the English-language daily The News, said from hospital two men on a motorcycle approached him as he left his car and tried to stab him in the heart.

The journalist said he fended off the attack with his forearm, which was badly cut.

Khan told reporters he had previously received threats over his articles about authorities in Sind province, of which Karachi is the capital, and these threats were repeated by his assailants on Monday.

# Bush moves to assure Israel of continued support

## PLO negotiating with Israel indirectly

ALGIERS, Sept 24: The PLO is negotiating indirectly with Israel to allow Palestinian leaders from the Israeli-occupied territories to speak via satellite to the parliament-in-exile in Algiers, delegates said on Monday, reports Reuter.

There is a possibility they could speak to us via satellite. Negotiations are still under way, one delegate told Reuter.

He did not say who was mediating between Israel and the PLO or which Palestinian leaders would be involved in the satellite link.

Israel refuses to deal directly with the Palestine Liberation Organisation, which it considers a terrorist group.

Some 480 Palestinians have seats in the Palestine National Council (PNC), an arm of the

PLO. Israel has refused to allow 186 from the occupied territories to attend the meeting.

PLO chairman Yasser Arafat attacked the Israeli ban in a speech to the council, describing it as an example of the Jewish state's stubbornness.

The PNC is meeting for the first time since 1988 to discuss whether Palestinians should attend a Middle East peace talks the United States and the Soviets want to convene next month.

In Jerusalem, the government denied an Israeli radio report that Faisal Al Hussein and Hanan Ashrawi, two key Palestinian leaders from the territories, had been allowed to attend the meeting.

There is no basis to the report that Israel allowed their participation in the meeting. If they are there, legal steps will be taken against them according to the law, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's spokesman Ehud Gol said.

Hussein's aides declined to comment on his whereabouts but both are known to be abroad.

Israel radio quoted an unnamed Palestinian source as saying the United States had put pressure on Israel to let Hussein and Ashrawi leave.

The radio quoted the source as saying Hussein and Ashrawi would urge the PNC to back the peace conference.

AFP from New York adds: President George Bush attempted to assure Israel of continued US support Monday when he called on the UN General Assembly to repeal its 16 year old resolution equating Zionism with racism.

The expected move was perceived in diplomatic circles as a way to mollify Israel after its dispute with the White House over the settlement of the occupied territories.

The so called Zionism is racism resolution mocks the principles upon which the United Nations was founded and I call now for its repeal, the president told the 46th UN General Assembly.



ALGIERS: Palestinian Liberation Organisation leader Yasser Arafat calls for a point of order during debates on the question of Palestinian representation to the proposed Middle East peace conference at a PLO National Council meeting here September 23. Arafat pledged that his organisation would contribute to the success of the conference but rejected Israeli blackmail. —AFP/ UNB photo

## Iraq forcibly takes back nuclear 'blueprint' from UN team

BAGHDAD, Sept 24: A UN nuclear inspection team said on Monday a "blueprint" of Iraq's nuclear programme was taken from it by force, but Baghdad said it acted because the group refused to record and give a receipt for documents it had seized, reports Reuter.

The row erupted after the 45-member nuclear mission made a short-notice dawn visit to a central Baghdad building which Iraq had not declared as part of its nuclear weapons programme. Team

leader David Kay said they found a virtual treasure trove of papers related to Iraq's nuclear capability, including methods of material production they had not previously come across.

But, in a five hour dispute with Iraqi officials, they were prevented from leaving the walled and guarded compounds around the building with the papers.

The Iraqi authorities forcefully detained the mission, denying the right to leave the facility with the material

and at the end forcibly removed, under strong protest, the material from our vehicles, Kay said.

An Iraqi Foreign Ministry spokesman disputed the team's version of events, which followed a dispute between the United Nations and Baghdad over the use of helicopters by inspectors verifying the scrapping of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction under the terms of the Gulf war ceasefire.

At the United Nations in New York, US President George Bush told the General Assembly that Iraq was rebuilding its weapons of mass destruction and said there would be no compromise with Baghdad over inspection of its facilities.

The Iraqi Foreign Ministry spokesman said in a statement that Iraq agreed to the UN team's request to take the documents "provided that the delivery process was documented and receipts issued to register the documents taken by the team."

He said Iraq had not breached its obligations under UN Security Council resolutions, which order it to declare and destroy all its weapons of mass destruction.

He said it was within Iraq's right to register the documents taken "so as to check against any possibility that falsified papers are inserted among the original documents."

"This is all that Iraqi authorities demanded, but the inspection team did not accept this Iraqi demand which is a right already agreed with all inspection teams," he said.



ISLAMABAD: Children give a bouquet of flowers of Princess of Wales Diana upon her arrival at Syed Academy for impaired children in Rawalpindi September 23. Diana is on a four-day visit to Pakistan her first trip an Islamic country. —AFP/ UNB photo

## BRIEFLY

### Croats begin lifting blockades

Croatian forces began lifting blockades of Yugoslav army bases on Monday as a ceasefire in the Balkan Federation held despite a series of violations, reports Reuter from Zagreb.

Tanjug News Agency said Croatian authorities started restoring electricity and water to besieged barracks under the terms of Sunday's truce. But it quoted military sources saying "very many" bases were still besieged.

The army cited the blockades and attacks on its barracks as its reason for launching a massive Army, Navy and Airforce offensive against Croatia last Friday. Major fighting was halted by the ceasefire.

Relative calm prevailed in most of the country after weeks of battles, despite the ceasefire violations which included an air raid and an alleged assault by army tanks on a Croatian village.

### British hostage to be released soon

Pro-Iranian kidnappers, in a statement with a photograph of US hostage Joseph Cicippio, said Tuesday they would release British hostage Jack Mann within 48 hours, reports Reuter from Beirut.

"We announce to the (UN) Secretary-General (Javier Perez de Cuellar) that his march in the useful ways has yielded a result and his intensive efforts have become fruitful... we will release within 48 hours British pilot Jack Mann," said a statement by the revolutionary Justice Organisation sent to An-Nahar newspaper.

### Rebels reject ceasefire in Negros

The governor of Negros Occidental province declared a 10-day ceasefire Tuesday in the war with Communist rebels and offered to hold local peace talks. The insurgents spurned the move, reports AP from Philippines.

The region's military commander said he would cooperate and suspend attacks on Communist New People's Army guerrillas operating in the province, located on Negros Island, 495 kilometers (310 miles) south of Manila.

The move followed Sunday's withdrawal by the rebels of their own nationwide unilateral ceasefire after President Corason Aquino withdrew her government's notice terminating the US bases agreement.

Gov. Daniel Lacson said the ceasefire will give a chance to about 1,000 rebels on Negros to come down from the hills and give up their arms.

### Sayeh re-elected PNC president

Sheikh Abdul Hamid al-Sayeh, President of the Palestinian National Council (PNC), was re-elected to the post late Monday, official Palestinian sources said, reports AFP from Algiers.

Two hundred and thirty-eight of the 413 members of the PNC voted for Sheikh Sayeh following a five-hour debate behind closed doors.

The current session of the PNC, which opened Monday, is to discuss US proposals to hold a Middle East peace conference in October.

Sheikh Sayeh, who is 85, announced in Amman several days ago he had no intention to ask for his own re-election given his advanced age.

### Kashmiri militant leader arrested

Indian security forces arrested a leader of separatist militants in troubled Jammu and Kashmir state and Muslim guerrillas hit back by kidnapping a relative of a senior minister, police said on Monday, reports Reuter from Srinagar.

They said their paramilitary forces picked up a self-styled general of the Hizb-ul-Mujahideen guerrillas, known as Moosa, on the outskirts of Srinagar. They did not say when he was seized.

Militants, in an apparent retaliation for current army operations in the state, kidnapped a close relative of India's Parliamentary Affairs Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad on Sunday.

Police said militants of the Al-Omer Muslim guerrilla group kidnapped Tasadduq Dev, younger brother of Azad's wife, from his Srinagar home.

Azad is himself a Kashmiri Muslim.

### Armenia, Azerbaijan agree on truce

Armenia and Azerbaijan on Monday agreed to an immediate ceasefire and the disarmament of armed groups in the disputed Nagorny Karabakh region, a member of the Kazakh Mission who brokered the accord along with Russian officials said, reports AFP from Russia.

Leaders of the two republics meeting in this southern Russian city also decided to repeal "unconstitutional acts," adopted in the Nagorny Karabakh dispute, Marat Auyezov said.

### Soviet n-arms worry UK

Soviet nuclear weapons remain a big worry for Britain and its allies during the turbulence in the Soviet Union, British Defence Minister Tom King said on Monday, reports Reuter from Singapore.

Our immediate worry, along with all the people in the Soviet Union is who will have custody of the massive nuclear arsenal that they have, King said in a speech to senior Singapore military officers.

King said British Prime Minister John Major discussed the problem with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and Russian republic's President Boris Yeltsin on his recent trip to Moscow.

We have received certain assurances about the steps that have been taken and the actions that were taken over both the technical and physical command and control arrangements over nuclear weapons.

But this is going to be a continuing problem, King said.

### Four army divisions moved to Assam

Four army divisions moved into Assam state in northeast India on Monday and an army official monitoring a week-long anti-Maoist military campaign said a massive operation appeared imminent, reports Reuter from Dibrugarh.

"We are waiting for a go-ahead to start the final crackdown," the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

"So far we have probed and attacked specific targets," he said, adding that militants of the Maoist United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) had not released six hostages they were holding, despite repeated warnings.

The ULFA postponed a Sunday deadline to execute the six, who include three oil workers. A spokesman for the militant group told reporters the deadline was extended in response to appeals from the hostages' families.

The ULFA is fighting for Assam's independence from India and says New Delhi exploits its oil and tea resources.

## Off the Record



PUNTADELGADA (Argentina): A oil-soaked Magellan penguin stands September 15 by another which escaped an unlocated oil slick which floats off the coast of Argentina. More than 1,000 penguins have been found dead in the last several weeks in this area after being contaminated by the oil spill. —AFP/ UNB photo

## 'Ganashatru' best Bengali film

CALCUTTA: Satyajit Ray's "Ganashatru" has been adjudged best Bengali film for 1990 by the Ritwik Ghatak Smriti Puraskar Samity, reports PTI.

A Press release of the Samity said that Tapas Pal and Satabdi Roy had been selected as the best actor and actress for the film "Apan Amar Apan" and "Abhimannu" respectively.

It said that Nabendu Chatterjee would receive the award for best direction in "Parashuramer Kutuhar" while director actress Aparna Sen had been selected as best story writer in "Sati."

The release also said that Usha Uthup and Shibaji Chatterjee had been selected as best playback singers for "Baldan" and "Chetana" respectively.

## Not really a Mickey Mouse picture

LONDON: Four London men have been jailed for trying to sell a 16th century painting worth three million pounds (5.2 million dollars) back to the gallery it was stolen from, reports AP.

Used car dealer Stanley Dee and his accomplices, however, were not impressed by Pieter Brueghel's "Christ and the Woman Taken in Adultery" — passed on to them in 1990 from the London underworld because it was too well-known to sell. "It was a Mickey Mouse picture. I thought it was a load of rubbish," police witnesses at Dee's trial quoted him as saying after his arrest.

The painting, dated 1565, had been snatched from the Courtauld Institute in west London eight years previously.

The four men, who pleaded guilty Monday to handling stolen property, were sentenced by Judge Denis Paiba to jail terms ranging between 30 and 36 months.

Dee said he had no idea of the value of the painting until he showed it to an art expert, who fainted when he recognized it.

## Poverty in London

LONDON: Young people sleeping rough on the streets huddled in sleeping bags and inside cardboard boxes have become a common sight on the streets of the British capital, reports AFP.

But while these visibly homeless number an estimated 2,300, the city's buildings conceal the larger scale misery of the homeless trapped in temporary accommodation, often in so-called "bed and breakfast" hotels.

These hotels, lodging tens of thousands of homeless nationwide, have nothing to do with the popular tourist image of cosy, homely, family-run places.

"They are squalid, overcrowded and expensive," says Sarah Mosely of the national campaign for the homeless, Shelter. "Conditions in most of them are appalling, with whole families in one room... and one kitchen and bathroom for up to ten families. Prostitution and drug-taking is rife. Some families are too terrified to go outside their door," said social worker Sheila Laslette-O'Brien.

The rooms are typically piled up with people's possessions, clothes in black plastic sacks, the wardrobe doubling as a food cupboard. Cockroaches are common, people find them in their babies' cots," she said.

## Little has changed in Moscow

MOSCOW: Around People's Street, near the Kremlin, last month's failed coup and the momentous political changes of the past five years have done little to alter daily life, reports AP.

Some local evils have vanished: the Agitpunkt, or Communist Party propaganda point; the board for party slogans and pictures of heroes of labour; the rat-infested floating restaurants on the nearby Moskova river.

But for the average consumer, life is worse. Bakery No 121 still has the same proud posters telling Soviets to save bread "as if it were a member of the family" and to honour it "not as a gift of nature, but a symbol of our labour."

Yet there's precious little choice of bread these days, and prices are three to four times what they were last fall. It takes 10 minutes to buy a tasteless 70 cent bun of dough spread with sticky jam.

Up the hill, among fine brick apartment blocks locally known as the "sovminkvye doma" (government houses), the food store is a shock.

Where shelves once stood empty, now there are no shelves at all. In one corner, a little bread was for sale. On another counter, there was sausage and rancid butter.

The word... to get — always loomed large in shortage-plagued Soviet life. Now, the search for food is more urgent than ever, and triple-digit annual inflation drives a new, constant quest for money.

# Evacuation of asylum seekers from East Germany begins

BONN, Sept 24: Officials have begun to evacuate foreign workers and asylum-seekers from an East German industrial town, after nearly a week of riots right-wing crowds demanding the foreigners leave, reports Reuter.

The refugees include Africans, Asians and East Europeans.

Kurt Biedenkopf, Prime Minister of the State of Saxony in former East Germany, said police could no longer protect some 250 refugees and dozens of foreign workers whose hostels in the town of Hoyerswerda have been attacked nightly.

But he added, in a German television interview: "I don't think we should call moving out the foreigners and asylum seekers a capitulation by politicians."

The Hoyerswerda riots topped a string of attacks and arson bombing of foreign refugee centres, mainly in East Germany.

Chancellor Helmut Kohl's conservative government reacted on Monday by condemning the violence but also calling for a tightening of Germany's liberal asylum laws.

Saxony police told reporters right-wing youths were threatening to continue their

attacks on the two hostels until all foreigners had left.

Violence at the two apartment blocks peaked at the weekend when crowds led by what police called a "hard core" of 30 to 50 skinhead youths pelted police lines with stones and petrol bombs.

Police used truncheons, guard dogs and water cannon to drive back the attackers, who throughout the week were cheered on by some local residents.

Police said 33 people were arrested on Sunday night and six people were injured. On Monday evening, German television showed

dozens of Africans, Asians and Eastern Europeans packing luggage aboard a line of buses under police protection before being driven to other hostels or military barracks in the region.

"We decided on this step after long consideration because we had great difficulty in protecting the people and we were not sure whether we could calm down the heated-up atmosphere fast enough," Biedenkopf said.

Violence against foreign workers and refugees has risen sharply in Eastern Germany since unity with the west last year crippled ex-communist

industry and sent the joblessness rate soaring to nearly 40 per cent.

In Bonn, the Opposition Social Democrats (SPD) accused the government of "cowardly silence" over an unabated wave of violence against foreigners seeking asylum in Germany.

Deputy SPD leader Hertha Däubler-Gmelin charged the ruling Christian Democrats (CDU) were using the attacks in a campaign to change Bonn's liberal laws on asylum and stem the flow of refugees. "High-ranking (CDU) politicians have so far maintained a

cowardly silence," Däubler-Gmelin said in a radio interview.

"It is terribly annoying and repulsive that the CDU is engaged in an election campaign on the backs of people who cannot defend themselves," she said.

Faced with an expected record 200,000 foreigners seeking asylum this year, Chancellor Helmut Kohl wants to amend the liberal asylum guidelines written into the Bonn constitution as a reaction to the racist policies of the Nazi third Reich.