

## BRIEFLY

**Boris Pankin leaves for Israel:** Soviet Foreign Minister Boris Pankin flies to Israel Thursday on the first leg of a tour to help remove obstacles to a US-Soviet sponsored Middle East peace conference planned for the end of this month, reports Reuter from Moscow.

Pankin will meet US Secretary of State James Baker on Friday to discuss that peace conference and have talks with Israeli leaders on restoring full diplomatic relations.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir has demanded Moscow renew ties, severed over the 1967 Middle East war, if it wants to sponsor peace talks.

US President George Bush and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev hope to hold the conference by the end of October and invitations could be sent out this weekend.

But outstanding problems remain, notably over Palestinian representation at the peace conference.

**'Palestinians may take part in talks':** US Secretary of State James Baker emerged from three hours of talks with prominent Palestinians here Wednesday to say he was "optimistic" about the chances of forming a Palestinian delegation for Middle East peace talks, reports AFP from Tel Aviv.

Meanwhile, US officials sought to play down an apparent setback to the peace process, when Syrian officials told Baker in Damascus that their country would not take part in the whole of the planned peace conference.

Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq Al-Shara said his country would stay away from a multilateral phase of the planned conference unless its positions were taken into account.

This was a reference to Syria's demand for the return of the Golan Heights, which Israel seized from it in 1967 and has since annexed.

The statement brought immediate accusations from Israel. "This attitude proves that Syria does not want peace," a spokesman for Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir said.

**Prison uprising leaves 12 dead:** A prison uprising in northern Venezuela left 12 people dead Wednesday, as inmates seized control of most of the buildings in the compound, radio Rumbos reported in Caracas, reports AFP.

Some 20 prisoners may have fled the facility in San Juan de Los Morros, 100 kilometers (60 miles) southwest of the capital, and national guard officers reportedly had moved on the city in an effort to capture the escapes, the radio said.

Prisoners complaints about poor treatment and overcrowding at the jail were likely to have sparked the rebellion which began early Wednesday, radio Rumbos added.

Inmates have demanded that President Carlos Andres Perez and Justice Minister Alfredo Ducharme come to the scene to hear their demands, and were rejecting attempts by other officials seeking to mediate in the standoff, the radio said.

**Hosni Mubarak in Germany:** President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt arrived in Bonn Wednesday for a two-day working visit in which he will review the Middle East peace process with German leaders, German officials said, reports AFP from Bonn.

Mubarak was greeted by President Richard von Weizsaecker.

Mubarak meets with Chancellor Helmut Kohl Thursday for talks on the outlook for peace and with Economy Minister Juergen Moellmann to discuss trade and economic cooperation.

Egypt is one of the biggest recipients of German aid: It has received 5.5 billion marks (3.2 billion dollars) so far in grants and soft loans.

**30 feared killed in landslide:** At least 30 people were feared killed in a landslide in Guwahati city, capital of India's northeastern Assam state, the Press Trust of India (PTI) news agency reported on Wednesday, says Reuter from New Delhi.

PTI, quoting rescuers, said six bodies had been removed from the debris since Monday when the landslide occurred near a hill in the Ganeshpuri area of the city. Many more were feared trapped under the debris, it said.

**Five killed in Mujahideen attack:** Guerrillas fighting the Afghan government fired rockets into the eastern town of Mehtarlam on Wednesday, killing five people and wounding 16, the official Kabul radio said, reports Reuter from Islamabad.

The attack by surface-to-surface missiles on the Laghman province capital also severely damaged 30 houses, four public utility buildings and three cars, said the broadcast monitored in the Pakistani capital of Islamabad.

## 22 shot dead in Texas: killer commits suicide

KILLEEN, Texas, Oct 17: A man rammed his truck Wednesday through a cafeteria window, shot dead 22 people and wounded 20 others before committing suicide, in the worst mass killing in US history, authorities said, reports AFP.

Cafeteria porter Sheldon Smith said that after the truck crashed through the window, the gunman jumped out and yelled, "this is what Bell County has done to me."

"As he opened fire, the guy that he ran over with the truck was trying to get up and he shot him. Then he pointed toward the line where the service was and he started shooting down the line," Smith said.

The man, who opened fire with a semiautomatic pistol on the lunchtime crowd, then went into the cafeteria toilets and turned the gun on himself, committing suicide, authorities said.

"I'm not sure he committed suicide. The police may have helped him," said Robert Stubblefield, Bell County Justice of the Peace, adding that the gunman's body was covered in blood.

Police said 23 people were

shot dead—including the gunman—in Luby's Cafeteria and 20 others were wounded after the man drove his truck through the cafeteria window and began firing on those inside.

Police Captain Roy Stover said the shooting began at 12:41 pm. Shot were fired for approximately 10 minutes," he said. "At 12:51, we were notified the gunman was dead at the restaurant. He apparently shot himself in the head."

Police did not identify the gunman or mention his motive for the shooting but authorities said he wielded an Austrian-made Glock 9mm semiautomatic pistol that usually carries a 17-round magazine.

Sam Wink, a local resident who was in the restaurant, described the gunman as 20 to 30 years old, 1.78 meters (5-foot-10) in height and about 75 kilograms (160 pounds) in weight.

Killeen resident James Tati said the gunman lived in Killeen and had been involved in a dispute shortly before the shooting spree which, he said, lasted between 30 and 40 minutes before police arrived.

Vicky large, a pregnant cafeteria employee, said she fled to the cafeteria kitchen and out the back door after the shooting began. She said she heard shooting continue for 10 to 15 minutes after she escaped.

## Clashes leave 79 dead in Lanka

COLOMBO, Oct 17: Security forces shot dead at least 52 Tamil guerrillas and lost 27 of their own troops during a combined land, sea and air attack in northeast Sri Lanka, the military said here today, reports AFP.

Army spokesman Colonel Sarath Munasinghe said that in the operation overnight Wednesday, troops overran and destroyed a jungle hideout belonging to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in coastal Kikkuthuduwat region.

Thirty-three security personnel, including three officers, were wounded in the fierce battle to capture the LTTE base, which was believed to have accommodated about 200 to 300 guerrilla cadres.

## Move to set up SAARC forum for transportation

PUNE, Oct 17: The Secretary of the Ministry of Surface Transport, PM Abraham yesterday welcomed the proposal for setting up a South Asia Forum for Transportation (SAFT) with an institutional base at the Central Institute of Road Transport (CIRT), here, to disseminate information among the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries on various developments in the field of urban transport, reports PTI.

Delivering the valedictory address at the three-day SAARC seminar on urban transport here, Abraham said the facilities established in the CIRT could be utilised by transport organisations in other SAARC countries for management development and consultancy services.

While South Asian countries share a common culture and history, there is vast scope for coming together in order to chalk out common approaches, he said.

Stressing the need to integrate public transport in urban development planning, Abraham appealed to the urban planners to avoid high cost solutions to transport problems.

## Off the Record

## Hitler wanted to be a painter

LONDON: Two paintings believed to be the work of Adolf Hitler, were sold on Wednesday to an anonymous telephone bidder at an auction in northern England, reports Reuter.

The Pastel pictures of flowers, signed "A Hitler" and dated 1901 and 1911, fetched a total of 3,100 pounds sterling (5,300 dollars), auctioneer Andrew Hartley told reporters.

Christies auction house in London authenticated the painting as the work of Hitler but declined to handle the sale.

Hartley said it was not unusual for paintings by Hitler to come up for sale. "They are of historical and sociological interest because of who the artist was," he said.

Hitler had a brief, unsuccessful career as an Artist in Vienna just before the outbreak of World War II.

## James Bonds are best, says East spy

BONN: British spies were the best of the espionage foes pitted against the eastern European foreign intelligence networks, according to Markus Wolf, head of East Germany's secret service for 33 years.

In an interview soon before his arrest last week, he admitted that little was known about the activities of British spies, unlike the espionage efforts of West Germany, which he disparagingly described as "not very good".

"Maybe the English were the best, these James Bonds, because they were the ones I knew the least about," Herr Wolf told Bunte, the Germany weekly, in an interview before he was arrested last week while trying to enter Germany from Austria.

Herr Wolf has played a pivotal role in eastern European intelligence since the 1939-45 war, with a relatively high profile compared to his shadowy British counterparts. It is said that he provided the inspiration for Karla, the head of the intelligence service with whom George Smiley regularly crossed swords in John Le Carre's spy novels.



Sean Connery as Bond

His own novel, *Trotka*, which is a thinly disguised version of his own life, has been translated into several languages.

Herr Wolf, 68, said his agents had filled Bonn's political and defence establishments until their cover was blown by Germany unity last October.

He brushed off Bonn's BND foreign intelligence agency, saying: "The BND's situation as far as informants was never very good."

Herr Wolf's most spectacular coup was the planting of an agent inside the office of Willy Brandt, the then-West German Chancellor. When the agent's cover was blown, Herr Brandt's government fell in 1974.

It is estimated there are about 400 uncovered agents in Germany. But in interviews before his arrest Herr Wolf said he did not intend to reveal their names.

His view of western intelligence was confirmed last night by Nigel West, the spy writer and historian, who said Herr Wolf had good reason to sing the praises of the so called James Bonds.

"By and large we have been very successful. The number of our people who have been arrested around the world and accused of being British agents is pretty limited," Mr West said.

He corroborated the view of the West German intelligence service portrayed by Herr Wolf. Herr Wolf's former boss used to report seeing more of his employees when he visited Bonn than in the intelligence service's East German headquarters.

With the collapse of successive communist governments in the East, Herr Wolf has spent recent years evading arrest and, until last week, staying one step ahead of those who would have happily detained him.

He fled to Moscow last year just before unification took place. The failed coup in Moscow perhaps persuaded him that the time had come once again to move on, this time taking a flight from Moscow to Vienna. It was as he moved from Austria to Germany that his past caught up with him and he was finally arrested.

He is in prison pending a decision on whether he will stand trial on Cold War espionage and treason related charges against Bonn.

## A Tutu hug for Nadine Gordimer

JOHANNESBURG: Nadine Gordimer, winner of this year's Nobel literature prize, returned home to South Africa on Wednesday to a congratulatory bear-hug from fellow Nobel laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu, reports Reuter.

Black nationalist admirers greeted her with shouts of joy. A weary-looking Gordimer, who was in the United States when the prize was announced on October 3, told reporters: "All I can say is that I am happy to be back home and among my friends."

Asked about her prize, she added: "I am more surprised than delighted."

A group from the Congress of South African writers, an affiliate of Nelson Mandela's African National Congress black nationalist movement, blew on a cattle horn and hosted a gold banner displaying a huge portrait of the novelist and the slogan "Congratulations Nadine Gordimer."

Gordimer has said she will give part of her million dollar prize to the writers group.

Tutu won the Nobel peace prize in 1984 for his campaign against apartheid race segregation.

## Raisa's brother in psychiatric hospital

MOSCOW: Raisa Gorbachev's brother has been in a psychiatric hospital for the past six months, a Moscow newspaper reported Wednesday in a front-page story, reports AP.

The article was accompanied by a photograph of a pale, downcast, unshaven man smoking a cigarette and wearing a bathrobe. Moskovsky Komsomolets, the radical newspaper, said he was Yevgeny Titorenko, brother-in-law of President Mikhail S Gorbachev.

## Bush, Gorbachev may open ME confce this month

WASHINGTON, Oct 17: President George Bush and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev may open a Middle East peace conference this month, if one is arranged, but no final decision has been made, the White House said on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

"We'll announce our plans at the appropriate time," Bush told reporters while posing for photographs with visiting Danish Prime Minister Poul Schluter. He said he was "still hopeful there will be a Middle East peace conference."

"We want to do whatever will facilitate peace in the Middle East and I mean that with all sincerity," Bush said.

White House spokesman

Marlin Fitzwater, asked if Bush and Gorbachev would open talks that officials hope will begin on October 29 in Lausanne, Switzerland, told reporters "certainly that's possible."

"President Bush and President Gorbachev have both been involved in trying to expedite this conference and trying to push it forward as much as possible," Fitzwater said, stressing that final details have yet to be agreed by Israel and its Arab neighbours.

They both would be interested in getting the peace conference off to a good start," Fitzwater said of the two world leaders, "but at this point we just aren't willing to make a commitment."

## UN urged to monitor security of Maldives

UNITED NATIONS, Oct 17: Maldives has urged the UN General Assembly to ask the Secretary General to continue to monitor the security of small states and bring any threat to them to the attention of the Security Council, reports PTI.

In a draft resolution introduced in the special political committee, Maldives representative Ibrahim Hussain Zaki spoke of the vulnerability of small states to external threats from international adventurers like mercenaries, terrorists, narco terrorists and other forms of aggression.

The threat was demonstrated two years ago when a band of mercenaries sought to replace the democratically elected government with a puppet regime in Maldives and in the case of Kuwait last year, he said.

Zaki said small states were increasingly alarmed over the activities of mercenaries and terrorists. These groups and individuals carried sophisticated weaponry and had a powerful international network with financial resources far beyond the means of small, weak and poor countries, he said.

## Blasts claim 55 during Hindu festival in UP

LUCKNOW, Oct 17: Fifty-five people were killed in two bomb explosions at Rudrapur in Nainital district of Uttar Pradesh, last official reports here said today, reports PTI.

Earlier reports said 41 people had died and over 100 others were injured in the two blasts which occurred during a Ram lila function and at nearby hospital in the township late last night.

The toll mounted to 55 when fourteen succumbed to their injuries in hospital today, sources said.

Another twenty-three of the injured are reported to be "very very critical", the sources said.

The explosions, believed to be operated by remote control devices, occurred first at the

venue of the Ram lila and later at the hospital where the victims were taken for treatment.

The first blast led to a stampede killing some and injuring scores of others.

## Rajiv's aide files nomination for Amethi seat

AMETHI, India, Oct 17: The late Rajiv Gandhi's campaign manager filed his nomination on Wednesday for a by-election to contest the Parliamentary seat of the assassinated former Indian Prime Minister, reports Reuter.

The ruling Congress party nominated Satish Sharma to fight for the seat in Amethi, northern Uttar Pradesh state.

ward."

The 43-year-old Thomas, a black conservative, is likely to be sworn in Monday. He replaces retired Justice Thurgood Marshall, a leading civil rights lawyer who was the first black to sit on the US high court.

Thomas is an outspoken opponent of affirmative action and other tools for the advancement of blacks that Marshall championed.

Women's organisations lobbied hard against Thomas, arguing that he would vote to overturn the Supreme Court's 1973 Roe vs. Wade decision that legalised abortion. Anti-abortion groups praised his confirmation, even though Thomas had said he had no opinion on abortion and the

Roe ruling. The ruling is likely to be reviewed by the court in the next year or two.

Thomas won confirmation only after one of the nastiest confirmation fights in American history. The president, in this case a Republican, nominates justices and the Senate, now controlled by opposition Democrats, confirms them.

During weekend hearings on the allegation Thomas sexually harassed a former aide, President Bush said he would be suggesting ways to change the process.

"I think when it's over I owe the American people my suggestions as to how to improve this process, and I will do my level best," said the president.



HARARE: British Prime Minister John Major addressing the opening ceremony of the 28th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting on Oct 16. Bangladesh Prime Minister Khaleda Zia is seen in the background.—AFP/UNB photo

## 13 killed as trains collide near Paris

PARIS, Oct 17: Thirteen people were killed when the Nice-Paris Sleeper Express and a goods train collided near Paris today, Railway officials said, reports Reuter.

A fireman said dozens of people were injured in the head-on crash at 6:30 am (0530 GMT) at Melun station, south of Paris.

A fireman said many injured people were still trapped in the wrecked express which usually carries about 2,000 passengers.

"We have a passenger coach standing on top of a goods carriage with many victims inside," he told a radio interviewer.

Witnesses said some carriages jack-knifed vertically and broke power lines six metres (20 feet) above the track. All the carriages of the express train were derailed.

A railway employee at Melun said the sleeper train was travelling at 120 kph (75 mph)

## Iraq will be responsible for safety of inspectors: US

WASHINGTON, Oct 17: The United States warned Baghdad on Wednesday it could not escape responsibility for the safety of UN inspectors charged with eradicating Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, reports Reuter.

The initial operation, to be called the UN Advance Mission in Cambodia (UNAMIC), will include 50 military officers and 20 experts in mine sweeping plus 75 international and 75 local staff for support and technical services. Australia is sending a 40-member communications unit.

"It is an infringement of the agreement," he said.

The Khmer Rouge, accused of killing up to a million when they were in power from 1975 to 1978, are the strongest of the three guerrilla groups facing the Vietnamese-backed Cambodian government of Hun Sen, which dislodged them.

The Security Council, by a unanimous vote of 15-0, authorised an advance peace-keeping force of 268 military and civilians, at a cost of nearly 20 million dollars.

French Ambassador Jean-

the recommended procedures after her supervisor at the Small Business Administration in Atlanta allegedly harassed her.

Another report adds: Lawrence Thomas, saying it is "time to put these things behind us," will take his seat on the Supreme Court positioned by the nation's laws for decades to come. His contentious confirmation battle left supporters demanding a change in the process.

"I'd like to thank America," Thomas said after the Senate's 52-48 confirmation vote Tuesday night.

"No matter how difficult or painful, this is a time for healing in our country," he said. "We have to put these things behind us. We have to go forward."

## UN council okays advance force of Cambodian peace-keepers

UNITED NATIONS, Oct 17: The Security Council on Wednesday approved an advance force of peacekeepers for Cambodia to kick off one of the most complex and costly operations in UN history, reports Reuter.

The initial group of 268 military officers and civilians will go to the southeast Asian country shortly after a final peace settlement ending two decades of warfare signed in Paris on October 23.

At the same time, UN Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar implicitly criticised reports that the Khmer Rouge guerrillas had forcibly transported refugees from that border camps back to Cambodia, presumably so that they can influence them during future elections.

French Ambassador Jean-

Bernard Merimee told reporters the five permanent members of the council, who drafted the Paris Agreement, were very disturbed at the news. He expected the controversy to be an issue in Paris if it were not resolved, but it would not necessarily jeopardise the conference.

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daunting which is why so few victims file sexual harassment complaints. But Hill's was perhaps the ultimate nightmare scenario. It was her word against his, and everyone was listening as she was accused publicly of vindictiveness, perjury, wholesale fantasy.

Many employees doubtless looked into the male faces of the Senate Judiciary Committee to see the gap in perception and experience broken wide open. Pressing charges of sexual harassment is at best a gamble. Hill's motives were assessed repeatedly in the hearing room and in headlines. Her testimony was marked by speculation that alternately labeled her a scorned woman, vengeful ex-employee, sociopath.

## Anita Hill's 10-yr silence on harassment puzzling

WASHINGTON, Oct 17: Does it pay to speak up? Anita Hill says yes, but she is back in Oklahoma with her credibility in question. And clearance Thomas, the man she accused of sexual harassment, has been confirmed to the Supreme Court, reports AP.

In that outcome, beyond public education and high-minded debate, lies a troublesome reality that for years has kept victims of sexual harassment from coming forward.

"Anita Hill came forward and she was shot down," said Sharon Ambrose, a youth Advocate at the Cleveland mediation Center. "It's very frightening because you can't help but wonder: What would happen to me?"

The risks have always been

That panel did a very good job of hauling out every kind of attack that women fear," Lady said. "It would make anyone think twice."

And yet, for however unsuccessful she was, telephone hotlines and equal employment offices around the nation have received hundreds of calls since Hill came forward.

The Senate Panel, and public, were perhaps most troubled by Hill's 10-year delay in reporting her allegations. Though psychologists have documented the reasons for such a deferment, people remained puzzled. "Why did she continue playing the game?"

Lillian P. Martin, 34, offers an answer: "I spoke up immediately and it didn't help me at all," said Martin, who followed

the recommended procedures after her supervisor at the Small Business Administration in Atlanta allegedly harassed her.

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