One in five

suffers from

hunger

Saving trees will help feed the hungry, said the United Na-

tions Food and Agriculture Or-

ganization (FAO), marking its

observance of World Food Day

many farmers used to do on

new land was to attack the

trees, seeing them as a threat

improve agricultural produc-

tion still has not spread to all

nations of the world," Euard

Saouma, the head of FAO, in a

statement issued in Washing-

of every five people in the

world most of them children -

suffers from hunger and that

15 to 20 million of them die

every year from its effects and

vate US organization, said that

while in the world people are

hungry than ever, the number

is declining in South Asia.

where most of the world's

population lives. And the

overall percentage is slowly

"llunger 1992," called atten-

tion to recent data from the

US Census Bureau that the

number of Americans living in

poverty rose from 31.5 million

to 33.6 million from 1989 to

1990. The percentages rose

both for children under 18

(17 million hectares) of forest

land are lost each year, most

of it to farmers clearing land to

grow crops. This is an area

about the size of Cambodia or

series of little known facts

about relations between trees

many parts of the world in

soups, stews and relishes;

some are high in fat, others in

protein and all are good

sources of vitamins and min-

region get more than 80 per

cent of their animal protein

nutrients; caterpillars are

especially high in vitamins, the

larvae of bees contains 10

times as much vitamin D as

cent of the energy in Bhutan.

Hunger in the US House of

Representatives scheduled a

hearing for Wednesday to

study what food security is,

how it is measured and how it

for World Food Day is conduct-

ing an international television

conference in English, Por-

tuguese and Spanish, lasting

for three hours. In this country

more than 400 colleges and

universities are due to take

part. Brazilian Agriculture Min-

ister Antonio Cabrera is ex-

The US National Committee

has been improved.

pected to speak.

Fuel wood provides 97 per

The Select Committee on

- Peruvians in the Amazon

Edible insects also provide

The statement provided a

- Leaves are widely used in

FAO said 42 million acres

and for elders over 65.

Missouri.

and **food**:

from game.

fish liver.

its second annual report,

Bread for the World, a pri-

discases it brings.

declining, it added

The FAO estimated that one

It noted that the first thing

The realization that trees

on Wednesday, reports AP.

to production.

WASHINGTON, Oct 17 :

## Aid to Moscow won't place undue strain: Lewis Preston

BANGKOK, Oct 17: The capitalist world winds up its annual gathering today having spent much of its time considering how to help its former communist foe, the Soviet Union, reports Reuter.

Moscow's economic plight dominated the annual meeting of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, pushing into the background such traditional concerns as global economic growth and Third World debt.

Soviet Chief Economic Strategist Grigory Yavlinsky suggested why Moscow stole the spotlight at a Bravura news conference on Wednesday: "It has nuclear weapons and its economy is collapsing."

The preoccupation of rich nations with Moscow annoyed many in the Third World and fanned fears that developing nations would be forgotten in the rush to help the Soviet Union and its former communist allies in Eastern Europe.

Indonesian Finance Minister Johannes Sumarlin complained that technical ex perts from the World Bank had already been pulled from his country to help the Soviet

'We cannot stress too strongly that is equally important to a growing world economy and trading system that the programmes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union not be at the expense of the developing countries, Sumarlin said.

Rich nations did not seem to be listening. Policymakers from the Group of Seven Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States \_ skipped a meeting of the IMF's main committee on Sunday to hold a second day of talks on the Soviet Union.

AP adds: The World Bank pledged Thursday to help the Soviet Union overcome its massive problems, despite concerns such aid would divert resources from struggling Third World nations.

World Bank President Lewis T Preston said, aid to Moscow

#### Ukraine asks for technical aid from WB,IMF

BANGKOK, Oct 17: The Ukraine has requested technical assistance from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, the IMF said in a statement, reports Reuter.

TMF staff have recently visited Kiev and talked with national bank officials about future forms of cooperation," the IMF said. "These contacts will continue.

It said the request for technical assistance from the Soviet republic was made by the National Bank of the Ukraine.

### Soviet gold reserve stands at 390 tons

BANGKOK, Oct 17: Soviet economic strategist Grigory Yavlinsky said Soviet gold reserves held abroad under swap arrangements totalled 150

Speaking at the IMF/World Bank annual meeting he told Reuter the Soviet Union had no other foreign holdings of the precious metal.

Inside the Soviet Union, Soviet gold reserves, including those held by the state bank, total 240 tons, making entire Soviet reserves of 390 tons.

The 390 tons figure is well below most Western estimates. which have been scaled down in recent weeks following Soviet statements.

### Oil prices hit highest level since Gulf war

LONDON, Oct 17: European oil prices on Wednesday hit their highest levels since the outbreak of the Gulf War last January, but then faltered in late trading, reports Reuter.

Strong buying ahead of the northern winter was given extra impetus initially by the prospect of storms in the North Sea reducing the number of cargoes available, oil traders said.

Persistent market talk of shortfalls in Soviet exports also contributed to an early surge in crude oil and refined prod-

uct prices. But the North Sea Brent price, used as a marker by the international oil trade, fell back to 22.70 Dollars a barrel for November futures in London by 1730 GMT, 11 cents below Tuesday's close, after hitting a high of 22.99 Dollars.

New York Light Crude oil futures also fell, with November shedding 30 cents to 23.56 Dollars.

would not place "undue strain" on the bank, which annually approves about 16 billion Dollars in loans and also dispenses economic expertise.

Preston and Michel Camdessus, the head of the International Monetary Fund, called for a reallocation of military spending to efforts to alleviate poverty and spur general economic development.

The bank offered technical assistance to the Soviets, who are applying for full status in the institution. A bank team will spend the next three months in the Soviet Union trying to unravel the complexities of what one Soviet delegate called a "rotting" sys-

Preston, who has recently taken over the bank presidency, said he was "slightly surprised" by Latin American and African delegations who felt the bank would channel too many of its resources to the Soviet Union.

Preston said the transfor-

WASHINGTON, Oct 17: The

Soviet Union, facing a harsh

winter of shortages and a

tough transition to capitalism,

needs 3.5 billion Dollars in US

farm credits through 1992, a

top Soviet trade official said

on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

Trade Minister, said his coun-

try-which is riddled with

economic problems after 74

years of rigid central planning

needs whatever credits it can

get to help it through the rest

US reticence about the size of

the 3.5 billion Dollars request,

Chumakov said, " this is only

that a Soviet delegation meet-

ing this week with US officials

has not yet made a request

for immediate credits.

Chumakov told reporters

BANGKOK, Oct 17: Devel-

oping countries that spend

less than two per cent of their

gross domestic product on

arms should get special aid

treatment, Belgium's Finance

Minister said Wednesday, re-

this formula caused occasional

difficulties, it would be a pow-

erful incentive to reducing the

waste of resources resulting

from excessive armaments

purchases by poor countries,"

Philippe Maystadt told the

World Bank and International

Monetary Fund annual meet-

other arms exporters had a re-

sponsibility to reduce arms

production and should plan to

convert their arms-making in-

cuts in arms spending by IMF

Managing Director Michel

It was the fear that calls for

Maystadt said Belgium and

ports Reuter.

dustries.

But with an eye to possible

of the year.

our idea."

Yury Chumakov, a Deputy

mation of the Soviet Union and easing of superpower rivalries positioned international banking institutions at a "historic juncture."

The former US commercial banker said he hoped a significant reduction in military spending around the world over the next year would reduce crippling deficits suffered by many nations.

The need for global savings to finance problem areas from Albania to Zambia was one of several themes sounded at the conference.

There also were repeated calls for environmental protection, alleviation of debt for the poorest nations, conversion of public enterprises to private status, and more emphasis on developing human resources in the Third World.

In a concluding address to the conference, Preston said the debate was "infused by pragmatism, rather than sterile ideological dispute."

But Moscow has asked for

US Agriculture Secretary

extra credits to cover freight

had refused, he said.

request for US aid.

expenses, which the US side

Edward Madigan recently led a

delegation to the Soviet Union

to get more information on

Moscow's requests for 10 bil-

lion Dollars worth of Western

food aid and to get a specific

billion Dollar credit request

coincided with Moscow's re-

quest last week for US food

further on that request, which

was submitted to Madigan in

falling industrial, agricultural

and oil production at a time of

Camdessus's would eventually

be linked to development aid

that caused the Group of 24

poor countries to tell the

World Bank and IMF last Friday

to stick to money matters and

Rudolf Hommes, said some

countries were worried that

the two world financial agen-

cies might start to insist on

cuts in arms spending as con-

tion any countries by name, officials said India and

Pakistan, which confront each

other across a disputed

border, were the strongest

critics of IMF involvement in

the Netherlands has been the

most vocal supporter of

Camdessus's tough stand on

Among industrial nations,

the arms-spending debate.

arms spending.

State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Abdul

Mannan Speaking as Chief Guest at the formal

Publication Ceremony of the Bangladesh Monitor, a

cargo/shipping, Banking and commerce, at a local hotel on

Wednesday. Syed Abed Ali, Publisher, Kazi Wahidul

Alam, Editor and Abu Yousuf, Asst. Editor of the journal

fortnightly journal on aviation, tourism, hotel

Although he did not men-

dition for extending loans.

The G-24 Chairman,

leave defence to them.

skyrocketing inflation.

Belgium calls for linking

aid with arms spending

"Even if the application of Colombian Finance Minister

But he would not comment

The Soviet Union is hit with

Chumakov indicated the 3.5

Soviets need \$3.5b

US farm loan

## Real Bangkok comes with vengeance

October 16.

BANGKOK, Oct 17: The worst fears of Thailand's image-makers were realised Wednesday when massive traf fic jams, attendant pollution and monsoonal flooding swirled around a major international banking conference, reports AP.

The Thai government had pulled but all stops to put forward Bangkok's best face during the annual meeting of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF).

To ease the notorious traffic, the government declared Monday and Tuesday special holidays, extended school vacations and put thousands of police on the roads to keep things flowing.

A slum across the street from the 96 million Dollars convention centre was threat ened with eviction, but a compromise was reached when a brightly painted fence was crected around the eyesore. A member of the military

junta even promised that there would be no floods during the conference, which ends Thursday. But on Wednesday, the real

Bangkok came back with a With businesses and government offices

opened, conference delegates even those with police escorts- were stuck in urban canyons hazy with pollution. some of the world's rudest

drivers were back out in force, while Bangkok's deathdefying motorcyclists slalomed around cars when they did move. At one major intersection, it took long minutes for the light to turn green.

Problems were compounded by an early afternoon downpour, which swamped roads in low-lying arcs with up to half a meter (1.5 feet) of rainwater. Vehicles stalled in the middle of roads.

## LDCs to forge greater unity

UNITED NATIONS, Oct 17: Representatives of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) met here on Tuesday under chairmanship Permanent Representative of Bangladesh, Ambassador Humayun Kabir, to discuss wide-ranging issues of special concern to them, reports BSS.

agreed to strengthen coordination among the LDCs.
The representatives also agreed to forge a greater unity among themselves and muster international help and support for their development pro-

The meeting unanimously

grammes. The representatives particularly lauded the commendable role played by Bangladesh in strongly articulating the concerns of the Least Developed Countries in different international forum.

#### Benefit-package for workers to support privatisation in Pakistan ISLAMABAD, Oct 17: The The concessions followed months after the ownership

SAN SALVADOR: Two children and a dog join other local residents as they scavenge for food in the municipal dump as

government institutions and non-official organisations celebrate the United Nations-sponsored World Food Day on

Pakistan government has offered sweeping benefits to tens of thousands of workers in an apparent bid to win their support for the privatisation of state-owned industries, reports AFP.

The package, on the eve of the opening of bids from prospective buyers for more than 100 public sector units. includes a 12-month ban on retrenchment by any privatised unit and a "golden hand shake" for those who volunteer to quit

Announcing details of a settlement reached late Tuesday between the government and the all Pakistan State Enterprises Workers Action Committee, Minister for Labour and Manpower Mohammad Ejaz-Ul-Huq said it was a "historic" step.

continual countrywide protests, including strikes and lockups, by the workers fearing large-scale layoffs with the transfer of ownership of state units to private hands. The units to be sold under Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's

privatisation programme include cement and fertilizer factories, chemicals and ceramic units, edible oil, rice and textile mills, bread-mak ing plant and automobile parts assembly plants. high powered

Privatisation Commission has received about 700 bids, officials said Wednesday.

The commission is to finalise here Thursday a list of selected bidders who will pay the total price of the units in four half-yearly instalments the first becoming due six transfer The rules provide for fur-

- AFP/UNB photo

nishing an acceptable bank guarantee for the payment of the principal amount and the interest Under the settlement with

workers, 10 per cent of a privatised unit's shares would be offered to its employees at a mutually agreed rate.

Employees considered surplus after the mandatory ban on retrenement will be given easy credit facilities for their self-employment while the government will facilitate their employment in foreign coun-

Till such time as the employees are placed in new jobs. they would receive an unemployment allowance at the rate of 40 Dollars per month for a maximum two years.

# C'wealth faces funds crisis

HARARE, Oct 17: Funding 50-nation the Commonwealth of former British territories is more than five million Pounds (8.5 million Dollars) in arrears, amounting to about 15 per cent of this year's contributions so far, reports AFP.

The slap on the writs over tardy payment is contained in a document to be discussed at the 28th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), which began here Wednesday.

The worst offender is also the biggest contributor. Britain. It has forked out seven million Pounds (11.9 million Dollars) or 30 per cent of the Commonwealth Secretariat's budget this year, but still owes nearly 1.3 million Pounds (2.21 million Dollars), according to the report, drawn up by Britain's Auditor-General.

"He observed that the arrears of contributions at the

BANGKOK, Oct 17: India

signalled its desire to tap the

International Monetary Fund

(IMF) for low-cost financing

for the first time, in a move

likely to raise fears among

other poor countries that they

will be squeezed out, reports

Manmohan Singh also told re-

porters India wants to borrow

three to four billion Dollars a

year over the next three or

four years from the World

Bank. Half the money should

be dispersed quickly to sup-

has to be kept up." Singh said.

"We will take more steps in

ready talked with the IMF

about borrowing from its

He said that Delhi has al-

"The momentum of reform

port economic reform.

the months ahead.

Indian Finance Minister

Reuter.

current level could endanger some of the activities of the sccretariat," the report said.

"Notwithstanding budget approval, if funds are not readily available to meet expendi ture, the secretariat will face serious operation problems."

The secretariat runs on a shoestring budget of less than eight million Pounds and is Soviets to overcome liquidity crisis with

G-7 support

BANGKOK, Oct 17: The Soviet Union would overcome any liquidity problem with the support of the Group of Seven(G-7) industrial nations Soviet Chief Economic Strategist Grigory Yavlinsky

said, reports Reuter.
If there will arise a liquidity problem, the Soviet Union with the support of the G-7, would overcome this problem, he told a news conference.

India to borrow low-cost IMF funds

Adjustment Facility (ESAF)

which lends cheap money to

"IMF management is sym-

But some other developing

countries are unlikely to be.

The ESAF only contains about

7.8 billion Dollars and would

be exhausted if India borrowed

racy. India has been eligible to

borrow from the ESAF for

years but has refrained from

doing so because its economy

has been in relatively good

hard times, as years of exces-

sive borrowing have been

brought to a head by the finan-

cial fallout from the Gulf crisis

and a collapse in its trade with

the Soviet Union, a major

But it has recently fallen on

The world's biggest democ-

all that it is eligible for.

the world's poorer nations.

pathetic," he said.

facing increasing demands. It is to send observers to

monitor Zambian elections in this month and will send another mission to Guyana later this year and is considering a similar request by Lesotho, whose military junta has promised a return to civilian rule by the end of next year.

Commonwealth Secretary General Chief Emeka Anyaoku, in his report of September 25. revealed that contributions to the flagship Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation (CFTC), which has a budget of 30 million Pounds in 1990 '91, had reached only 22.38 million Pounds.

British officials announced late Tuesday that London would double from 25 million to 50 million Pounds its aid to project linked to good government, set to top the agenda at the CHOGM, but on a bilateral basis, not through the Commonwealth.

Delhi has responded to the

crisis by taking tough eco-

nomic reforms and effectively

abandoning decade of social-

ism and a closed economy in

favour of a more market-ori-

reducing tariff levels (on im-

ports)," Singh said. "This pro-

cess will be accelerated so that

Indian tariff rates become

comparable with those in

other industrialising to devel-

the idea that foreign banks

play a bigger role in the Indian

economy. "We 're not objecting

to anybody. We're willing to

IMF to endorse India's eco-

nomic reform plans later this

month by approving a 2.2 bil-

Singh said he expects the

look at all new options."

He voiced sympathy with

"We have made a start with

ented approach.

oping countries."

lion Dollar.

### Israel looking elsewhere for loan guarantees

BANGKOK, Oct 17: Israel, while seeking a US guarantee for about 10 billion Dollars it needs to cope with a wave of Soviet immigrants, also is looking elsewhere for such backing, the nation's finance minister said Wednesday, reports AP.

Finance Minister Yitzhk Modai in Bangkok for the annual World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) meetings, said he was confident that the US Congress would approve the guarantee. President Bush had asked that consideration be delayed, presumably so it would not become an issue in setting up a Middle East peace conference.

When asked whether Israel was exploring other guarantee options, Modai responded

He declined to elaborate. Modaí said Israel is a reliable borrower that has cut its foreign debt from 30 billion Dollars five years ago to 15 bil-

## Oil prices move towards OPEC target level son and saw the possibility of

LONDON, Oct 17: Oil buying ahead of winter is taking the price of OPEC's basket of seven crudes back towards the 21 Dollars a barrel level adopted as a target price in July 1990, but last seen 10 months ago, reports Reuter.

are also seen.

The basket averaged 20.30 Dollars last week, 39 cents up from the previous week. Judging by the North Sea

brent market's performance. which has added one Dollar may approach 21 Dollars this

since Friday, the OPEC price "The market is creeping up toward the OPEC reference price of 21 Dollars" said

Mohammed Al-Sahlawi, head

of the OPEC Secretariat's in-

tormation department in Vienna.

"If the price goes to unacceptable levels it will deserve some attention form OEPC." On the cargo market,

November brent was up about one Dollar from Friday, while on London future, November stood at around 22.70 Dollars. after hitting a high of 22.99 Dollars, helped by the prospect of storms in the North Sea disrupting production.

Brent is used as a reference for many internationally traded crudes.

Gulf industry sources said they expected the price to remain strong throughout the winter and may add a couple

more Dollars.

"I expect the price will go higher and higher — but not much more than two or three Dollars," said an official from an OPEC Gulf Arab country.

"There are very few barrels being exported by the Soviet Union and no one knows when Iraqi oil will come back on the market." OPEC has not had to exert

itself to achieve its goal. Al-Shahlawt noted that the 13 members agreed to leave production unchanged when they met in. Geneva in September, and did not impose quotas on individual members.

The Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries

agreed to produce 23.6 million barrels per day in the fourth. quarter, which is close to capacity.

Moreover, Saudi Arabian Oil Minister Hisham Nazer said in September that while his country, which accounts for more than one-third of OEPC's production, wanted to achieve the 21 Dollar target price, it was not prepared to interfere unduly with the market to reach this goal.
There are a few extra hun-

dred thousand barrels that could be produced by some members to stifle the market should the rise get out of hand, OEPC sources said. "The Ministers anticipated

that demand will rise this sea-

supply disruptions from the Soviet Union and North Sea." "All this was taken into ac-

count when they decided against specifying any quotas (for individual countries)." Saudi Arabia's recent pro-

duction has averaged around 8.5 million BPD, but Gulf industry sources said it could be pushed up to nine million if necessary.

There is also some oil held unsold aboard tankers which could be released on to the market to dampen prices. OPEC sources said.

The basket price last averaged above 21 Dollars in the third week of January, the

week of the UN deadline for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait. The price averaged 24.6 Dollars that week but plummeted to 18.6 Dollars the next week after oil traders saw how little resistance Iraq could

muster against allied air raids. The price so far this year up to the end of last week has averaged 18.52 Dollars. In September, it averaged 19.19 Dollars, against, 18.47 Dollars in August and 18.20 Dollars in

July The OPEC basket comprises Algeria's Saharan blend, Indonesia's Minas, Nigeria's Bonny Light, Saudi Arabian Light, Dubat of the United Arab Emirates, Venezuela's Tia Juana and Mexico's Isthmus Crude

Costs related to the inflow of an estimated 1 million immigrants are replacing military expenditures as the biggest item in the Israeli budget.

lion Dollars.

Middle East.

World Bank and IMF officials have been urging to reduce military expenses to make capital available for more productive uses such as health and education, but Modai said such cuts will depend on the political situation in the volatile

"I haven't heard yet that in our part of the world there is a willingness to cut military expenditure," he said.