

# India lifts ban on travel to S Africa

NEW DELHI, Oct 31: India, among the first countries to impose sanctions on South Africa, on Wednesday lifted all curbs on travel between the two countries and ended cultural and scientific boycotts, reports Reuter.

The decision to allow "people to people" contact is in line with an agreement reached at this month's Harare summit of leaders from the Commonwealth, which groups Britain and most of its former colonies.

A Foreign Ministry spokesman said India was lifting with immediate effect "all consular and visa restrictions, cultural and scientific boycotts, restrictions on tourism promotion and the ban on direct air links" with South Africa.

The spokesman said the ministry had discussed the move with the Indian representative of the African

National Congress, Mtutuzeli Mpehle.

He said Commonwealth leaders "were encouraged by the recent considerable progress in the evolution of a unified and non-racial sports movement in South Africa," particularly in cricket.

But he added that boycotts on individual sports would be lifted only when India was satisfied that players were represented by a genuinely non-racial federation.

India was among the first countries to impose sanctions against South Africa in protest against the enforcement of apartheid laws in the 1950s.

An Indian-origin minority, now numbering nearly a million, was among the communities which were forced to live and trade outside "white" cities under the race segregation laws.



MADRID: Heads of state and heads of delegations attending the Middle East peace conference pose for a group photo at the Royal Palace Wednesday. —AFP/UNB photo

Rao will be in Colombo for 24 hours

## Massive security alert to protect SAARC summiteers

COLOMBO, Oct 31: Sri Lankan authorities, fearing bomb attacks by Tamil rebels during next week's South Asian summit in Colombo, have placed security forces on full alert, government spokesmen said today, reports Reuter.

"Security forces are on full alert," said Bradman Weerakoon, adviser on international affairs to President Ranasinghe Premadasa.

"Maximum security precautions are being taken for the safety of all delegates attending the conference," Cabinet spokesman Rani Wickremasinghe told a news conference.

Heads of state or government of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka will begin a three-day meeting in Colombo on November 7 to discuss how to boost the living standards of millions of impoverished people in the region.

Officials from the seven countries, which form the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC), began preparatory meeting today.

Defence Secretary Cyril Ranatunga was quoted in a newspaper this week as saying that Tamil rebels were planning to set off bombs in Colombo during the conference.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, fighting to set up an independent homeland in the north and east, have exploded bombs in Colombo in the past, killing dozens of people.

The Tigers are the main suspects in the assassination of former south Indian city of Madras in May, according to Indian police.

Weerakoon said 10,000 policemen were being deployed in Colombo to protect the delegates. Some 3,000 policemen will guard the hill-country, city of Kandy where the leaders will go on the second day of the meeting for a "retreat" to hold informal consultations.

"The military is providing backing to the police and security has been tightened," a military spokesman said.

Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao, expected to be the focus of attention at the summit, will visit Colombo for only 24 hours, Weerakoon said.

He said Rao would arrive in Colombo on November 7 just before the opening of the summit and leave the following day.

"His presence is needed in India because of by-elections and other priority domestic matters," Weerakoon said.

He said Rao and Premadasa would hold informal bilateral talks on relations between the two countries which he described as excellent.

It will be the first meeting between Rao and Premadasa who asked the Indian peace keeping force to leave Sri Lanka soon after he came to power in January 1989.

About 50,000 Indian troops were sent to Sri Lanka in 1987 under a pact with Colombo to disarm the Tigers. The Indians, who ended up fighting the rebels, left the island in March last year on Premadasa's insistence.

Official sources said Rao was also expected to make use of his brief visit to Colombo to have separate informal talks on bilateral problems with Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

## Cambodia frees 442 detenues

BANGKOK, Oct 31: In the first known significant release in years, Cambodia's Vietnamese-installed government said Wednesday it has freed 442 political detainees this month and more releases are planned, reports AP.

Previously, the Phnom Penh government did not even directly admit it was holding any political prisoners.

The government had said it will release all political prisoners once a treaty was signed to end the war with three guerrilla groups that started with Vietnam's invasion in late 1978.

The accord was signed Oct 23 in Paris, paving the way for United Nations-organized elections by 1993.

## Off the Record

### 2 earth-sized planets found

LONDON: Two more earth-sized planets, circling a distant pulsar, have been found by British scientists with Arecibo Radio telescope in Puerto Rico, according to local media, reports Xinhua.

The discovery has further increased the probability that a huge number of stars in our Milky Way have habitable worlds. Last such discovery was in last July when British astronomers in Manchester University found a roughly earth-sized planet round a superdense pulsar, which is some 30,000 light-years away in the heart of our galaxy.

The British paper Daily Telegraph said today that the newly found planets circle a pulsar, which is about 2,000 light-years from the earth and rotates at 200 times a second.

### 'Bush is a snake' proclaims Saddam

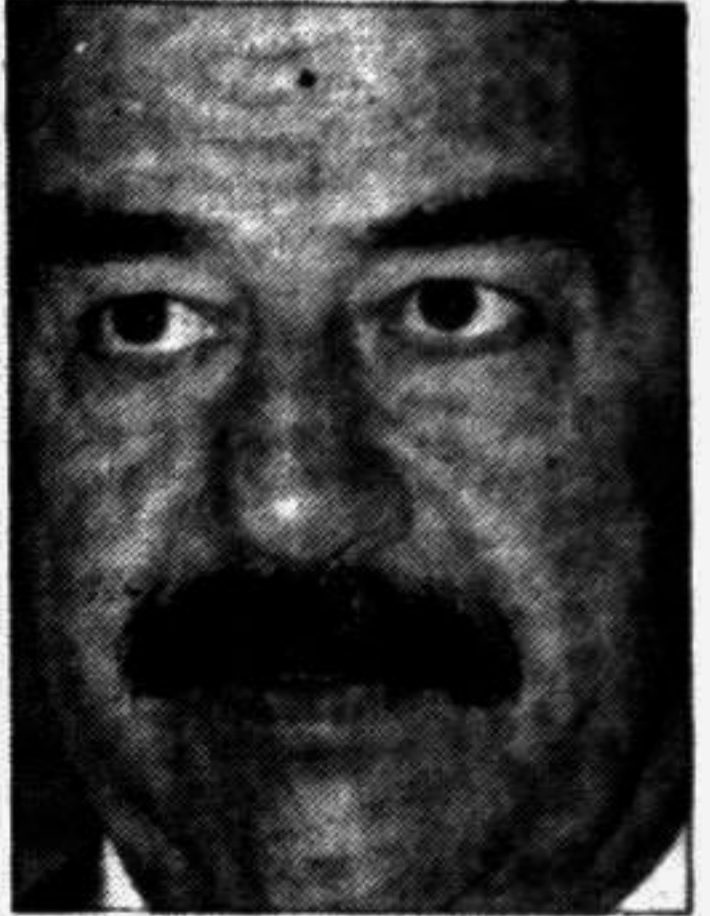
BAGHDAD: Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein said in remarks published as the Madrid-Middle East peace talks opened that US President George Bush was a snake and that Western leaders were mere tools of Zionism, reports Reuter.

"It is a great honour to have enemies like those dirty, immoral human beings led by their worst example, the President of the United States of America," Saddam told army officers.

He said Bush was trying to starve Iraqis through UN sanctions and acknowledged for the first time that food prices had shot up.

"Bush lacks humanity. Those who are deluded by the assumption that tender talk will bring the snake out of the hole should know that the snake is a poisonous one created by Zionism...." the Iraqi President said at a military decoration ceremony on Tuesday.

"These days, many of the leaders in the West are the creation of Zionism," said Saddam, in his first allusion to the Madrid conference. He also criticised Arab backers of the US-brokered talks.



### Smiles, skullcaps and keffiyehs in Madrid

MADRID, Oct 31: Wreathed in smiles and dressed in suits or flowing Arab robes, delegates poured into the Royal Palace on Wednesday in a rapid, well-scripted procession to their historic Middle East peace conference, reports AP.

The ceremonial opening was rich in pageantry and stiff with the human barriers that have kept the Middle East in conflict for 43 years.

As they walked into the conference chamber after shaking hands with King Juan Carlos of Spain, they broke into groups along familiar lines — the Israelis and their Egyptian friends, as well as the Lebanese, on one side; their foes — the Syrians, Jordanians and Palestinians — on the other.

A wide table with floral arrangements and white cloth separated them. No one expected old adversaries to fall into each other's arms, and there were no surprises. Israelis and Palestinians have never before met as negotiating equals, and Syria has never before attended a Mideast peace conference.

There was little Arab-Israeli mingling, even after adjournment, and the atmosphere was stiff but not without warmth. There were more smiles from Abdullah Bishara of Kuwait, representing the Gulf states, as he arrived wearing a white keffiyeh, or headscarf, and a gold-trimmed robe.

In the chandeliered conference chamber, Israelis, Americans and Egyptians fell into lively conversation. It reflected the sturdiness of the 12-year-old Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty — a treaty President Bush would mention in his speech as a potential model for a broader Mideast peace.

Israel's other neighbour at the table, Lebanon, has previously negotiated with Israel, though it remains insistent on the elimination of an Israeli security zone in the south of its territory.

Keeping almost exactly to schedule, the speeches began a minute after 10.3 am (0930 GMT), with Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez welcoming the delegates. Then it was the turn of Bush and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, co-sponsors of the conference.

Shamir sat between Foreign Ministers Amr Moussa of Egypt and Fares Bweiz of Lebanon, a burly man who towered over most of the delegates.

Shamir bunched his fingers together and listened solemnly to the speeches. Opposite sat Haidar Abdul-Shafi, 71-year-old leader of the Palestinian delegation, his head tucked in his chest.

### In search of computers

MOSCOW: Two Siberian brothers wanted to be computer programmers in the United States and set off by the shortest route — by raft across the Pacific ocean, reports Reuter.

Instead they were picked up by a Soviet nuclear-powered submarine and face charges of illegally leaving the country.

Tass news agency on Wednesday said Andrei and Pavel Vinogradov, 21 and 18, were found drifting in the chilly northern Pacific, their inflatable raft dragging a floating anchor.

It said they bought the raft while living for two months in an abandoned pillbox in remote Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky. On their second attempt to set off, they made it into open sea where a wind change quickly put their craft in trouble.

"The submarine crew... saved the two hapless fugitives from certain death in the cold autumn Pacific waters," it said. "But the brothers make no secret that they still want to reach America's shores and become computer programmers."

## Rewards for capture of bandits in Sind

KARACHI, Oct 31: Pakistani authorities on Wednesday offered millions of dollars of reward money for the capture of dangerous bandits dead or alive in the lawless southern province of Sind, reports Reuter.

A government statement said a total 124.5 million rupees (five million dollars) would be given as reward to those killing or capturing 195 bandits that it named.

Previous similar reward offers by authorities to enlist citizen support to fight bandits have not worked.

Kidnappings and highway robberies are common in Sind, where police say they have

killed more than 400 bandits in the past year.

At least five people were killed after bandits ambushed a passenger bus on Tuesday near the northern Sind town of Sukkur, police said on Wednesday.

Pakistani authorities on Wednesday told Chinese engineers working on an irrigation project in Sind to return to their camps from work sites before dusk, official sources said.

Earlier this month, bandits kidnapped a Chinese engineer in central Sind. The engineer was later freed after a gunbattle between the bandits and security forces.

## BRIEFLY

### Egypt gets more US warplanes:

Egypt will get more F-16 fighter-bombers from the United States as the F-16 are delivered in groups of 40 each, military source in Cairo said, reports Xinhua.

Egypt presently has 80 F-16s, delivered in the late 1980s. Washington has just started delivering a third batch of 40 planes.

Air Force Commander Lt. Gen. Ahmed Nasser said the country will double its fleet of US built F-16s by the mid 1990s. He disclosed agreement on a fourth shipment of F-16C and F-16D warplanes at a briefing for local newsmen which was carried by Thursday's newspapers.

Shipment of the third group will be completed next year, he said adding the US will begin delivering the fourth in 1994.

Nasser's disclosure means that Egypt will have 160 F-16s by the middle of the decade.

### Azerbaijanis storm bridge:

Two people were killed when about 10,000 Azerbaijanis stormed across a border bridge into Turkey, Tass news agency reported on Wednesday, says Reuter from Moscow.

It quoted Soviet border guards as saying the victims were jostled off the bridge and into the Arax river as the crowd surged across the bridge on Tuesday from the Soviet autonomous republic of Nakhichevan.

Tass said 40,000 people had gathered to mark the opening of the bridge by Nakhichevan leader Geidar Aliev, but he arrived five hours late for the ceremony. A large portion of the crowd lost patience and stormed the bridge.

Earlier, Turkish officials said the Azerbaijanis had crossed the bridge to meet relatives, but the influx had posed no real problem and all had later returned. They made no mention of the reported deaths.

### Canada to allow US, UK N-submarines:

Canada said on Wednesday it would allow US and British nuclear submarines to enter its waters without prior permission under an agreement that defuses a longstanding source of tension with Washington, reports Reuter from Ottawa.

Visits by nuclear-powered warships and vessels that can carry nuclear weapons had required approval and Canada needed assurances over safety and compensation in case of accidents.

Canada will now receive 72 hours' notice of submarines entering its waters.

The new arrangement announced by the Defence and External Affairs Ministries will allow passage for US nuclear-powered submarines through the Dixon Entrance, a 36-mile-wide (58 km) strait near the border between the Canadian province of British Columbia and the US state of Alaska.

Canada and the United States both claim the passage, which submarines have to pass through to reach a new US navy testing facility at Behm Canal, Alaska, opening in November.

### 12 Sikh rebels shot dead:

Indian Security forces shot dead 12 Sikh militants in the northern states of Punjab and Haryana, Police said Wednesday, reports AFP from Delhi.

Seven other civilians were also killed in violence linked to a bloody Sikh militant campaign for a homeland called Khalistan (Land of the Pure), the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported.

Police gunned down Harbans Singh, an "area commander" of the Khalistan Commando Force (KCF), in the heart of Haryana's Patiala city after a car chase Wednesday, the news agency said.

Police said their men began the chase after spotting three militants travelling in the car, culminating in a gunbattle in which Harbans Singh died. The two others, however, escaped.

Haryana, a Hindu-majority state with a substantial Sikh population, borders Punjab.

### Iraqis won't bow down to US:

President Saddam Hussein vowed that his people will not "bow down" before the United States and will resist the economic embargo imposed more than a year ago, the Iraqi press reported Wednesday, says AFP from Baghdad.

They (the Americans and Israelis) think that the Iraqis could fall to their knees but this people has learned only to bow down to its creator Allah, Hussein said in a speech Tuesday reported here a day later.

Describing US President George Bush as "inhuman, servile and a reptile," the Iraqi leader rejected the words of "those who claim that the embargo would be lifted if Iraq made concessions to the United States."

To make concessions is pointless and shows a lack of pride, Hussein said.

He also invited Iraqis to resist the embargo imposed by the United Nations after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait on August 2, 1990.



AYODHYA: A Hindu Sadhu or holy man, chants before the foundation stone for the proposed temple to the Hindu deity Lord Rama Wednesday in the ancient holy city Ayodhya. —AFP/UNB photo

## Palestinians gaze as Shamir blasts Arab hostility

MADRID (Spain), Oct 31: The second day of the Mideast peace conference got under way Thursday with a speech by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir sharply criticising the Arabs' history of hostility to his country, reports AP.

Shamir, in a blue-gray suit, took the podium in Madrid's Royal Palace just after 10 am (0900 GMT) and began reading notes, occasionally leaning back to gaze at Shamir.

Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al-Sharaa listened through earphones.

"I stand before you today in yet another quest for peace, not only on behalf of the state of Israel, but in the name of the entire Jewish people," said Shamir. His English thickly accented with his native Polish.

Even Egypt, apparently in coordination with the other Arabs, raised strong demands. Foreign Minister Amr Moussa called on Israel to end its control it could become an open city for all faiths.

Introducing the thorny issue of East Jerusalem, which Israel occupied in the 1967 war and later annexed as part of its capital, was a surprise move by the Egyptian minister whose country has suggested in recent weeks that the problem be postponed to future negotiations.

Wednesday, Bush offered a more conciliatory line and said that "peace will only come as a result of direct negotiations" and called for "territorial compromise."

At a news conference later, Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Benjamin Netanyahu seized on Bush's words.

He said he wanted to see compromise on both sides. "I hope this is my interpretation, that if Israel, that has already given a full 91 per cent of the territories, that compromise does not mean that Israel is asked to give 100 per cent and the other side is asked to give zero."

Shamir spoke for about 30 minutes, 15 minutes less than the time allotted to each delegate.

## Riyadh may stop aid to Mujahideen

ISLAMABAD, Oct 31: Saudi Arabia may stop military aid to Afghan rebels to go along with a decision by the Soviet Union and the United States to halt arms supplies to Afghanistan on January 1, a senior Soviet diplomat said on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

The United States and the Soviet Union agreed last month to halt all arms supplies to both sides in the war to help promote a United Nations peace plan.

The United States has been the main source of arms supplies for the Mujahideen guerrillas in the 13-year-old civil war. Moscow has backed the Kabul government.

## CPSU gave \$ 100 m to fellow parties in West

MOSCOW, Oct 31: The Soviet Communist Party gave some 100 million dollars to fellow parties in Western countries over the past 10 years, with the French and US parties getting the biggest hand-outs, Soviet television reported, says AFP.

Documents found in the former Politburo headquarters of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) revealed that the party had given 24 million dollars to the French Communist Party in the 10 years up to the banning of the Soviet Party after and abortive coup here last August.

The US party was second with donations totalling 21.25 million dollars, and Finnish communists were third with 15.6 million dollars.

The television said files on support for other communist parties had vanished.

Earlier this month the weekly magazine Russia said that the French party had for years been receiving two million dollars a year from Moscow.

The French Communist Party has indignantly denied the allegations.

## Australian aborigines meet British defence officials

LONDON, Oct 31: A delegation of Australian aborigines whose homelands were contaminated by British nuclear tests met defence officials in London on Wednesday to press their demands for compensation and a clean-up of the area, reports Reuter.

Weapons tests carried out in the 1950s have left the tribal homelands of the Maralinga Tjaputja tribe in south Australia with high levels of plutonium pollution.

## French search warrants for Libyan officials

PARIS, Oct 31: A French magistrate Wednesday issued international arrest warrants for four senior Libyan officials including a brother-in-law of Libyan leader Moammar Gaddafi, directly implicating Tripoli in the 1989 terrorist bombing of a French airliner, reports AFP.

The UTA DC-10 jetliner exploded over the desert in Chad after taking off from the Congolese capital Brazzaville on September 19, 1989 killing 170 people.

Judicial sources said two of the Libyans sought by France were Abdullah Senussi, considered number two in the Libyan intelligence services and a brother-in-law of Gaddafi and Abdallah El Razagh, Libya's representative in Brazzaville.

The bomb is believed to have been planted on the plane in the Congolese capital during a stopover.

Two officers in the Libyan secret service, Ibrahim Naelt and his deputy, Musbah Arabs were also sought.

The warrants were issued for complicity in murders, destruction of moveable and immovable goods using explosives in contravention of the law on explosives and crimes relating to a terrorist body.

Investigating magistrate Jean Louis Bruguiere who has led the French probe into the sabotage of the airliner, issued search warrants for two other senior Libyan officials, the judicial sources said.

The two were Deputy Libyan Foreign Minister Moussa Kussa and the third top official in the Libyan secret services, Abdissalam Zadm.

Two notices have also been issued calling on all states belonging to Interpol to draw attention to the two if they are

sighted on their territory or to carry out questioning to enable the examining magistrate to issue an arrest warrant or to choose to hear their cases on the spot.

All the warrants were issued through Interpol.

## US-Vietnam ties likely by '92

HONG KONG, Oct 31: The United States is expected to restore diplomatic relations with Vietnam next year, a top US official said today, reports AFP.

Robert Fauver, US Deputy Undersecretary of State Economic and Agricultural Affairs, told reporters here and in other Southeast Asian cities in a satellite linkup that "in the course of 1992, we will come back to forge relations with Vietnam."

The two were Deputy Libyan Foreign Minister Moussa Kussa and the third top official in the Libyan secret services, Abdissalam Zadm.

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