

Chandigarh declared disturbed area

NEW DELHI, Dec 8 : The Indian government has declared Chandigarh, joint capital of Punjab and Haryana states, a disturbed area enabling raids and arrests without warrant, the Press Trust of India (PTI) said Saturday, reports AFP.

The Agency said the decision had been taken following high level consultations between civilian and army authorities, but did not give an explanation.

The move follows warnings that since the army moved into Punjab to help prepare the troubled state for elections scheduled for February Sikh militants fighting for a home-

Cuba accuses US of setting up 'concentration camp'

HAVANA, Dec 8 : Cuban President Fidel Castro has accused the United States of setting up what he called a "concentration camp" of Haitian refugees at a US naval base in eastern Cuba, reports Reuters.

"Look at these hypocritical imperialists who talk about human rights while they convert the Guantanamo Bay base into a concentration camp of Haitians," the Cuban leader told a congress of school children in Havana on Friday night.

More than 3,500 Haitian refugees, picked up by the US coast guard after they fled their country in boats, have been settled at two camps at the Guantanamo Bay Base, which Cuba's communist government says is illegally occupied by US forces.

In remarks published by Cuban state media on Saturday, Castro said Cuba would not forcibly repatriate the more than 1,000 Haitians the Cuban authorities were sheltering at their own camps around Maisi on the island's eastern tip.

This situation will be discussed with the United Nations because we will not send them back by force to Haiti," the Cuban leader said.

He added Cuba was having problems" with its own camps.

BRIEFLY

TV news copter crashes : 3 killed : A television news helicopter crashed early Saturday, killing three people, and the lone survivor walked through a half-mile (kilometer) of woods with a broken ankle for help, officials said, reports AP from Paquay-Virina.

Tony Debo, a sports reporter for WTVD-TV in Durham, was found on the porch of a house. Authorities estimated it took him 45 minutes to get there after the midnight crash.

Debo "pointed to some mechanical failure, engine failure" as the cause of the crash as he and a crew returned from a high school football game in Wilmington, station general manager Tim Bennett said.

The helicopter crashed in a rural field just off a highway between Raleigh and the town of Eustis-Virina in eastern North Carolina, sheriff's officials said. Debo said a warning light came on and the helicopter went dark.

US-Ukraine diplomatic ties likely : A US envoy has had talks in Kiev with Ukrainian leaders on the possibility of establishing diplomatic relations between the two countries, Tass reported Saturday, reports Xinhua from Moscow.

The President's envoy, Deputy Secretary of State Thomas Niels, arrived in the Ukrainian capital Friday.

The newly independent country is seeking diplomatic relations with Germany, Canada, Italy, Sweden and other countries, Tass said.

It was also reported that Niels is expected to discuss with Ukrainian leaders on nuclear weapons, human rights, economic reforms and other issues.

Violence claims 10 in Algeria : Nine Islamic fundamentalists and one policeman were killed Saturday in a clash between the two groups in eastern Algeria, authorities reported, says AP.

State-run television said the confrontation took place in El Oued, near the Tunisian border. The town is near the site of an attack last week that left three border police dead, their throats slashed.

A statement from the gendarmerie said three people, one fundamentalist and two members of the security force, were injured in the latest confrontation.

The attack comes less than three weeks before Algeria's first multiparty vote for parliament since independence from France in 1962.

The Islamic Salvation Front has yet to say whether it will take part in the December 26 voting, although it has signed up candidates in all districts.

100 hurt as trains collide in UK : More than 100 people were injured Saturday, 10 of them seriously, when a passenger train crashed into another that was stationary in a tunnel under the river Severn near Bristol, western England, hospital sources said, reports AFP from London.

The train, travelling from the southern England port of Portsmouth to Cardiff in South Wales, hurtled into the rear of an express from London that had stopped about two miles (three kilometers) into the tunnel.

A spokesman for the Royal Gwent Hospital said 102 people including four children were hospitalised after the collision.

Rescuers said that everyone had been brought out of the wreckage in the tunnel.

ANC leader named secy-gen of CP : One of the African National Congress' most militant leaders, Chris Hani, was named secretary-general of the South African Communist Party on Saturday, reports AP.

Hani was unanimously chosen by the 413 delegates at a party congress. It is thought that he will enhance the party's popularity with radical blacks, particularly younger people who oppose negotiations with the white-minority government.

Hani has long been a leading member of the ANC, the nation's main black opposition group. He is chief of the ANC's military wing and was elected to the ANC's governing National Executive in July.

His selection to head the Communist Party came as somewhat of a surprise. The ANC said recently it wanted Hani to devote all his time to his ANC positions, and Hani himself had said he would not be available for the Communist Party position. It was unclear how the selection would affect his ANC posts.

International

Arab-Israeli bickering over venue ends

Middle East peace talks resume in Washington tomorrow

WASHINGTON, Dec 8 : Weeks of Arab-Israeli bickering over when and where to hold the next round of Middle East peace talks have ended—for the moment, reports Reuters.

Representatives of Israel, Syria and Lebanon, together with a joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation, will resume peace talks in Washington next Tuesday.

A large Israeli delegation will arrive in Washington this morning, four days after the date originally set by the US administration for the US-sponsored negotiations.

They will skip tomorrow because the Arab negotiators plan to take the day off to mark the fourth anniversary of the Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories.

But the heads of the four Arab delegations said on Saturday they would go on Tuesday to the State Department, the designated site for the talks, and an Israeli spokeswoman said the Israeli delegates would also be present.

It has taken more than a month for the United States, acting as middleman, to bring the two sides in the Arab-Israeli conflict back to the table after a first round of unprecedented direct talks in Madrid on November 3.

Israel wanted the talks to take place in or near the Middle East while the Arabs, trusting the US administration will intervene in their favour if Israel rejects land-for-peace, prefer to stay in Washington.

Both sides have said the want to go straight into sub-

stance in the Washington talks but the dispute over where to meet could resurface in the early stages.

Israel says the talks should move out of Washington after

one or two meetings.

Suhail Shammam, the head of the Lebanese delegation, in remarks echoed by his colleagues, said on Saturday, "we intend to stay in Washington

and I don't think we will entertain proposals to change the location easily."

In the last four days of concentrated wrangling, both sides have had to make concessions.

Israel gave up a request that its meeting with each of the Arab delegations be staggered at intervals of several days and agreed to include substance in the talks.

The Arabs, anxious to lock the United States into the mediating role, insisted on Thursday that the State Department should propose a new date for the talks.

They dropped the demand when it became clear that the United States would not comply and that the wrangling was beginning to make both sides look ridiculous.

The Israelis will have separate talks with each of the three Arab delegates in separate State Department rooms.

In the case of Lebanon, the United States has proposed Israel persuade its Lebanon, militia allies to pull out of the southern town of Jezzine as a test and gesture of good will.

It has asked Israel to say what territorial concessions it is prepared to make on the Syrian Golan Heights and has asked Syria to tell Israel what kind of peace it envisions.

Israel has said it is bringing new proposals on interim self-rule for the Palestinians of the occupied territories. Palestinians say they will have to be good to convince them Israel is prepared to concede more than token autonomy.

JERUSALEM : An Israeli border policeman arrests a Palestinian girl Saturday during a violent demonstration that erupted here prior to the 4th anniversary of Intifada (Palestinian uprising) today (December 9). The police used rubber bullets to disperse the crowd. — AFP/UNB photo

Nepal committed to promote human rights in Tibet

On the failure of the SAARC meeting, Koital said, some technical problems shot up in

5 children buried alive in Jammu

JAMMU, Dec 8 : Five children were buried alive as a mound of earth tumbled onto them when they were collecting empty shells in an army shooting range, in Nazirwala village in Samba sector, 35 kms from here, last evening, reports PTI.

Addressing a press conference here, he said the hazards of nuclear weapons should be viewed as a global "problem and many countries have started viewing these human problems in totality."

He said both India and Nepal are committed to promote and preserve human rights and democracy and all problems must be solved on these basis.

Goto said : "This most unfortunate event certainly taught us a most valuable lesson," and vowed that Tokyo will never again use war as an instrument of national policy.

Regarding the Tibet issue,

he said we are committed to

promotion and preservation of

human rights. We should not

like to point out any particular

part of the world. We should

make efforts to ensure the

practice of human rights there.

Police identified the five

children as Sethi Lal, Angrez

Singh, Nelli Daisy, Madho Rani

and Renu Devi. All the chil-

dren were in the age group of

seven to ten.

All the five were buried

alive under the debris. The

bodies were later dug out by

police, the reports said.

On the last SAARC summit and those should be seen in the light of the provisions of the SAARC charter.

He said the charter necessitated the presence of the heads of all member states because if the head of any state could not attend the meeting its decision could not be unanimous creating problems again.

He expressed happiness about the forthcoming visit of the Chinese Premier to India and said it would help in fostering good relations between India and China.

Asked about movement of

terrorists on the Indo-Nepal

border, he said "I don't believe in any kind of terrorism. An agreement has already been reached."

7 killed as planes collide in US

SNOHOMISH, Wash. DEC 8 : Two small planes collided over a rural field Saturday, killing seven people, an official said, reports AP.

Wreckage was scattered over a half-mile (0.8 kilometers) area, mainly in a farm field next to the strip, said Snohomish county Sheriff's spokesman Elliott Woodall.

The accident occurred about one mile (1.6 kilometers) west of Harvey Airfield, a private landing strip about 12 miles (19 kilometers) northeast of Seattle, said Michael O'Connor, a Federal Aviation Administration duty officer in Renton.

Witness Jon Hornback said he saw three planes in the sky just before the accident.

"I couldn't believe it when I saw it," Hornback said. "They just drove into each other like no one was even looking out the front."

"We saw one guy... just plummet from the sky, tumbling over and over and over," Hornback said. "We kept hoping a parachute would pop or something, but none of them had parachutes on."

The ideas are distorted and mutilated," the conservative Archbishop of Braga, Eurico Nogueira said in an interview. Saramago said he wanted to condemn the church's role in the history of human suffering.

Although there was no immediate official reaction from the Church many Catholics were outraged. The book also portrays Jesus as the lover of Mary Magdalene and describes Jesus's conception by Joseph and Mary.

"The book aims to show, 'Christianity was not worth it,'" he said in an interview.

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