

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-

land had fanned out into surrounding states.

Since the warning more than 40 people have been killed in militant attacks in the neighbouring states of Haryana and Uttar Pradesh.

Punjab, where some 4,000 deaths this year have been attributed to the militant fight for a theocratic homeland, has long been mandated a disturbed area.

The disturbed areas act enables security forces and the army to search, raid and arrest suspects without warrants.

Chandigarh, which has the status of a union territory, lies on the border of Haryana and Punjab.

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 Maiti 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,

which were not big enough to hold the influx of Haitians.

The refugees are among thousands who have fled Haiti by boat following the September military coup that ousted elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

"The Yankees do not have any right to concentrate Haitians at the (Guantanamo) naval base and it just shows the little respect they have for human rights and international laws," Castro said.

He added the Cuban authorities were giving medical attention to Haitian refugees and questioned whether the US military were doing the same at their camps.

Castro criticised the decision by the US government not to grant asylum to vast majority of the Haitians, which Washington says are not politically persecuted but merely seeking a better life.

He contrasted this policy to the welcome given to Cubans who cross the Florida Straits in rafts to seek asylum in the US.

"When a 'worm' of Cuban origin arrives at Miami in a raft or boat, he or she is rejected like the Haitians. On the contrary, they are praised and their action is publicised around the world," Castro said.

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 Shammah, 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.

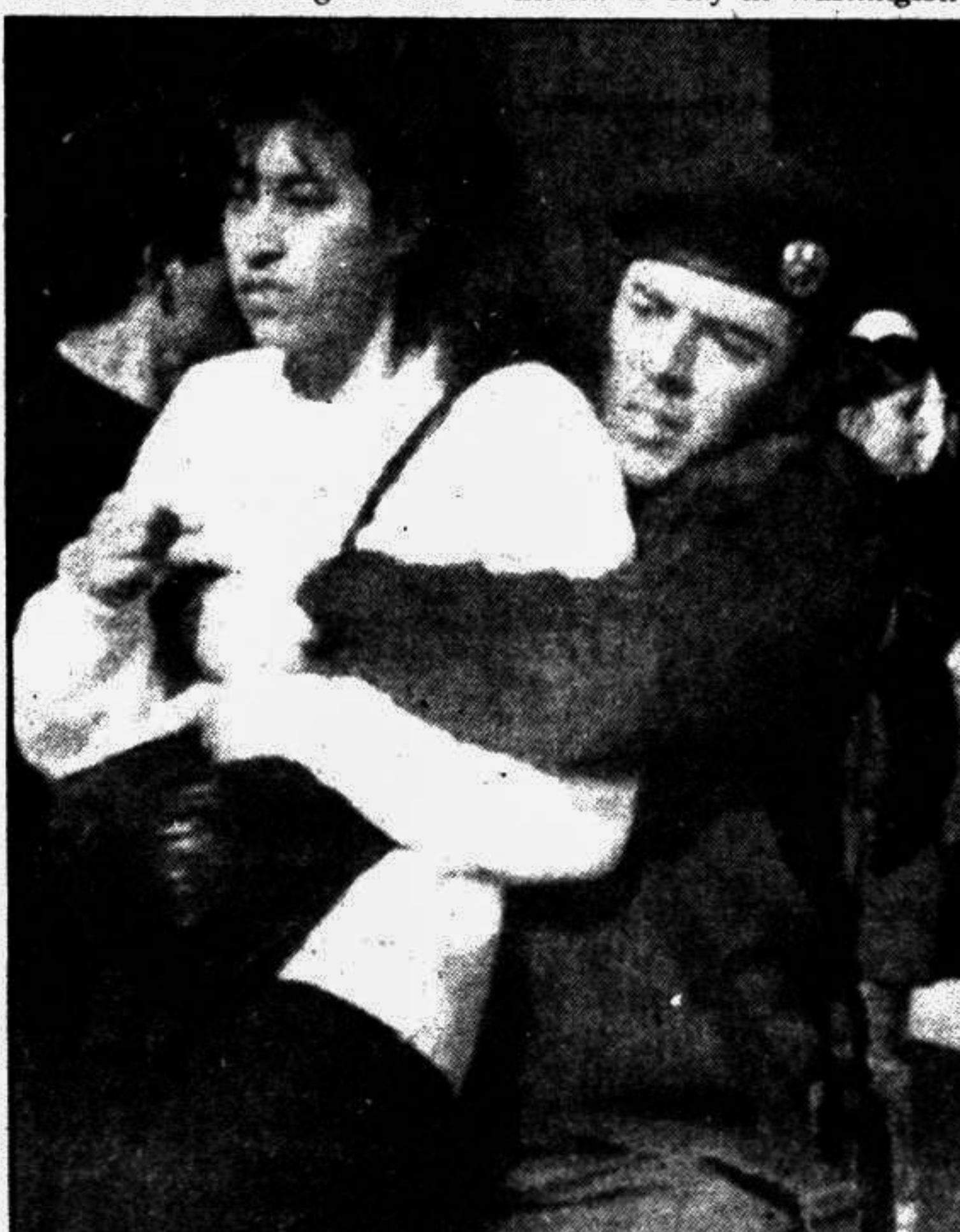
They dropped the demand when it became clear that the United States would not comply and that the wrangling was beginning to make both sides look ridiculous.

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

Japan apologises to Philippines

MANILA, Dec 8 : The Japanese Ambassador to Manila, Toshio Goto, on Sunday apologised for this country's occupation of the Philippines during World War II, reports AFP.

Goto, speaking at a World War II memorial ceremony at the presidential palace here, expressed his country's contribution over the suffering inflicted upon a great many people of the Philippines and other Asia-Pacific countries.

Japanese warplanes bombed key U.S. Air and Naval facilities in the Philippines on the morning of December 8, a few hours after the devastating Japanese Air raid on Pearl Harbour in Hawaii. Japanese troops occupied the Philippines for the next three years.

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.

Nepal committed to promote human rights in Tibet

VARANASI, Dec 8 : The Nepalese Prime Minister GP Koirala, said the formation of a nuclear-free zone in south Asian countries should not be confined to a particular region, 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.

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.

On the failure of the SAARC meeting, Koirala 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 Nazwal village in Samba sector, 35 kms from here, last evening, reports PTI.

Police identified the five children as Sethi Lal, Angrez Singh, Nelli Daisy, Madho Rani and Renu Devi. All the children 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.

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 members 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 in 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 Airdfield, 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 dove into each other like no one was even looking out the front."

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



ANTWERP : Over 3,000 persons carry signs showing a red sign circle with a slash superimposed of a photo of Adolf Hitler photo as they demonstrate against extremist right-wing movements and fascism in Belgium. Many European countries have experienced a surge in fascist, neo-Nazi, anti-semitic and anti-immigrant groups, activities and political parties in recent years. — AFP/UNB photo

Japan 'deeply remorseful' for attack on Pearl Harbour

TOKYO, Dec 8 : Japan said today it was "deeply remorseful" for its surprise attack on the US base at Pearl Harbour 50 years ago, in an effort to state clearly its contrition after parliament's failure to pass a resolution of regret, reports AFP.

The statement by Foreign Minister Michio Watanabe was issued on the 50th anniversary of the fateful attack which drew the United States into the war.

At the same time, Japan expressed delight that US President George Bush had earlier spoken out against isolationism and for the US-Japan alliance in a ceremony at the

base in Hawaii.

The statement, which was issued in English and thus avoided problems of translation which dogged another comment by Watanabe last week, said "Japan is deeply remorseful over these past actions."

"I wish again to express my sincerest condolences to all those people and the countries concerned and Japan who sacrificed their lives in the course of the war," Watanabe's statement said.

The words in English "deeply remorseful" had been called into question by members of his own ministry last week.

In an interview in Japanese with Watanabe, the Washington Post had used "deep remorse" to translate the Japanese word that the Foreign Minister had used : Hanshi.

But unnamed Ministry bureaucrats said the word should be rather translated as "regret", and questioned the Post's assertion it had been the strongest expression of regret expressed by Japan to date.

In his statement today, Watanabe also said Japan should not avoid accepting its responsibility for starting the war.

"Japan, for its part, should face squarely the historical fact that the Pacific War, which in-

flicted unbearable suffering and sorrow on many peoples, of the Asian Pacific region, was started 50 years ago today with Japan's surprise attack on Pearl Harbour," the statement said.

"Japan renews its resolve never to repeat such an unfortunate history and, as a nation dedicated to peace, wishes to continue its positive contribution to the peace and prosperity of the international community," the statement said.

The statement, which was released here at 7:00 A.M. followed failure by the Diet, or parliament, to pass an "anti-war" resolution in time for the

Off the Record

Lucky men recall bitter memories

PEARL HARBOUR, Hawaii : "We were incredibly lucky. We were on drydock," said Harold Rivinius, who was aboard the battleship Pennsylvania when Japanese warplanes attacked Pearl Harbour exactly 50 years ago, reports AFP.

"They (attackers) didn't find us until 9:00 am. Then they dropped four or five bombs. One hit us directly," said the 69-year-old survivor from North Dakota.

As he peered out toward Ford Island as if to relive the tragic events, Rivinius said with a shrug, "It's got to come to an end... it's the past."

He said he had no hard feelings toward the Japanese. "I had just finished showering, with only my skivvies on, when I heard the planes," said William Speer, who was on the Honolulu, a light cruiser.

"I looked out the port AFT and saw a plane drop a torpedo, bank, and then I saw the red rising sun of Japan.... the meatball, as we used to call it," the 73-year-old survivor said.

Arthur Critchett remembered seeing a large concentration of aircraft in the area at 7:55 am and thinking that it was odd for Sunday morning.

Flaws in education can't hinder discoveries

STOCKHOLM : Winners of the 1991 Nobel prizes in physics, economics, physiology and chemistry said Saturday they made scientific discoveries despite various flaws in their educations, reports AP.

However, most praised the flexibility of the UN scientific research and higher education system, although this is the first year since 1975 that no American citizen is a Nobel Prize winner.

"One of my greatest advantages is that I have never taken a course in economics," said Ronald Coase, the British winner of this year's Nobel Memorial Prize in Economics. "This has meant I start with the problem and how to solve it. (instead of) someone who knows all about techniques and goes around trying to apply them.... like corpses looking for an undertaker."

The 81-year-old University of Chicago Law School professor emeritus was honoured for theories the economics establishment had ignored for decades, such as how transaction costs and laws affect an economic system.

"I'm very pessimistic about Russia," he said. "It's all very well saying you're going to have market prices, but without a legal system defining what responsibilities and liabilities you're incurring and not knowing what you're gaining it's going to be very difficult to decide on a price."

"I was lucky that, because of the war, I was never in school until the second year of high school, so I missed elementary school," said Pierre-Gilles de Gennes of France. "One main thing from my Prize is it gives me a little leeway to shake this system."

Rushdie victim of religious terrorism

STOCKHOLM, Sweden : Nobel literature laureate Nadine Gordimer said Saturday that British author Salman Rushdie is a victim of religious terrorism, whose case should be taken to the United Nations, reports AP.

"The edict of a world religion has sentenced a writer to death," the South African novelist said in a lecture at the Swedish Academy. Tuesday Gordimer will be honoured at a ceremony recognising her as the 1991 Nobel Prize winner.

The late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini of Iran declared nearly three years ago that Rushdie should die because his novel, "The Satanic Verses," was an offence against Islam. Rushdie has since lived in hiding in Britain.

"This murderous new dictate invoking the power of international terrorism in the name of a great and respected religion should and can be dealt with only by democratic governments and the United Nations, as an offence against humanity," Gordimer said.

"There is no asylum for him anywhere," Gordimer said. "Every morning when this writer sits down to write, he does not know if he will live through the day."

She praised Rushdie as a brilliant writer. Even if he were mediocre, she said, "his situation is the terrible concern of every fellow writer.... It should be the concern of all individuals and, above all, of governments and human rights organisations all over the world."

Christianity not worth it

LISBON : A new novel from Jose Saramago is always a big event in Lisbon. But the interest surrounding the latest book from Portugal's best-known writer, a controversial re-telling of the life of Jesus Christ, has been frenetic, reports AP.

His "The Gospel According to Jesus Christ," sold a "phenomenal" 20,000 copies in the week after its November 13 release, a spokeswoman for his publisher said.

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

"If we had continued with the old Roman Gods, the history of Europe and of the world would not have been very different.... man would not be very different."

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 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.

Christianity, like any other religion with few exceptions, bears a mark of blood and suffering that in some cases reaches torture.... religious war, blood lettings, invasions, fires, tortures."

Japan has been made uneasy by the ceremonies to commemorate the attack on Pearl Harbour on December 7, 1945. The attack, which came before Tokyo's official declaration of war on the United States, left 2,403 Americans dead.

Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa on Friday told reporters that Japan felt "deeply responsible" for its militarist past.

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 Faquay-Varina.

Tony Debo, a sports reporter for WTVB-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 Euquay-Varina 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.

They 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 kilometres) 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.