

# BRIEFLY

**Kabul seeks food from Pindi :** Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani asked Pakistani authorities on Saturday for food to meet shortages in his country during the winter, says Reuter from Islamabad.

Rabbani made the request at talks with Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif during his first official visit to Pakistan since Pakistan's support for overcoming the food shortage during the impending winter, the official APP news agency said.

Sharif told Rabbani that Pakistan would give "support to the legitimate government in Afghanistan" and would not allow its territory to be used to undermine it, the agency reported.

Afghanistan has previously depended on food supplies from the former Soviet Union. Supplies had been reaching the country since the Mujahideen took power in Kabul last April from the former communist government.

**One shot dead in S Lebanon :** Israeli troops shot and killed one guerrilla overnight during a firefight in south Lebanon, the army command said Saturday, says AP from Jerusalem.

The army statement said the soldiers, patrolling Israel's self-proclaimed security zone in south Lebanon, encountered a guerrilla band Friday night near the village of Houana in the area of Aramita and opened fire.

One guerrilla died and several were wounded in the clash, the statement said. The wounded fled with the rest of the squad north of the Israeli-controlled zone, army radio reported. No Israelis were hurt, the army added.

Military sources said a page of the Quran, two Soviet-made Kalashnikov rifles, hand grenades, a bomb and ammunition were found next to the body of the dead guerrilla.

**16 Germans killed in road mishap:** Sixteen Germans were killed on Saturday when their minibus and a train collided on a railway crossing at Agard, southwest of Budapest, reports Reuter from Budapest.

Hungary's MTI news agency reported that 15 of the 19 Germans in the bus were killed on the spot and another died on the way to hospital. The other three were injured, two seriously.

Hungarian radio quoted a police investigator as saying the German minibus had driven from a camping site and ignored a red warning light at the railway crossing.

The train driver told a radio reporter he was travelling at 100 km (60 miles) an hour when he saw the minibus and applied his brakes, but could not stop in time.

**Quake hits Indonesia :** A strong earthquake measuring 6.6 on the Richter scale hit near the Indonesian island of Halmahera, the US Geological Survey (USGS) reported, Reuter says from Washington.

There were no reports of damage or injuries after the tremor, which was recorded at 6:16 am local time Sunday (10:16 GMT on Saturday) by USGS earthquake monitors in Golden, Colorado, a USGS spokesman said.

The earthquake monitors said the tremor was centred about 1,600 miles (2,575 km) east northeast of the Indonesian capital of Jakarta and about a 1,050 miles (1,690 km) south-southeast of Manila in the Philippines.

It was the strongest earthquake in the Halmahera area in more than 32 years, since a magnitude 6.8 tremor on March 5, 1960.

**Gunmen cut Baluch power lines :** Gunmen shot through power transmission lines, cutting electricity supplies to most of Pakistan's vast southwestern province of Baluchistan throughout Saturday, reports Reuter from Quetta.

Power authority officials in Quetta, the provincial capital, said the lines were cut early in the morning by gunfire in a village in the adjoining province of Sindh. The damaged lines carried power to Baluchistan from Sindh's Quddu thermal power station.

The officials said they did not know who fired the shots. None claimed responsibility.

**Earthquake shakes Iran:** An earthquake measuring 4.1 on the Richter scale shook two provinces in southern Iran on Sunday. There was no immediate report on injuries or damage, the official Islamic Republic News Agency said, reports AP from Nicosia.

IRNA, monitored in Nicosia, said the earthquake struck at 3:42 am (00:12 GMT) and the epicenter was 280 kilometers (173 miles) southeast of Shiraz near the Evaz and Bastak districts of Fars and Hormuzgan provinces.

It said the seismography centre at Shiraz reported the quake measured 4.1 on the Richter scale, which gauges the energy released by an earthquake as measured by the ground motion recorded on a seismograph.

Every increase of one number means the ground motion is 10 times greater. An earthquake measuring 4 on the scale can cause moderate damage.

## Koreas to talk family reunion this week

SEOUL, Sept 27 : South Korea is prepared to be flexible over a North Korean demand for the repatriation of an aged guerrilla fighter at talks this week to get a family reunion plan back on track, a press report said today, according to AFP.

The national Yonhap news agency quoted officials as saying Seoul wanted to hold quarterly family reunions arranged through their respective Red Cross societies.

Seoul is prepared to discuss repatriating Li In-Mao, a former North Korean guerrilla jailed here for decades for refusing to recant communism, in order to allow the family exchange plan to proceed, the report said.

The two Koreas were to have held a limited family exchange in August, but the plan

was shelved after the North threw up a series of conditions, including the repatriation of Li, who says he was a war correspondent when captured.

The two sides will hold high level talks this week to discuss reunions of relatives separated by the cold war division of Korea, the officials were quoted as saying.

South Korea has also secured the support of Cornelio Sommaruga, president of the international committee of the Red Cross who visited both Koreas this month, to help mediate a solution.

Seoul will also demand to interview 12 South Korean fishermen who were abroad a vessel that was seized by the North in 1987 to see if they want to be repatriated, the report said.



ZAGREB, Croatia : Muslim refugee women from embattled Bosnia-Herzegovina pray in the city mosque on September 25, after having fled from their homes carrying only bare necessities in plastic bags. — AFP/UNB photo

## Arafat concerned at Israel-Syrian peace move

# US to give Israel Apache, Blackhawk helicopters

OHIO, Sept 27 : The White House said on Saturday the United States would supply Israel with Apache and Blackhawk helicopters, reports Reuter.

A statement released by the White House as President George Bush was campaigning in Ohio said Bush and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin had reached agreement on the measures, which it said would be initiated by the United States "in the very near future."

"These measures include the supply of Apache and Blackhawk helicopters and the prepositioning of advanced defence equipment in Israel," the White House statement said.

White House spokesman Judy Smith said most of the equipment would be supplied to be Israeli next year.

She refused to say how many Apache and Blackhawk helicopters were involved in the deal.

Asked whether the decision

to supply the weapons was intended to reassure the Israelis after the president announced the sale of 72 F-15 fighter jets to Saudi Arabia about two weeks ago, Smith declined to answer directly.

But she said the move was intended to show that the United States would "maintain its ongoing commitment to the preservation and maintenance of Israel's qualitative edge in the region."

She said the equipment would be drawn down from United States military stocks. Congress had authorised such transfers of military equipment to Israel about two years ago.

A Paris report adds: Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat voiced worry in an interview published on Saturday that Israel would make a separate peace with Syria that would not include settlement of the Palestinian issue.

The PLO has demanded that any peace agreement between Israel and other Arab countries be conditional on Israeli withdrawal from the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"What has happened to the political and national rights of the Palestinian people? They are going to create another Camp David," he said, referring to a 1979 peace accord under which Israel returned the entire Sinai peninsula to Egypt.

Another report says: The Israeli army will bar nearly two million Palestinians of the occupied territories from entering Israel for three days because of the Jewish new year starting today.

The army announced on Saturday night that only Arabs from the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip with special permits would be allowed in from 4 am today until the same time on Wednesday.

## 25 pc cut in Thai army by next decade

BANGKOK, Sept 27: Thailand will reduce its armed forces by 25 per cent over the next decade because the external threat to country has diminished in the post-cold war era, a top general was quoted today as saying, reports AFP.

That includes a 15 per cent cut in military strength over the next five years, with much of that coming from the army, Lieutenant General Surayudh Chulanonda told the Nation newspaper.

Thailand's army currently numbers about 170,000, and

that is about half its total military strength.

The reductions will be achieved through voluntary retirements, forcing soldiers guilty of offenses to resign, and decommissioning officers who fail physical and knowledge tests.

Surayudh said the defence council had approved the force reductions because Thailand was unlikely to face a big or long war during the next decade.

"It's not going to be a situation similar to the Cambodian or Lebanon civil wars," he told the English Language daily.

But he said the military needs better technology.

"We still don't have a naval force (capable of) protecting our economic interests in the Andaman Sea, and this is important given the project to develop the southern seaboard area," Surayudh said. "And as any military strategist knows, the air force would be at the forefront in deterring any possible aggression."

The Nation also quoted an unidentified security source as saying the navy would now get priority among the three branches of the military. The army has had priority because

## 14 more killed in Kashmir clash

SRINAGAR, India, Sept 27: Fourteen people, including two soldiers, were killed when Muslim militants opened fire on government troops in Jammu-Kashmir state, police said Sunday, reports AP.

Soldiers searching for guerrillas in Tregam village, 120 kilometers north of capital Srinagar, shot and killed nine rebels who fired on them, said police chief Balwinder Singh Bedi.

Two soldiers were killed and six injured in the encounter on Saturday, Bedi said.

In another incident, troops burnt down a house to flush out three rebels who fired on soldiers, witnesses said. Bedi, however, said the three militants were killed in cross firing at Achabal, 70 kilometers south of Srinagar, the seat of the Muslim insurrection.

Bedi said he was probing allegations that soldiers burnt down the wood-and-brick house.

## US Congress okays \$2.1b for space station Freedom

WASHINGTON, Sept 27: The US Congress has voted to spend 2.1 billion dollar next year on research needed to build the space station Freedom, an orbiting laboratory, reports AFP.

The project, which has contractors in 37 of the country's 50 states, provides 75,000 jobs at a time when lingering unemployment is the bane of President George Bush's re-election campaign.

Because of the many states that stand to benefit from the contracts, critics of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) project put up little fight when the House of Representatives and Senate voted Friday to approve nearly all of the 2.25 billion dollars the President had requested.

The space station is expected to cost 40 billion dollars to build and 100 billion dollars to operate during its planned 30-year lifespan. NASA hopes to begin building Freedom in four years.

The funding was included in an 86.9-billion-dollar spending package for Housing, veterans, space and environmental programmes in the government's 1993 fiscal year, which begins October 1.

# Off the Record

## They were found stretched across the beach

SYDNEY: Wildlife authorities began to carry out autopsies Sunday on 197 pilot whales which beached themselves in the southern Australian state of Tasmania, reports Reuter.

A spokesman for the Parks, Wildlife and Heritage Department in Hobart said the autopsies, to try to solve the mystery of why the whales stranded themselves, should be finished by Monday or Tuesday.

The pilot whales would then be buried at the site in a single pit, he said.

They were found on Saturday stretched across hundreds of metres of beach about 10 km (six miles) north of Bicheno, on Tasmania's east coast. All were dead except two which were later destroyed.

## Her last words were 'please give me the gas'

SOUTHFIELD, Mich: Suicide machine inventor Dr Jack Kevorkian assisted in the suicide Saturday of a 52-year-old woman who had terminal lung cancer. Kevorkian's attorney said, reports AP.

Lois F Hawes, of Warren, died at about 10:45 am, after placing a mask over her face and turning on a canister of carbon monoxide, attorney Geoffrey Fieger said at a news conference in his Southfield office. Hawes' last words were, "please give me the gas," Fieger said.

Hawes' death was Kevorkian's fifth assisted suicide and came 10 days after Kevorkian vowed to the Michigan State Medical Society to continue assisted suicides. His comments came after the society rejected his request for immediate help in handling his patients.

His medical license was suspended in November 1991, after he helped a Portland, Ore woman kill herself.

Kevorkian, 63, of the Detroit suburb of Royal Oak, was not present at the news conference Saturday, and Fieger said he would not be making a statement.

Kevorkian has been charged with murder in three of the four assisted suicides, but the charges were later dropped because Michigan has no law against assisted suicide.

## Wedding night in jail

FLORENCE, Italy: The bride wore white, the husband wore a tuxedo and they both ended up in handcuffs, reports AP. Authorities said Saturday that a newly married couple were arrested on charges of drug trafficking just as they sat down to their wedding feast.

According to the news agency ANSA, police waited for the ceremony, picture-taking and the seating of guests at the table before they hauled away Claudio Marrucci and Giuseppe Antonazzo of Massa, both in their late 20s.

Investigators accused them of being part of a large international drug ring, ANSA said. The arrests took place September 19 but were only disclosed Saturday.

The news agency reported that the couple had just finished their appetizers when police slapped the cuffs on them. The guests — bewildered at first — decided to go on with the meal, ANSA said.

## She had to go to '84 Charing Cross Road'

LONDON: Helene Hanff was savouring all her favourite haunts on what she said was her last trip to London, Fortnum and Mason, Buckingham Palace. And, of course, 84 Charing Cross Road, reports AP.

The clerks in black tails were still ringing up sales at Fortnum's. The inscrutable guards marched across the forecourt of Buckingham Palace on schedule at 11 am. She knew the secondhand bookstore, Marks and Co, at 84 Charing Cross Road was now a record shop but still, she had to go back.

After all, her literary love affair with Britain began when she started writing in 1949 to the musty old shop which specialized in out-of-print books.

Her best-selling book and movie "84 Charing Cross Road," chronicling 20 years of correspondence with the store's manager, Frank Doel, has made the address one of the most famous in London.

"I had to drop in at 84 to see how it's doing," she said. Hanff insisted on going alone to see the circular plaque outside commemorating her book. No photographers to jar the memories, please.

The old Marks and Co sign which record store owner Howard Woo of San Francisco bought at auction now hangs over rows of compact discs.

The smaller Marks and Co sign which flapped in the breeze outside the shop at the corner of Shaftesbury Avenue now hangs in her New York apartment, a present from a fan.

## Spread Buddhism in Russia: Dalai Lama

MOSCOW, Sept 27: The Dalai Lama, exiled spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhists, called Saturday on followers to spread the "eternal values" of Buddhism in Russia, Itar-Tass news agency said, reports AFP.

"It is necessary to open schools, to teach people the basics of our faith and to bring up children in the spirit of its eternal values the Dalai Lama said in an interview with the agency.

He arrived in Moscow and left Saturday on a flight for India where he resides.

# Kennedy took cocaine with his children to teach moderation

NEW YORK, Sept 27 : A new book written by a disgraced former top aide to Senator Edward Kennedy accuses him of being addicted to sex, drugs and alcohol and says he once snorted cocaine with his own children, reports Reuter.

The book provoked immediate outrage from Kennedy who called it "a collection of bizarre and untrue stories."

Through a spokesman, the 60-year-old Democratic senator from Massachusetts denied ever using cocaine of any other illegal drug and many long-time associates raced to his defence, branding the book a total fabrication by a man with

a history of mental problems and huge debts.

About 250,000 copies of the book, "Senator: 10 Years With Ted Kennedy," by ex-aide Richard Burke will be in stores on Monday. The publisher, St. Martin's press, released advance copies to the press on Saturday.

"Senator" details Kennedy's alleged sex orgies with celebrities like Warren Beatty, Jack Nicholson and Joan Baez, wild drinking bouts, and accuses the senator of regular use of cocaine including having the drug secretly shipped to his US senate office. It says his cocaine addiction was so bad that

aides had to wipe the drug from his nose before he went out on the senate floor.

Dr Stuart Shapiro, an expert on drug addiction who travelled with the senator for nine months during the 1980 presidential campaign and has known him for many years, called the charges of cocaine use "preposterous."

"I was with the senator from early morning until late at night for months and I never saw any signs of cocaine use and believe me you can tell if someone was using cocaine. This book is a complete fabrication."

Burke, who quit Kennedy's

staff in 1981 after making phoney death threats against himself while a cocaine addict himself, describes without giving a date an incident in which the senator allegedly took cocaine with his two eldest children, Kara and Edwar Jr, to "teach them moderation."

Burke claims that Kennedy was concerned about his children's own use of cocaine and instead of lecturing them not to use it, wound up snorting the drug with them to show them they could control what they were doing.

Burke says he was told about the incident by a former girlfriend, whom he calls

Cindy Marks, who was also having an affair with Kennedy and allegedly was in the house that night.

In an author's note in his book, Burke admits Cindy Marks was not the women's real name and that she was a "composite character" even though he insists her story was fact.

Burke also alleges that Kennedy had affairs at his home in suburban Washington while his children were in the house, seduced a 17-year-old girl on his staff in a hot tub at his house and introduced her to cocaine use.

He also claims Kennedy had

frequent affairs while he was married to Joan Kennedy, including one with Margaret Trudeau, the ex-wife of former Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau.

Kennedy press secretary Paul Donovan said, "this book relies on invented characters, fabricated names and composite characters. It is not a biography. It is a work of fiction."

The senator in a statement said, "I have no intention of reading this book but it has now been described to me. It is an outrageous example of say anything, sell anything and publish anything for a buck."



JOHANNESBURG : African National Congress President Nelson Mandela (R) and South African President F W De Clerk (L) arrive at the world trade centre in Johannesburg on Saturday for their summit on ways to prevent political violence in this country. — AFP/UNB photo

## Pak airlift in Somalia to end Tuesday

ISLAMABAD, Sept 27: The airlift of 500 Pakistani peace-keeping soldiers to famine-stricken Somalia will be completed in two days, senior military officials said Sunday, reports AP.

Briefing reporters on the month-long operation, US military officers said the last batch of some 50 Pakistani troops would leave Islamabad Monday night and arrive in the Somali capital of Mogadishu Tuesday morning.

American transport planes have been ferrying Pakistani troops and their equipment to the Somali capital of Mogadishu to guard its port and airport and to protect relief supplies for the dying.

Civil war, lawlessness and a devastating drought have caused a famine that has killed more than 100,000 people. Relief workers fear 2 million more are at risk.

## Kabul frees former vice president

KABUL, Sept 27 : The Islamic government said Sunday it had released Gen. Mohammed Rafai, a vice president in the former Communist regime arrested last week for trying to sneak out of the country, reports AP.

Rafai was detained Monday at Kabul airport by security forces who stopped him from leaving on a flight to India, Defence Ministry spokesman Yunis Qanuni said.

But Qanuni said Rafai was arrested for using a fake passport and not for crimes from the 14-year civil war between the former Communist government and the Muslim rebels.

Qanuni said the Islamic government that replaced Communist rule in April had no evidence that Rafai was a war criminal so nothing could stop him from leaving

Afghanistan as long as he has a valid passport.

With the exception of ousted President Najibullah, all former Communist officials have been granted general amnesty as long as they do not actively oppose Afghanistan's new Islamic government.

Rafai was an architect of the April 1978 coup that installed the Communist government and a close associate of Najibullah. When the regime collapsed, he sided with renegade guerrilla leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar in his unsuccessful bid to seize the capital.

Najibullah remains at a UN compound in Kabul, where he took refuge in April. The new government wants the United Nations to hand over Najibullah to stand trial for his role in the civil war, which claimed more than 2 million lives.

## Romanians begin voting

BUCHAREST, Sept 27: Romanians began voting today in presidential and parliamentary elections presenting a watershed choice between communist leaders and radical reformers, reports Reuter.

Polls opened at 6 am (0600 GMT) and voting began in Bucharest at first light, in clear autumn weather.

Balloting was due to end at 9 pm (1800 GMT). Some 16 million of the country's 23 million people were entitled to vote.

Opinion polls gave unclear forecasts of the outcome.