BRIEFS

Major urges EC to save Yslav victims

BRUSSELS, Oct 15 British Prime Minister John Major said in a letter to EC partners that hundreds of thousands of people could die in former Yugoslavia this winter and that Friday's community summit must tackle the issue. "We should address the looming humanitarian disaster in the former Yugoslavia ... there is a serious danger of hundreds of thou sands of deaths this winter, Major wrote, resorts Reuter.

British Coal to make 100,000 jobless

LONDON, Oct 15: British Coal's savage cutbacks could mean more than 100,000 job losses throughout the hard pressed UK economy in addition to the 30,000 miners' job losses announced Tuesday, employers and trades unions said. Stateowned British Rail, road haulers, power generators small pit contractors and equipment suppliers are set to bear the brunt, as well as small businesses in mining communities. Those with big exposure include major equipment firms Dobson Park Industries (DBSN,L) and Fenner PLC (FENR,L) Gope Company Bridon PLC (BDNL,L) and supplies firm Ms International (MSIL,L), reports Reuter.

Alcatel launches digital project

ISLAMABAD, Oct 15: France's Alcatel launched a multi-million dollar project to manufacture digital switching systems here Wednesday in a major boost to its decade-old presence in Pakistan. Laying the foundation stone of the company's digital switching factory, Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif described the joint venture as a landmark in the development of the country's telecommunication

infrastructure. The eight million dollar project is to start production by mid-1994 to manufacture 120,000 digital switching lines for Pakistan Telecommunication Corp (PTC), reports AFP.

WB, Poland hold talks on agriculture

WARSAW, Oct 15: A World Bank delegation met Polish government officials to discuss plans to protect the country's forests and modernise its agriculture. A World Bank spokeswoman said August Schumacher, the head of the mission, was meeting Environment Minister Zygmunt Hortmanowicz and officials at the Agriculture Ministry. She said the bank hoped to work out the final details needed to clear a 100 million dollar loan to Poland that has already been agreed in principle to protect and rebuild forests, reports Reuter.

French budget deficit may rise

PARIS, Oct 15: Premier Pierre Beregovoy predicted Wednesday that France's budget deficit for 1992 will rise above earlier estimates but won't exceed 220 billion franc (46 billion dollar). Beregovoy, responding to questions in parliament, also said that the Bank of France has repaid the currency swaps it arranged with Germany's Bundesbank during Europe's recent currency turbulence. He did not disclose the figure. Recent government figures in the 1993 draft budget pegged the 1992 deficit between 170 and 180 francs (35 billion and 38 billion dollar); reports AP.

Probe into loans to Iraq urged

WASHINGTON, Oct 15 The chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee called Wednesday for an independent counsel to investigate why the FBI, CIA and Justice Department with held information in a case involving illegal bank loans to Iraq. Sen. David Doren wrote Attorney General William Barr saying that "a truly independent investigation is required to determine whether federal crimes were committed in the government's handling" of the politically charged case. Boren said his committee's investigation had found that the country's top law enforcement and intelligence agencies withheld information from each other and from the prosecution in the case of the Atlanta branch of an Italian bank which made 5.5 billion dollar in illegal loans to Iraq, reports AP.

Mahathir slams US double standards on trade

HONG KONG, Oct 15: Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad bitterly attacked the United States on Wednesday for building a North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA), while blocking his plan for an East Asian economic group, says Reuter.

Washington risked creating bitterness even among its friends in East Asia, said Mahathir, adding that Japan risked being left out in the cold if it spurned his plan.

"It is really a case of double standards, a case of telling East Asia to do what the U.S tells them, and not what the U.S does," he told the colony's foreign correspondents' club.

He first proposed the East Asian economic group in 1990 to include South East Asian nations, Japan, China and South Korea.

But Mahathir, who has long had prickly relations with the West on issues ranging from the environment and human rights to trade, excluded other Pacific rim nations such as the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

Faced with U.S opposition, the proposal for a group representing 1.8 billion people did not win even support from

TOURS (France), Oct 15:

French farmers, angered by

price cuts and US efforts at

world trade talks to curb their

subsidised exports, demon-

strated across the country on

Wednesday ahead of this

week's European Community

midday. On Tuesday farmers

clashed with police at a

demonstration in Paris, raising

fears of violence at

that clashes would erupt if

European Community leaders

meeting in Birmingham,

England, on Friday backed

MANILA, Oct 15: South East

Asian finance ministers face

hard bargaining next week on

efforts to create a regional

free trade zone, Philippine

Trade and Industry Secretary

The six members of the

Association of South East Asian

Nations (ASEAN) have agreed

to create the ASEAN Free

Trade Area (AFTA) over the

But talks over which prod-

ucts the Philippines.

Singapore, Brunei, Malaysia,

Indonesia and Thailand want

to put into the system and

which they want to keep pro-

"It may take a bit of hard

Economic ministers meet

for two days next week after

officials have tried to thrash

out some of the issues to be

decided before the AFTA tar-

iff process begins on January 1.

by an ASEAN ministerial meet-

ing with a Japanese govern-

ment delegation led by

and Industry Kozo Watanabe.

Minister of International Trade

The talks will be followed

tected could prove hard work.

negotiating or bargaining here

but we have got to get there,"

Navarro told a news confer-

next 15 years.

Rizalino Navarro said on

Wednesday, reports Reuter.

But one farm leader warned

No violence was reported by

summit, reports Reuter.

Wednesday's protests.

some of Malaysia's South East Asian neighbours, who are also worried about the power Japan might wield.

The name was subsequently changed to East Asian Economic Caucus (EAEC) but



it has yet to get off the ground. "Admittedly there are fears of domination by Japan, particularly on the part of its imneighbours," mediate Mahathir said, but these can be overcome.

"What is preventing the EAEC from taking shape is the vehement objection of the United States of America." Washington, fearing it

down in the face of US pres-

sure at GATT global trade ne-

demonstrators bricked up the

door of a government building

and spilled tonnes of sugar

dumped cart loads of dirt and

farm waste in front of govern-

ment buildings and local of-

fices of members of parlia-

farmers halted traffic at

Avenues-sur-Helpe, about one

hundred kilometres (60 miles)

east of Lile, to hand out

And a few days after that

ASEAN ministers will meet a

high-level European

Community (EC) delegation.

leaflets to motorists.

In the north, a group of

In Normandy, farmers

In Senlis, north of Paris,

gotiations.

beets in front of it.

would be shut out under the Mahathir plan, is backing an alternative group which includes the other Pacific rim

nations. Mahathir denounced NAFTA, which groups the United States with Mexico and Canada as "clearly a protectionist group - unlike the EAEC". he said. "NAFTA by definition will favour its members against those who are not.

"The EAEC will leave its members quite free to trade with anyone. Yet the U.S is against it."

Mahathir said he had once aroused Washington's ire by suggesting that there was a racist element to its attitude. Citing NAFTA and the European Community, he said: "Why is it that everyone else is allowed to form regional grouping while the East Asian countries are not allowed

EAEC was dedicated to free trade and its main purpose was to give East Asia a stronger voice in world trade talks, he

"The opposition to the EAEC by the U.S is likely to create bitterness, even among the friends of the U.S in East

farmers' latest against the EC's

reform of its common agricul-

tural policy, adopted in May.

The overhaul will slash prices

that are guaranteed to farmers

and require grain producers to

idle 15 per cent of their land

as a means of capping excess

taken on added importance as

Washington and its farm-ex-

porting allies like Canada and

Australia press the EC at world

trade talks to swallow more

gotiations, held under the aus-

pices of the General Agree-

The six-year-old trade ne-

· Portugal's objections to

Portuguese colony of East EC.

Indonesia's human rights

record in the former

MOSCOW: Russian President Boris Yeltsin (L) hands over data concerning the Korean Air

Lines jumbo jet shot down in 1983 by Soviet fighters to K Efkinson (R), Chairman of the

American Association of relatives of crash victims, Oct 14. The KAL fight 007 was shot down

on Sept 1, 1983 after it strayed into Soviet airspace. All 269 passengers and crew were killed,

subsidy cuts.

ASEAN faces hard bargaining over

proposed trade bloc

The demonstrations have

French farmers protest price cuts,

US policy at GATT

"Dark talk of imperialism neo-colonialism and hegemony are being heard at seminars and workshops all over East

Mahathir, who will meet Japanese Prime Minister Kitchi Miyzawa later this week, also delivered a warning to Tokyo, saying it could find its markets shrinking, as regional trade blocs spring up around the world, if it does not sup-

port ÉAEC. "If Japan doesn't join, it is going to be out in the cold," he said. The only way for Japan to open up is markets is to have some backing, the backing of a very big regional mar-

Beijing had been very supportive of the plan despite some misgivings, said Mahathir. "We feel they may be worried about the role of

Japan, Memories of World War Two. Japanese atrocities are still fresh throughout East Asia and many countries fear total economic domination by the modern Japanese state, analysts-say.

But Mahathir said Japan's clout in the group will be offset by China and South Korea. "There will be no dominate power in the EAEC," he said.

ment on Tariffs and Trade, are

snagged on differences over

farm subsidies. France has led

EC opposition to US demands

for deep and quick cuts in

against the American aggres-

sor," Luc Guyau, head of the

powerful French farmers' fed-

eration FNSEA, told a rally

here. Protesters near him held

posters saying "America is

Consille said there would be

brutal, uncontrollable peasant

revolt if EC leaders gave in to

US pressure at their symmit

Timor have so far blocked a

new economic cooperation ac-

cord between ASEAN and the

- AFP/UNB photo

FNSEA Leader Christian

blocking our future."

this weekend.

"We need to stand firm

handouts.

EC, US moving to GATT deal

BRUSSELS, Oct 15: The European Community and the United States are moving towards a GATT farm trade deal, John Gummer, U.K Farm Minister and current presi dent of the EC farm council said, reports Reuter.

"I believe that a solution can be achieved this year and I think it ought to be a solution which in the end the French will find it possible to live with," Gummer told a meeting of the centre for European policy studies here.

Gummer was responding to a question on prospects for a GATT would trade agreement after bilateral talks in Brussels between the EC and U.S failed to achieve a breakthrough this

France strongly opposes making further farm concessions to Washington, notably on subsidised cereals exports and oilseeds.

Energy saving technology for idle computers

WASHINGTON, Oct 15: Intel Corporation, microprocessor supplier for 80 per cent of the world's desktop computers, has announced it has developed technology for reducing those computers' energy use by 50 per cent or more by turning them off au tomatically when they are no in use, reports USIS.

At an October 14 press con ference with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) offi cials, David House, Intel senior vice president, said the energy-saving technology will be incorporated in future production of all Intel chips at no ad ditional cost to buyers.

EPA Assistant Administrator William Rosenberg said 12 manufacturers that together produce 40 per cent of all US desktop computers have already agreed to incorporate the energy saving chips in their products. He said he seeks 100 per cent coopera tion with the voluntary programme by June.

House said Intel would phase in production over 1993 and 1994, expecting that most new US made computers will incorporate the new chips during that time. They are not compatible with existing computers and software.

Uganda asks Indian traders

to return, invest NEW DELHI, Oct 15:

Twenty years after dictator Idi Amin expelled Indians from Uganda, the African nation's president Wednesday invited Indian businessmen to come back and invest, reports AP.

Yoweri Museveni, who became president seven years ago, promised his government will never threaten foreign in-

"We have enough social" forces to see that Amin will not come back," he told a news conference at the end of a three-day visit to India.

Officials of both nations will meet in Kampala next month to discuss freeing blocked funds are rescheduling 60 million dollar of debts, Museveni said. Credit guarantees have been arranged to cover trade from India.

Western donors have said a renewed Asian presence in Uganda will create jobs and improve its credibility among potential investors.

Uganda's ethnic Indians, who began immigrating to the mineral-rich nation 100 years ago when it was under British colonial rule, controlled most of the economy by the time Amin took power in 1971.

Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur can claim \$140m compensation for oil pollution

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 15: Malaysia and Indonesia can claim up to 140 million US dollar from two international shippers' funds as compensation for oil pollution in the Strait of Malacca, environment officials said Wednesday, reports AFP.

Jakarta could demand up to 80 million dollar and Kuala Lumpur 60 million dollar from the London-based funds separately established by tanker and cargo owners to compensate for oil spills, they said.

The claims would result from the collision September 20 between the Nagasaki Spirit, carrying 57,000 tonnes of Arabian medium-crude oil, and a Panamian-flagged container ship, the Ocean Blessing, off Sumatra,

Indonesia. A large oil slick from the tanker spread into Malaysian waters, hitting some beaches. An estimated 28,800 tonnes of crude oil are still aboard the ship, now in Indonesia's custody, and Malaysia has urged Jakarta not to release the tanker until its remaining cargo is safely transferred to another vessel.

Based on fund rules. Malaysia could make its claim under the Tanker Owners Voluntary agreement concerning Liability for Oil Pollution (TOVALOP) and the contract regarding a supplement to tanker liability for oil pollution (CRISTAL).

Jakarta could claim under the international convention on civil liability for oil pollution damage CLC and the international convention on the estab lishment of an international fund for compensation for oil pollution damage (fund convention).

Bombay bond scam

Probe committee accuses minister of invalvement minister of involvement

NEW DELHI, Oct 15 Several members of a parliamentary panel probing India's 1.3 billion dollar bank and stock market scam alleged Wednesday that a senior cabinet minister was directly involved in the scandal, the Press Trust of India (PTI) said, reports AFP.

The members on the Joint Parliamentary

Committee(JPC), consisting of MPs from all parties, were quoted as accusing Petroleum Minister B Shankaranand of being involved in the scandal during Wednesday's resumed deliberations here.

They said Shankaranand, who is also chairman of the Indian government-run Oil Industry Development Board (OIDB), was "fully aware" of huge investments OIDB made

for trading through two banks even after the scam erupted last year shaking many banks. Singh urged to probe

A member of the jointparliamentary committee probing the securities scam has urged the Finance Minister to direct the Reserve Bank of India to undertake a immediate detailed inspection and physical verification of the currency chest in various banks. In a letter to the Finance

currency chests

Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, Gurudas Dasgupta, CPI member from Rajya Sabha expressed the apprehension that a verification was urgently required since possibility of the misuse of huge amounts kept in the currency chests for short periods could not be ruled out.

Iraq ready to sell oil futures for food, medicine The United Nations has

BAGHDAD, Oct 15: With its hard cash coffers empty and gold reserves depleting, Iraq today offered to sell future off deliveries in return for food and medicine, reports Reuter.

Trade Minister Mohammed Mehdi Saleh told the government newspaper Al-Jumhouriyah his country was prepared to strike deals and pay later either in cash or future oil deliveries.

"Iraq is ready to sign contracts with various foreign companies to buy food and medicine, provided that the costs be covered by Iraq's frozen assets ... or deferred payment to be made by value of Iraqi oil when exports are permitted," he said.

seized part of Iraq's frozen abread and will channel some of this to its weapons inspection missions in Iraq and needy Iraqi Kurds and other minorities.

Saleh put the amount of assets seized by the UN at four billion dollar. "That represents more than 50 per cent of Iraq's oil assets deposited in foreign banks," he said.

He said Iraq had concluded contracts worth 4.5 billion dollar with loreign companies to buy food and medicine. "But the American persistence not to open letters of credit denied Iraq the opportunity of using these assets."

Japan's trade surplus balloons to all-time high

TOKYO, Oct 15: Japan's trade surplus in September jumped 24.9 per cent from a year earlier to an all-time high of 12.07 billion dollar, the Finance Ministry said Wednesday, reports AFP.

The trade surplus for the first half of Japan's fiscal year - April-September - soared 32.2 per cent from a year earlier to a half-year record 52.46 billion dollar.

"The impact of the economic stimulus package has not appealed yet," a ministry official said, referring to the 86 billion dollar package adopted in August to boost the ailing Japanese economy. Japan's economic slowdown is encouraging manufacturers to seek more overseas outlets for their products while at the

same time slowing imports. Exports grew 14.3 per cent from a year earlier to 31.60 billion dollar in September, while imports rose only 8.6 per cent to 19.53 billion dollar, the report said.

The surplus, the 21st con-secutive increase in the monthly trade figures, mainly reflected surging car and office equipment exports, including computers, and offsetting a slump in exports of audio-visual equipment.

A long neglected land of abundance looks for investors

A long-neglected area of Zambia with an abundance of resources is looking for investment to open it up. It is potentially the richest part of the country and typical of many regions of Africa waiting for their opportunities to be realised. The North-Western Province, more than 600 kilometres

from the capital, Lusaka, borders Zaire to the north and Angola on the west. It has only 350,000 people, most of them dependent on subsistence farming. It has lagged far behind the rest of the country because the last administration, under President Kenneth Kaunda,

concentrated its development programmes on those provinces which had a large number of their own people in government. Yet the North-Western Province is a land of milk and honey. It has big mineral reserves - copper ore in almost all districts, iron, steel, lime, precious stones, uranium, gold and

diamonds. Only one copper mine is working - at Kansanshi. The mine began operating in the 18th century and is the oldest in Zambia, having been used in the Iron Age and by the bushmen. A second mine at Kanengwa was shut by the Kaunda government on the pretext that the copper had run

The North-Western Province has one of the biggest national parks in the country - the West Lunga Park - and several game management areas. Its vast virgin lands are very fertile and have not been used for centuries, except for subststence farming. The villagers grow cassava, finger millet and sorghum for

their own consumption. In recent years peasant farmers have been growing some mixed crops on a small scale. A 1990-91 report by the Mutanda Research Station, near Solwezi, said the soil was good for any type of crop, except in

those areas where it is acidic for maize - and even there the acids can be neutralised with lime. The province has abundant water. At a time when devastatby Collins Museman'geji

ing drought has hit much of the country the region has good rains and has not been much affected. Major rivers like the Zambezi, Kafue and Kabompo emanate from the region. Many of the rivers and streams are a potential source of hydro-electricity .Two Catholic mission centres, in



Mwinilunga and Zambezi districts, use their own hydroelectricity.

Despite all this, no organisations or companies showed any interest in investing in the province in the first three decades of independences. There is no proper infrastructure, and only one tarmac road runs from Lusaka up to Mwintlunga district. The other districts are still linked just by gravel

The road from Mwinilunga links the region to the port of Lobito in Angola. The civil war in that country has been an other factor preventing development. The route to Lobito is short and could provide quick access to world markets for

exports and imports. The region has no industry and few commercial businesses. It has only three banks - two in Solwezi and one in Zambezi. Two more are due to open soon. There is one telecommunication exchange office and a small radio and television station.

The province has nine hospitals, five run by missionaries and four by the government.

The hope now is that the new government led by President Frederick Chiluba, which came to power a year ago, will target the province for development. Minister of Mines Hum-pherey Mulenga says the go-

vernment is considering ope-ning new mines in the region. It wants to open one in Mufumbwe district. It may also open the controversial iron and steel mine at

Mumbenji. Infrastructure was built by the Kaunda government, which planned to open the mine with help from the Yugoslav government of Marshal Tito. But when Tito died his successors dropped the idea. It became a white elephant. Paul Kapin'ga, Resident Minister of the province, is

appealing for investors to come in with whatever ' type of business they may choose and use the untapped resources. The region could become the centre and heart of Zambia's development. The North-Western Provi-nce is the Cinderella region of

- Gemtni News take off. Collins Museman'geji is a freelance Zambian journalist down from 343.90 dollar bid based in Solwezi in the North Western Province.

Dollar slips against most

CUTTENCIES LONDON, Oct 15: The US dollar fell against most European currencies in early trading on Thursday. Gold prices were lower, reports AP. In Tokyo, the dollar closed at 120.55 yen, down 0.55 yen

from Wednesday's close. Later

in London, the dollar was

quoted at 120.70 yen. Other dollar rates compared with late Wednesday:

-1.4545 German mark, down from 1.4625 -1.2985 Swiss franc, down

from 1.3035 - 4. 9420 French guilder,

down from 4.9645 1. 6318 Dutch guilder, down from 1.6460 - 1,285.50 Italian lire,

down from 1,292.50 - 1.2500 Canadian dollar, up from 1.2493 In London the British

pound was quoted at 1.6967 dollar, down from 1.7085 dollar Wednesday.

dealers fixed a recommended gold price of 341.75 dollar Zambia, just waiting for somebody to come in and help it per ounce at midmorning, per ounce late Wednesday.