

# Hurd in Pakistan to balance relations

ISLAMABAD, Oct 31: British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd arrived here today for an official one-day visit, reports AFP.

Hurd's trip is essentially aimed at balancing Britain's relations with both India, which he has already visited this year, and Pakistan, which last hosted a foreign office secretary in 1989, a diplomat said.

He was to meet with Pakistan's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Siddique Kanju, before lunching with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, who visited London in June. Hurd was to pay courtesy call on President Ghulam Ishaq Khan later today.

Pakistan's relations with India, including the 45-year-old dispute over Kashmir, were to be discussed, a diplomat said.

Britain still stands by its traditional position that both

the 1972 treaty of Simla and relevant UN resolutions should be taken into account in any resolution of the problem, the source said.

Talks were also to focus on the situation in Bosnia, Afghanistan and on implications of the Maastricht Treaty for developing countries.

Later today, Hurd was also to meet armed forces chief Asif Nawaz, at Pakistan's request, the source said.

Pakistan, which is looking for new fighter planes, is said to be considering the British-made Tornado and the French Mirage among other candidates.

Hurd, who was initially to spend three days in Pakistan, cut the visit short due to difficulties faced by Prime Minister John Major's government in ratifying the Maastricht Treaty in the House of Commons.



ANGOLA: UNITA guerrillas fighting opponents as new civil war broke out after the election results in which the UNITA lost to MPLA. — Star TV photo

# UN Council for immediate end to violence in Angola

UNITED NATIONS, Oct 31: With Angola apparently slipping back into civil war, the Security Council Friday extended the UN mandate there until November 30 and issued a sharp warning to opposition UNITA rebels, reports AFP.

The Council unanimously condemned any increase in hostilities in Angola and appealed for an immediate end to such acts. It also stressed the need to preserve the territorial integrity of Angola.

Renewed fighting, stemming from disputed elections, between government and rebel forces was reported Thursday and Friday in Huambo and Luanda.

Another report from Luanda adds: Portugal prepared to evacuate 40,000 nationals from

Angola as the African state tottered on the brink of renewed civil war.

Late on Friday UNITA Radio said Savimbi had ordered a ceasefire between his forces and government troops in Angola's second city Huambo, where the UNITA leader has established his headquarters.

The situation in the rest of the country was unclear. At least 15 people were killed in an attack on Luanda's main airport early on Friday and fighting was reported in at least a dozen other towns.

The clashes were the worst since UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) lost to President Nsoso Eduardo Dos Santos's ruling MPLA in the country's first multi-party elections last

month which were supervised by the UN.

Savimbi, supported until last year by South Africa and the United States, provoked a political crisis by refusing to accept electoral defeat.

The clashes have threatened to endanger the peace agreement signed by UNITA and the MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) last year.

The Security Council adopted a resolution threatening action against any party that violates the accord and renews the civil war that racked the country for 16 years.

Portugal, former colonial ruler of Angola, expressed concern at the spreading violence.

# Sikhs massacre 17 Hindus

LUDHIANA, India, Oct 31: Sikh militants massacred 17 Hindu farmworkers in Ludhiana in India's northern Punjab state, police said today, reports Reuter.

Official sources said the militants appeared to be regrouping after recent police successes in which key guerrilla leaders were killed.

Ludhiana police chief Chandra Shekhar told Reuter that three or four militants herded the workers into a

field in Jagraon village of Ludhiana on Friday and shot them.

Shekhar said three more workers, migrant farm labourers from "Indians" backward Bihar state, were being treated for serious injuries.

The massacre was the third major attack since Punjab police chief KPS Gill claimed this month that security forces had killed 70 per cent of the militants.

Shekhar did not identify

the group involved. Official sources said they probably had links with Pritam Singh Sekhon, recently appointed head of the Khalistan Liberation Force (KLF) guerrilla group.

Sikh militants want an independent homeland in the agriculture — rich Punjab which they call Khalistan, a land of the pure. Between 15,000 and 20,000 people have been killed in their 11-year insurgency.

# Gunmen attack Downing Street

LONDON, Oct 31: For the second time in less than two years, terrorists Friday launched a violent attack on Downing Street and the heart of the British government, when a car bomb exploded yards from the Prime Minister's office, reports AFP.

Gunmen forced a mini car driver to drive to White Hall, where the car was abandoned outside the gates of Downing Street, exploding minutes after the men ran off. On

warning was given, Scotland Yard said.

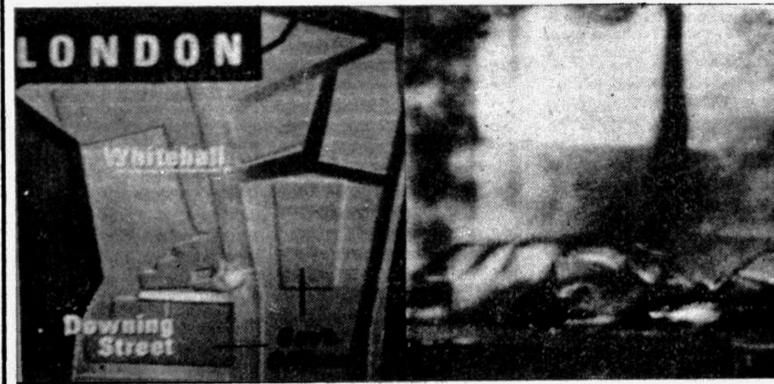
The explosion, which bears all the hallmarks of the Irish Republican Army, is the 15th attack in central London in the past month. In the most serious attack, one man died and five were injured after a lunchtime explosion in a pub in Covent Garden on October 12.

Friday's blast came at 2:09 GMT on the north side of White Hall as police sealed off the area. Major was in his

Huntingdon constituency, around 100 kilometres (65 miles) north of London, when the bomb exploded.

Commander George Churchill-Coleman, head of Scotland Yard's Anti-terrorist Squad who leaves office today, confirmed there were no injuries in the explosion.

Churchill-Coleman said once the vehicle stopped it was soon challenged by police, and the vehicle exploded as the area was being cleared.



A bomb planted in a car went off Friday night within yards of 10, Downing Street, the official residence of the British Prime Minister. Photo shows a map of the area (left) and the remnants of the car. — Star TV photo

# Lanka plans major attack against LTTE

COLOMBO, Oct 31: The government troops will launch a major offensive against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in the Jaffna Peninsula at the northernmost extremity of Sri Lanka, reports Xinhua.

The situation there has been assessed by the ground commanders and all plans have been processed with assistance from the joint operation command in Colombo for the offensive, security sources here said today.

More government troops were reportedly sent to north Sri Lanka and some top military planners visited the northern Jaffna Peninsula to study the ground situation there.

Asked whether additional troops had been moved from Colombo and other camps, the sources said that "all necessary steps are being taken and regular movement of troops were taking place".

# Patten to pursue democratic reforms in HK

HONG KONG, Oct 31: Governor Chris Patten said during a visit to Macau that it was his obligation to pursue democratic reforms in Hong Kong ahead of 1995 elections, radio reports said here today, according to AFP.

"I have to put forward on the voting method for directly elected seats. I have not put forward proposals on the composition of the election committee, Patten said Friday while on an official visit to the nearby Portuguese-administered territory, which reverts to Chinese rule in 1999.

The governor was reiterating a policy position he took in a speech October 7 that was ill-received by the Chinese government, which last week alleged that it had a secret deal with Britain over the composition of an electoral college for the 1995 vote.

"The (Sino-British) joint declaration commits us to work for the steady development of democracy... so under the existing text, texts which are silent on those specific matters, the governor of Hong Kong has to suggest ways in which the 1995 elections should be conducted, Patten said.

The dispute was alleviated Wednesday when both sides released confidential exchanges regarding the matter. Both the Chinese and British sides, however, claimed the documents supported their arguments.

# Myanmar frees 130 more detainees

BANGKOK, Oct 31: Myanmar's military government has released 130 political prisoners in the last few days, bringing to about 1,000 the number of detainees freed since April, reports Reuter.

Official Yangon radio, monitored in Bangkok yesterday, said 47 male prisoners were released from the Pakokku jail. On Thursday it announced 83 prisoners were set free from the prison in the central town of Myingyan.

The junta, which seized power after crushing a pro-democracy uprising in September 1988, has vowed to free all political prisoners whom it deems not to threaten national security. Scores of common criminals have also been released.

But human rights groups say despite the releases and the junta's pledge to start drafting a new constitution to pave the way for civilian rule, its record of repression is still appalling.

The New York-based Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights, in a report issued this week, called the actions "cosmetic."

Although it welcomed the releases, it criticised their arbitrary nature and the "systematical-treatment and torture of persons in detention." "Hundreds if not thousands of dissidents were still in jail," it said.

# Off the Record

## Impotence due to injury during intercourse

BOSTON: A study by US doctors estimates that up to 15 per cent of all cases of impotence are caused by injury during intercourse, and the chief author of the study recommends men practise "defensive" sex, reports Reuter.

The study, which appears in the journal of urology, is the first to demonstrate how pressure or abnormal bending of an erection during intercourse or masturbation can result in chronic impotence.

Impotence, the inability of a man to achieve and erection, has many causes. Some psychological poor health, advanced age, drug or alcohol use, stress or fatigue can cause the problem.

But in a study of 19 men the researchers, led by Dr Irwin Goldstein, a urologist at the Boston University Medical Centre, estimated that 10 to 15 per cent of impotence cases are caused by physical damage incurred during sex.

"Men think their erections are made of concrete," Goldstein said in a statement. "Patients are often quite surprised when they are told it is possible to permanently injure their erections during intercourse."

The researchers also found that the condition often results from damage to the lining of an interior passage in the penis rather than from a complete fracture of the erection.

## She is expelled for curling hair

TOKYO: A student expelled from a Japanese high school for curling her hair has lost a long legal battle against the school, reports Reuter.

The Tokyo High Court on Friday rejected a lawsuit filed by the student almost five years ago against the Shutoku Gakuen High School in Tokyo, news reports said.

Judge Nobuo Kikuchi upheld the school's right to ban perm or curly hair and to set an example by expelling students who broke rules.

Angry parents have challenged the right of schools to issue long lists of rules that regulate the way students dress and behave, even out of the classroom.

The Plaintiff, who was not identified, was expelled several weeks before her graduation in 1988.



SYDNEY: Feminists with their mascot "Mudge" the dog (C) gather for the "Reclaim the Night" protest march through Sydney on Friday. Over 5,000 women demonstrated against the recent increase in rape and domestic violence in Australia. — AFP/UNB photo

## Chamberlain's plane ticket on auction

LONDON: The flight ticket issued to former British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain for his fateful 1938 trip to meet Adolf Hitler fetched 13,200 pounds (21,000) at auction on Friday, reports Reuter.

An anonymous bidder paid three times the pre-sale estimate for the British Airways ticket at auctioneers Christie Chamberlain flew to Munich for a meeting with Hitler to discuss the growing crisis in Europe and returned clutching a signed agreement with Germany which Chamberlain heralded as "peace in our time."

Less than a year later Hitler's armies invaded Czechoslovakia and Poland, and World War Two began.

## Now Japanese carry Thai prostitutes' HIV

TOKYO: A strain of the HIV virus commonly found among Thai prostitutes has spread to Japan, according to experts attending an international meeting on viral diseases in Kobe, western Japan, reports Reuter.

Six HIV-positive Japanese males recently examined appeared to be infected with a Thai strain of the African A-type Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus (HIV), a group of virologists from the United States, Japan and Thailand told the conference on Friday according to Kyodo news agency.

That particular strain is commonly carried by Thai prostitutes and homosexuals, they said. Four of the six Japanese carriers said they had visited Southeast Asia.

Infection with HIV leads to Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome which kills by destroying the body's immune system.

Last year, over 200,000 Japanese men visited Thailand, many of them in male-only-sex tour groups.

Japan's health ministry has estimated that 60 per cent of the Japanese men infected with the virus through heterosexual intercourse caught it overseas, against 20 per cent for women.

## Demand to castrate rapists

NEW DELHI: The administrator of an Indian state was Friday quoted as demanding federal legislation to castrate rapists, saying existing law was inadequate to deal with rising incidents of rape, reports AFP.

Biju Patnaik, chief minister of the eastern state of Orissa, told the provincial assembly Thursday that only the fear of castration would instil fear into prospective rapists.

There appeared to be hardly any other way to stop crime against women, the Hindu and other dailies quoted him as saying in the Orissa capital Bhubaneswar, eight days after two women were gang raped in the city.

Rape had become endemic, Patnaik said, and added that he would take up the subject of legislation on castration with the central government when he goes to New Delhi.

Rape in India is punishable with up to life imprisonment. But women's groups allege that those charged with rape get as little as two to three years in jail if the prosecution fails, as often happens, to prove more than molestation.

# BRIEFLY

**Plea for safety of US nuns:** US officials in Liberia have asked a rebel faction and West African peacekeepers to ensure the safety of five American nuns believed trapped in an area outside the capital, Monrovia, the State Department said Friday, AP reports from Washington.

Department spokesman Joseph Snyder said the US Embassy has asked the two groups to locate the Roman Catholic nuns and escort them to safety.

Snyder could not confirm reports that the nuns have been taken into custody by forces of the National Patriotic Front, headed by Charles Taylor.

"The NPF officials have assured us of cooperation in securing the release and safe passage of any US citizen in territory held by Taylor's forces," Snyder said.

**ROK wants Akihito's visit:** South Korean Foreign Minister Lee Sang-ock said in an interview published yesterday that he was seeking an early visit by Japanese Emperor Akihito to Seoul, AFP reports from Tokyo.

Lee was quoted as telling the Yonhju Shimshun, I think it is desirable that the visit will be realized in the near future.

The minister, in Tokyo to attend an international meeting on aid to the former Soviet Union, told the mass circulation daily that he hoped both countries would create a welcome atmosphere for the visit.

In 1990, South Korean President Roh Tae-woo extended an official invitation to the emperor and the empress during his visit to Japan.

**Sihanouk celebrates birthday:** Prince Norodom Sihanouk was in tears. Twenty-two years had passed since Cambodia's god-king last celebrated his birthday with his subjects, and yet they hadn't forgotten him, reports AP.

As high-ranking Cambodians, foreign diplomats and Buddhist monks and nuns celebrated inside the royal palace this week, hundreds if not thousands of other well-wishers gathered outside the yellow walls, dancing in the moonlight until past midnight. Fireworks lit up the sky.

Sihanouk turned 70 on Saturday. "We have missed 22 years of celebrating with him already," said Kem Oul, member of a political group led by one of Sihanouk's sons and therefore an honored guest inside the gates.

**Myanmar enacts drug law:** Myanmar Friday enacted the national drug law by announcing that a 12-member Myanmar Food and Drug Board of Authority will implement its functions and duties, Xinhua reports from Yangon.

According to an official report yesterday, the law was signed by State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) Chairman General Than Shwe.

The main purposes of the law are to enable the public to use quality, safe and effective drugs and food, and to systematically regulate the manufacture, import, export, storage, distribution and sale of food and drugs.

The seven-chapter law says that a person desirous of manufacturing, importing, exporting, storing, distributing and selling pharmaceutical raw material or drug shall register the relevant drug with the board of authority in the prescribed manner.

**Israelis hit UN-policed village:** Israeli gunners pounded a string of UN-policed village in South Lebanon early yesterday, security sources said, Reuter reports from Tyre.

They said Israeli artillery positioned inside the Jewish state's self-declared security zone fired dozens of shells into the villages of Kafra Yater and Beit Luf east of the port of Tyre, 76 km (48 miles) south of Beirut.

There was no immediate word on casualties in the bombardment, which lasted more than two hours.

The shelled villages are policed by peace-keepers of the United Nations Interim Forces in Lebanon (UNIFIL). Pro-Iranian Hizbollah guerrillas are active in the area.

**Human skulls found in Panama:** Several coffins and at least nine human skulls have been found in a Panama City house that may have been the site of bizarre rituals, authorities said on Friday, Reuter reports from Panama City.

Authorities found the skulls, along with human bones, in a new coffin buried in the basement but other empty coffins were found strewn about the house, said municipal director Milciades Cedeno.

The remains were taken to local coroner Humberto Mas, who told reporters it would take time to unravel the mystery. "Given the surrounding circumstances, these bodies may have been used in some sort of fetish," said Mas.

## Iliescu sworn in as president

BUCHAREST, Oct 31: Ion Iliescu was sworn-in anew Friday as president of Romania and called on politicians, trade unionists and media to "support the future government" to help the country through "the most difficult stage of transition" that the said lay ahead, reports AFP.

Taking an oath to defend freedom, democracy and Romanian sovereignty, Iliescu said the electorate had voted for continuation of his reforms which "can only be carried through by the national as a whole."

Iliescu was re-elected with 61.43 per cent on votes on October 11 and has a mandate for four years.

# Puerto Ricans US citizens but not allowed to cast vote

SAN JUAN, Oct 31: Clinton, Bush and Perot are not prime-time stars in this US commonwealth. No pundits ponder their possibilities. Their sound-bites barely make the daily newscasts, reports AP.

But don't call it apathy. Puerto Ricans, though US citizens, are not allowed to vote in presidential elections.

As this politically passionate Caribbean island of 3.6 million votes for a new governor Tuesday, a perennial question resurfaces: How long can Puerto Ricans be governed by a president they could not vote for?

States flourishes every four years when election time comes around.

"What we have is a second-degree citizenship, and it's like second-degree murder," says Norberto Rivera Matos, who was drafted by the United States to fight in Vietnam. "You're still being punished, but you know you could be worse off."

"I don't know if I want (Puerto Rico) to be a state. But I do want to vote for the president," says Rivera Matos, 48, a bus driver.

Puerto Rico, a US possession since 1899, has maintained an unusual relationship with the United States since the creation in 1952 of the

"Estado Libre Asociado," which binds the two loosely in what was then billed as a renewable, malleable political pact.

The permanence of the pact, and the fact that it has not changed substantially for four decades, have triggered Congressional debates. But changes are not forthcoming.

Puerto Ricans — US citizens since 1917 — do not pay federal income taxes and are not allowed to vote in presidential elections. The island has one non-voting member in Congress, although delegations from the island do vote in Democratic and Republican conventions.

Many US military veterans,

like Rivera Matos, believe their service and the deaths of many Puerto Ricans in combat should entitle islanders at least to vote in presidential elections, regardless of Puerto Rico's political status.

According to Veterans Affairs Administration statistics, the island had 124,480 veterans even before the 1990 Gulf War.

But Puerto Rican veterans groups "have not found a compassionate ear" on the mainland, said Richard Fret, a supervisor at the Puerto Rican chapter of the Disabled American Veterans.

After months of discussion by that group's national leaders, it ruled that "our proposal

was not 'germane' to their politics," Fret said.

"We've been fighting and losing for too long."

The Democratic primary victory September 15 of Nydia Velazquez, a Puerto Rican, in New York's 12th district has focused new attention in Puerto Rico on what some say is revitalized Puerto Rican politics in the United States.

Increasing Hispanic visibility in state and national politics — especially in Florida, Texas and California — and the high-profile jobs held by US Treasurer Catalina Vazquez Villalpando and Surgeon General Antonio Coello de Novello have made many Puerto

Hispanics think about their political power as a voting bloc.

But without a status change, Puerto Rico — where voter turnout has averaged 87 per cent in the last two local elections — may not be part of that dream.

"For the United States, Puerto Ricans remain second-class citizens," said Victor Garcia San Inocencio, the pro-independence candidate for the non-voting spot in Congress. He predicted no change in Washington's "view of the world or in our place in their list of priorities."

But, he said, "They could learn from our sense of participation. We are political animals. We have always been."

## Shining Path rebels kill 11 in Peru

RUMI RUMI, Peru, Oct 31: Maoist Shining Path guerrillas killed 11 people in an attack on a highland hamlet in the Ayacucho region, their second raid in the cradle of the insurgency since the capture of rebel chief Abimael Guzman, reports Reuter.

About 25 guerrillas armed with rifles and machetes attacked Rumi Rumi, 340 km (210 miles) southeast of Lima, on Tuesday at about the same time President Alberto Fujimori was visiting an adjacent province, witnesses and officials said.