

### 10 killed as troops bandits clash in Sind

KARACHI, Nov 8: Pakistani bandits killed four soldiers in a gunbattle in the forests of southern Sind Province that also killed six bandits, police said today, reports Reuters.

More than 80 people, including 12 bandits, were arrested after one of the bloodiest clashes between the army and bandits, known as dacots, since troops moved into Sind in late May to stop mounting kidnapping and lawlessness.

Troops, paramilitary forces and police has cordoned off the area in Khairpur District, about 150 km (90 miles) north of Karachi, on Saturday to comb the forests for dacots when the gun battle erupted, police said.

The army set fire to 12 hideouts of bandits, who live along the Indus River and kidnap travellers for ransom, the police said.

At least 157 bandits have been killed in the army crackdown, an army spokesman said today. Thousands of illegal weapons including a rocket launchers and ammunition have been recovered.

# Pro-Communist rally in Moscow to mark Bolshevik Revolution Thousands chant against Yeltsin, tear down Russian flag

MOSCOW, Nov 8: Thousands of people rallied on the 75th anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution to protest the reforms of President Boris Yeltsin, reports AP.

Protesters on Saturday tore down a Russian flag and raised a red banner near the Kremlin. But police prevented them from marching across Red Square, the traditional site of parades on Revolution Day, which has been a holiday under Soviet rule.

"We will march there again one day. Our time will come!" said World War II veteran Sergei Mishunin, 72. He wore a red ribbon fastened with a tiny portrait of the leader of the 1917 Revolution, Vladimir Lenin.

The peaceful protest was one of the largest yet against Yeltsin, whose economic re-

forms have set off 1,000 per cent inflation and rising unemployment. Still, the crowd was not nearly as large as those that rallied for Yeltsin before he came to power, and opinion polls show his popularity remains high.

If Communists were in charge again, "they would never even allow such a demonstration" by the opposition, said Georgy Markov, 50, a participant in a pro-Yeltsin counter-rally that drew only about 200 people.

The day was marked in different ways. Some marched under red banners, others mourned those killed and tortured by the Bolsheviks, still others just enjoyed a day off, Russian television announcer Tatyana Khudobina, commented on the nightly news.

"This is a sign of new times."

Huge banners touted the recently founded National Salvation Front, which is trying to unite hard-line groups. It hopes to force changes in Yeltsin's Cabinet when the country's highest legislative body, the 2,250-member Congress of People's Deputies, meets on December 1.

Yeltsin this month banned the front, but its leaders have ignored the order. Speakers from several parties on Saturday pledged allegiance to the front, and supporters filtered through the crowd taking donations.

Part of Red Square is being repaved, a construction project that hard-liners denounced as a deliberate attempt to disrupt the celebration.

Despite bitter cold, the

mostly elderly and middle-aged pro-Communist demonstrators gathered in central October Square under the city's largest statue of Lenin. Then they paraded several blocks to Manezh Square, an open space just outside the Kremlin.

Police and Russian media estimated the crowd at about 20,000 Organizers and some observers claimed it was larger.

All heads turned skyward when a man climbed a construction crane at the remodelled National Hotel. He pulled out a red flag bearing Lenin's profile and tied it to the crane. He then tore off a white, blue and red Russian flag that had hung there for months, tossing it into the air.

As it floated down to Gorky Street, the crowd laughed and

applauded. The scene was a symbolic reversal of last December 25, when a red flag over the Kremlin was hauled down and replaced by the Russian tricolor after the Soviet Union collapsed and former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev resigned.

Hard-line politicians, flanked by descendants of Cossack horsemen in black uniforms, stood atop a truck and spoke through loudspeakers. They denounced Yeltsin's economic reforms, demanded his resignation and accused him of betraying the common people — a now familiar litany at protest rallies.

Anti-Semitic and anti-American symbols also were common, as usual at hard-line rallies.

## Angola declares Botha persona non grata

LUANDA, Nov 8: Angola declared South Africa's Foreign Minister Pik Botha persona non grata on Saturday for allegedly giving support to the UNITA rebel group, reports Reuters.

The government said Botha could only visit Angola if invited because Pretoria had supplied logistical aid to UNITA in a recent flare-up of the conflict with the ruling MPLA.

Minister Pik Botha will not come to Angola if he is not especially invited," Deputy Foreign Minister Venancio de Moura said on state-run radio.

South Africa backed UNITA

during much of its 16-year insurrection against the MPLA government before last year's peace accord, but a foreign ministry spokesman in Pretoria denied on Saturday that Pretoria had helped UNITA in the latest flare-up.

Pretoria had adopted a clear policy not to obstruct Angola's democratic process. "We will not support UNITA in any way in armed conflict," the spokesman said.

Botha acted as mediator last month between the two sides in Angola, trying to avert a resumption of strife after UNITA rejected the result of Angola's first multi-party elections.



CHAMONIX MONT-BLANC, France: Bosnian refugee mothers with their children, who fled from embattled Bosnia-Herzegovina, arrive in Chamonix, eastern France, Nov 07, to spend the winter with French families. The operation has been called "a refuge for 1000 children".

## Rebels kill 26 policemen in Colombia

CALI, Colombia, Nov 8: Leftist guerrillas killed 26 policemen in an ambush in southern Colombia, crippled the country's main oil pipeline and set off bombs in Santafé de Bogotá Saturday, police said, reports AFP.

The surprise attack, one of the bloodiest in the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC) history was a sharp escalation in a three-week-old nationwide guerrilla offensive seen as an attempt to force President Cesar Gaviria to the negotiating table.

Gaviria cancelled negotiations with the Marxist rebels scheduled for late October because of fresh fighting and analysts said the latest clashes make new negotiations unlikely.

## BRIEFLY

**Roh arrives in Japan:** South Korean President Roh Tae-woo arrived in this ancient capital city yesterday for a one-day working visit for talks with Japanese Prime Minister Kijichi Miyazawa, AFP reports from Kyoto. Roh is to hold talks "informally" with Miyazawa for three hours including a working luncheon at a Japanese restaurant. His top aide said talks were aimed at improving bilateral relations which have cooled since Miyazawa visited Seoul in January.

**Quake hits Fiji Islands:** An earthquake measuring 6.5 on the Richter scale has struck a remote region of the Fiji Islands, the US Geological Survey says, AP reports from Washington. The quake occurred at 0343 GMT Sunday (3:43 pm Sunday Fiji time) about 250 miles (400 kilometers) northeast of Suva and 1,050 miles (1,690 kilometers) east of Auckland, New Zealand, said USOS spokeswoman Rebecca Phipps. She said there had been no reports of injuries or damage. It was the largest earthquake in the area since a 6.6 magnitude temblor on March 29, 1982, Phipps said.

**New York chief judge held:** The chief judge of the New York State Court of Appeals was arrested Saturday for allegedly trying to extort money from a former girlfriend by threatening her and her daughter with harm, authorities said, AP reports from New York. FBI agents arrested Judge Sol Wachtler on the long Island Expressway in the city's borough of Queens, US attorney Michael Chertoff told a news conference. Wachtler, 62, was accused in a criminal complaint of making threatening calls to a New York woman after their relationship had ended.

**Palestinian shot dead in Gaza:** Masked men shot dead a Palestinian resident of Rafah in the Israeli-occupied Gaza Strip on Saturday, the army said, Reuters reports from Jerusalem. Palestinians sources said the man, Haled Ibrahim Ahmed Ismail, was suspected of collaborating with Israeli authorities. Ismail was abducted from his home early on Saturday. His body was later dumped in the market of the Shaboura refugee camp in the occupied Gaza Strip, the army said.

## Changes in Lankan police deptt likely

COLOMBO, Nov 8: The Sri Lankan government is considering some decisive changes in the police department by the end of this year, reports Xinhua. One of the key improvements will be the reorganization of the Counter Subversive Division (CSD) better known as the Security Coordination Division (SCD), officials sources here were quoted to-day by The Island newspaper as saying.

# No progress in talks to resolve Cambodian crisis

BEIJING Nov 8: Cambodian factions and multinational negotiators failed in talks Sunday to resolve disputes threatening to derail Cambodia's peace process, including the Khmer Rouge's refusal to disarm, reports AP. At the end of the day, we could not yet get a full consensus on the way in which we should resolve the major obstacles," said Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas, who co-chaired the Paris talks that led to the 1991 peace ac-

## Thailand to take softer line on exiled Myanmar students

BANGKOK, Nov 8: Thailand is to review its policy of "constructive engagement" towards the military junta in Myanmar and will take a softer line on exiled Myanmar students, a highly-placed government source told Reuters.

Bangkok has been criticised by western governments and the Myanmar opposition for its close ties with its neighbour, whose record of repression is labelled appalling by international human rights groups.

Up to now Bangkok has said the policy was aimed at coaxing the ruling generals towards democracy rather than confronting them.

"We will have to overhaul the Myanmar policy. I am against all measures that contribute to prolonging the power of the SLORC," the source said of the ruling State Law and Order Restoration

## Britain lifts ban on arms sales to Lanka

COLOMBO, Nov 8: Britain has lifted a ban on arms sales to Sri Lanka, whose armed forces are fighting separatist Tamil guerrillas the independent Sunday, Times newspaper reported, says Reuters.

It said British Prime Minister John Major lifted the ban after talks between visiting Foreign Office Minister Mark Lennox-Boyd and Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa last month.

British diplomats were not immediately available for comment. London banned arms sales to Colombo, froze aid and cancelled high-level diplomatic visits after Sri Lanka expelled British High Commissioner (ambassador) David Gladstone for alleged interference in the island's internal affairs last year.

## Mitterrand, Egyptian FM talk ME issue

PARIS, Nov 8: President Francois Mitterrand help talks here Friday with Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Mousa on the Middle East peace process and an upcoming visit to France by Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, AFP reports from Paris.

The Egyptian minister said he had delivered a message to Mitterrand from his Egyptian counterpart on bilateral ties, in which he thanked France for its prompt help following the earthquake that struck Egypt in October.

Mousa told reporters after the half-hour meeting that no firm date had been set for the Mubarak-Mitterrand summit, which could take place this month.

"Our two presidents will soon meet in Paris and will review several topics, including the Middle East and bilateral relations as well as the situation in the Mediterranean."

## West African leaders call for truce in Liberia

ABUJA, Nov 8: West African leaders have called for a ceasefire in Liberia, imposed sanctions on the country's warring factions and urged United Nations involvement to help end the three-year-old conflict, says Reuters.

The measures, similar to others flouted in the past by main rebel leader Charles Taylor, were announced on Saturday after a meeting in the Nigerian capital of a committee set up by the 16-nation economic community of West African States (ECOWAS).

A final communique from the Presidential-Level Monitoring Committee reaffirmed support for the seven-nation ECOWAS peace-keeping force in Liberia since 1990 and called on warring groups to declare a ceasefire from midnight on November 10.

## Ex-Pak minister acquitted of misconduct

LAHORE, Pakistan, Nov 8: A Pakistani court on Saturday acquitted a former government minister of misconduct in awarding a power plant contract to a Japanese firm, reports Reuters.

The Lahore High Court said there was insufficient evidence to prove that former Minister of Water and Power Khawaja Ahmed Tariq was guilty of misconduct in awarding of the contract while his government was in power.

Tariq, now a leader of the opposition Pakistan People's Party (PPP), was charged with authorising the contract, to install a 300 megawatt power plant in central Pakistan, to be awarded to the Japanese firm Mitsubishi.

## Nepal fires over 200 top, middle ranking officials

KATHMANDU, Nov 8: Nepal sacked over 200 senior officials on Friday, including the heads of the foreign and interior ministries, and the Himalayan state's most senior civil servants, the government's press adviser said.

The pruning of top and middle ranking officials to reduce a bloated bureaucracy its cast against a background of a government still in the throes of transition from absolute monarchy.

"Most of the officials relieved were either too old or unwilling to change loyalties from palace to the Prime Minister's office," Jay Prakash Anand, press adviser to the government told Reuters.

## Iran frees 4 UAE fishermen

DUBAI, Nov 8: Iran has released four fishermen and two fishing boats from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) detained last month near the disputed Tumb Islands in the Gulf, reports Reuters.

## Clinton's victory makes old girlfriend happy

LONDON: Tamara Kennerley said she was delighted to see her old boyfriend from Oxford make good. "I'm sure he'll make a very good president," she said Friday, reports AP.

Kennerley dated President-elect Bill Clinton in 1969, when he was a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University.

Last week, the 45-year-old businesswoman from Cheshire made public a letter Clinton wrote her on Aug 15, 1969 about serving in Vietnam because she was "infuriated" that President

Bush had questioned Clinton's patriotism. Kennerley said the letter showed that Clinton had expected to serve in Vietnam, and she hoped its publication "helped him win" the election.

"I'd love to see him again, but I'm sure if he comes here he'll be too busy," she told the Associated Press. "I'd like to meet her (Hillary Clinton) as well. "It would be interesting," she said with a laugh.

## Diana defends queen, bashes press

LONDON: Princess Diana on Friday took the rare step of issuing a public statement attacking press reports about her and defending Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip, reports AP.

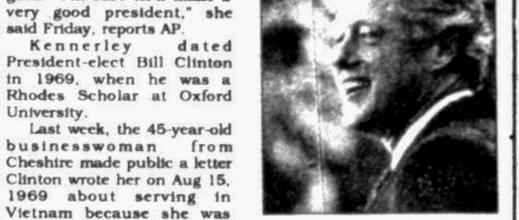
The short statement issued by Buckingham Palace at the princess's request said newspaper articles stating there had been friction between her and her parents-in-law over her alleged marriage difficulties were "misleading."

"The Princess of Wales would like to single out from the recent wave of misleading reports about the Royal Family assertions in some newspapers this week directed specifically against the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh," said the statement given to Press Association, the national news agency.

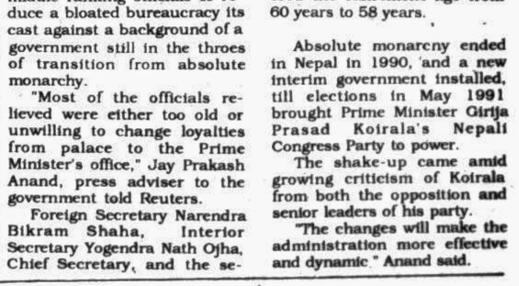
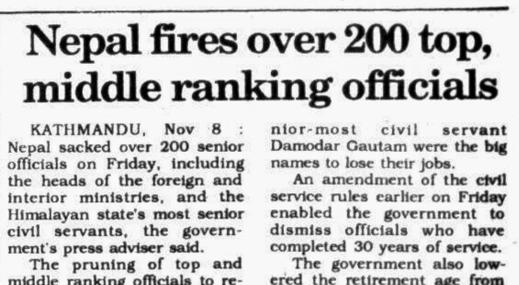
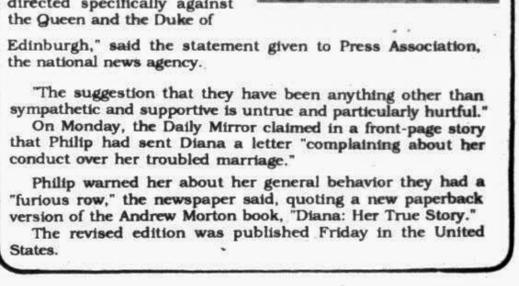
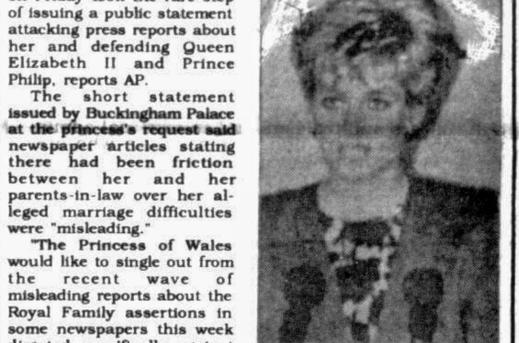
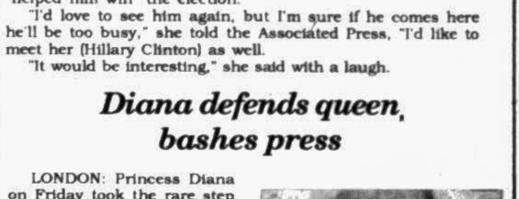
"The suggestion that they have been anything other than sympathetic and supportive is untrue and particularly hurtful."

On Monday, the Daily Mirror claimed in a front-page story that Philip had sent Diana a letter "complaining about her conduct over her troubled marriage."

Philip warned her about her general behavior they had a "furious row," the newspaper said, quoting a new paperback version of the Andrew Morton book, "Diana: Her True Story." The revised edition was published Friday in the United States.



HERISAU, Appenzell Canton, Switzerland: You've certainly got to hand it to a local hobby-gardener here. From his small carrot patch he fingered this remarkable root specimen just recently.



The fishermen said in Sunday's Al-Khaleej newspaper that they were freed on Friday from a prison in the Iranian port city of Bandar Abbas. The Iranians seized the fishermen and boats on October 15, further straining relations between the United Arab Emirates and Tehran.