

### 3 Bodo deputies held in Assam

GUWAHATI, Nov 27: Indian police arrested three tribal state deputies in connection with bombings last week which killed 40 people in Assam state, officials said on Thursday, reports Reuter.

"We have conclusive proof that they aided the bombers and provided them sanctuary. We have recovered gelatine sticks, fuse wires and detonators from their houses," Shiv Subramaniam, Assam's police chief told a news conference.

But a spokesman for the deputies said they were framed.

"This is a conspiracy. The state government wants to subvert a possible dialogue between the federal government and the Bodos," a spokesman for the deputies said.

Police suspect Bodos, who have waged a violent campaign to break away from northeastern Assam and carve out a tribal land within India, to be behind two bomb blasts at

Guwahati on Saturday. Parameswar Brahma, leader of the eight Bodo deputies in the state assembly, Pramila Rani Brahma, head of the women's front and Tejendra Narzary were picked up from their homes at Dispur, the state's capital, early on Thursday, officials said.

Police also arrested Thabla Basumatary, described by Subramaniam as the 'mastermind' behind the blasts.

Following the bombings the federal government banned the Bodo security force on Monday.

Bodos make up 13 per cent of Assam's population of 23 million and say that the Assamese have consistently discriminated against them, denying them job opportunities and educational facilities.

Bodos have been demanding a separate tribal state for over a decade, but it is only since 1988 that their campaign has taken a violent turn.

### Prospect of solution to Lankan Tamil crisis bleak

COLOMBO, Nov 27: Prospects of a settlement to Sri Lanka's dragging Tamil separatist war faded today as the main opposition leader denied agreeing to radical constitutional reforms aimed at ending the bloodshed, reports AFP.

The chairman of a parliamentary committee announced in a closed-door meeting Thursday that former premier Sirimavo Bandaranaike endorsed a proposal by a Tamil legislator calling for major concessions from both sides of the ethnic divide.

Mangala Munasinghe, the head of the committee appointed last year to hammer out a consensus solution, told legislators that Bandaranaike, in telephone conversations with him, had accepted the federal state formula of a Tamil MP.

The package proposed by legislator Kanapathipillai Srinivasan envisages the creation of a federal state with the Tamils in return agreeing to drop their demand for merging the island's northern and

eastern provinces. Within hours of the surprise announcement, Bandaranaike, in an informal chat with Indian journalists at an Indian High Commission (embassy) reception here, denied she supported a federal constitution.

"We can't accept a federal set-up. We are against the merger," Bandaranaike said. Sinhalese parties have rejected a federal constitution since independence from Britain in 1948.

Political sources said she may have been shocked that reporters had learnt of the development within the select committee, whose members have taken an oath of silence.

"It is understandable that no Sinhalese party would like to take the leadership, especially in proposing something that is not very popular with their electorate," a political analyst here said.

Reports that another Sinhalese MP had sought clarification about Bandaranaike accepting the Srinivasan formula prompted the ruling party to

go along with it, a senior government minister said. Other Tamil legislators had dismissed the Srinivasan plan as a sell-out. However, political observers here said that the fact the main Sinhalese parties agreed to a federal solution was a landmark development.

"We are not interested in deals. What we are interested in is a viable solution that will bring lasting peace," L. Keethiswaran, spokesman for the Tamil Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF), told AFP.

He said the Sinhalese leaders should publicly endorse the creation of a federal state and demanded that they actively campaign for it in a constitutionally required nationwide referendum.

Keethiswaran said the Tamil parties were insisting on the merging of the northern and eastern provinces into the administrative unit as part of any package to resolve the protracted ethnic conflict.

The radical leftist Nava Sama Samaja (new equal soci-

ety) Party (NSSP), the only Sinhalese party that supports a merger of the north and east, rejected the select committee as a waste of time.

NSSP legislator Vasudeva Nanayakkara, who is boycotting the select committee, said he did not believe the country was nearer to a solution to the ethnic crisis that has claimed thousands of lives.

"We are still light years away from a solution. The select committee only gives credibility to the government that it is working towards a solution," Nanayakkara said.

Political observers here believe that moderates on both sides of Sri Lanka's ethnic divide could isolate the dominant Tamil rebel group, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), only through a political solution.

However, military officers were sceptical whether a political solution could be implemented on the ground as long as the Tiger guerrillas remain as a fighting force in the north and east.

### Korean talks on mutual nuclear inspection fail

SEOUL, South Korea, Nov 27: Rivals South and North Korea on Friday failed again to agree on mutual nuclear inspection rules because of disagreement over US-South Korea joint military exercises, officials said, reports AP.

The breakdown in the talks seemed certain to abort next month's prime ministers talks, which would be the highest level contact between the two Koreas since their division in 1945.

The two sides also failed to set a date for their next nuclear meeting.

In a border meeting, the Communist North insisted that the pro-Western South scrap a plan to resume the annual Team Spirit exercises with the United States slated for early 1993, a Unification Ministry statement said.

The joint exercises were skipped this year to promote inter-Korean dialogue following the signing of historic peace treaties in December last year.

Seoul and Washington, however, recently agreed to resume the exercises unless Pyongyang agrees to open its secretive nuclear facilities to South Korean inspections under a nuclear arms ban treaty.

The North calls the exercises a war game for aggression. Seoul and Washington say they are for defensive purposes.

Friday's meeting was the 11th meeting between the two Koreas on inspection rules, but past negotiations failed mainly because of the North's refusal to open its military nuclear facilities.

### IRANI PAPER SLATES UN REPORT: An Iranian newspaper accused the West on Thursday of altering a UN human rights report as part of a campaign to distort Tehran's image. Reuter reports from Nicosia.

Jomhuri Eslami Daily said the original report by United Nations Human Rights Envoy Reynaldo Galindo Pohl of El Salvador, who visited Iran four times, "was in fact much distorted."

It said the report "had passed through malicious alterations by others in the wake of his meetings with many other people since his departure from Iran," the Iranian news agency (IRNA) reported.

The UN report released on Tuesday alleged that Iran tortured prisoners, rigged trials, made excessive use of the death penalty, persecuted followers of the Baha'i religion and systematically deprived women of civil rights.



SARAJEVO: A Slovak mother, holding her crying baby, kisses her husband's hands goodbye through the window of the bus taking her and other refugees to Prague on Thursday. —AFP/UNB photo

### PLO real partner for peace, Mitterrand tells Israelis

JERUSALEM, Nov 27: French President Francois Mitterrand, mixing plain speaking with economic incentives, has told Israeli leaders the PLO is the only real partner for peace and urged Palestinians to accept a step-by-step approach, reports Reuter.

The remarks on a state visit to the Jewish state earned a polite brush-off from the Israeli government but praise from Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Mitterrand, 76, told Israelis what they least want to hear at a Jerusalem news conference on Thursday, saying the Palestine Liberation Organisation and its chairman Yasser Arafat were the only entity that represented the Palestinian people.

"I cannot speak for the Palestinians, but I think the PLO definitely represents the whole Palestinian people. However, who to negotiate with is the Israeli government's business," he said.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin called the visit a turning point for better relations between Israel and France, and said differences of opinion over the Palestinians would not prevent the two countries from cooperating more closely.

The French leader, whose country was virtually shut out of the US-dominated Arab-Israeli peace process launched last year, said he would urge the European Community to put up a fund to support economic projects for a peaceful Middle East.

Meanwhile, Iraq said today

French President Francois Mitterrand's visit to Israel was an effort to preserve his "shaky throne" at home.

"Fire has been devouring Iraq's enemies... and is now burning Mitterrand's feet," said Al-Thawra, the ruling Baath Party newspaper, in an article signed by President Saddam Hussein's Head of Protocol.

"He is pleading, using all means, to satisfy Zionism to strengthen his trembling throne in the remainder of his presidency," said the article written by Abdul Wadud Al-Sheikhly, Head of Protocol in the residential office.

Baghdad's officials press has previously said God inflicted cancer on Mitterrand to punish him for his aggression in the Gulf war.

### Serb general refuses to confirm truce

SARAJEVO, Nov 27: Bosnian Serb military leader General Ratko Mladic has refused to confirm a ceasefire signed two weeks ago and largely ignored by the three warring parties, Bosnian Radio reported today, according to Reuter.

The radio said that fighting was continuing on all major fronts across Bosnia, including Gradacac, Maglaj and Brcko in the north, Olovo and Travnik in the centre and Mostar in the south.

It also said helicopters were still flying over Bosnia in defiance of a UN ban on air activity over the region.

The radio reported that Mladic had refused to sign an agreement confirming the ceasefire during talks on Thursday with UN Commander General Philippe Morillon.

In Sarajevo itself, under Serb siege for seven months, the situation appeared relatively quiet after shelling, sniping and machine gun fire was heard on Thursday evening.

Most of the Bosnian capital was without electricity and water, but the weather was warm for the time of the year.

"Every day of relative warmth like this means more people will survive the winter," a UN Relief official said.

### Warlord welcomes US offer for troops to Somalia

MOGADISHU, Somalia, Nov 27: A top warlord on Friday welcomed a US offer to send 30,000 troops to Somalia, but apparently believed their goal was to help his efforts to rule, not part of an expanded UN force, reports AP.

During an approximately hour-long news conference with Somali and foreign journalists, Gen Mohamed Farrah Aidid expressed optimism about how US involvement would help restore Somalia and aid his efforts to govern through his Somali National Alliance, or SNA.

But he seemed to think that the American initiative was separate from the ongoing United Nations involvement, and repeatedly criticised UN efforts, calling them a "dismal failure."

"We believe that the new initiative announced by the government of the United States, together with the political platform developed by the SNA, can put Somalia on solid ground from which to prosper economically, politically and socially," Aidid said.

"We believe the American move will solve our political, economic and social problems," he said. "The United Nations has failed to save the unity of Somalia, the reconciliation process and the recovery programme."

### 50 rebels killed in Peru: An estimated 50 Shining Path rebels were killed in two weeks of bombing raids on a camp in Peru's Andean mountains identified by former rebels, military sources said Thursday, reports AFP from Peru.

The raids concentrated on Viscatan, a remote area marked by deep ravines of difficult access about 480 kilometers (300 miles) southeast of Lima.

Former rebels told army intelligence that the Shining Path had set up a rebel training and indoctrination camp where about 300 rebels were staying, military sources said.

During the raids, artillery helicopters constantly overflew the zone in intense bombing raids, while 200 soldiers tried to penetrate the zone.

### Canada deports war criminal: Officials late Thursday deported war criminal Jacob Luitjens to the Netherlands, where he faces a life sentence for aiding Nazi occupation forces, AP reports from Vancouver.

Luitjens, 73, was found guilty in absentia in 1948 of aiding Nazis forces while serving as a Dutch police officer during World War II.

On Monday, Luitjens lost a four-year fight to stay in Canada. Immigration Adjudicator Daphne Shaw Dyck revoked Luitjens' citizenship after ruling he lied about his Nazi past when he sought entry to Canada from Paraguay in 1961.

Luitjens, a former botany instructor at the University of British Columbia, has pleaded that he suffers from heart problems and skin cancer. He had no comment on Thursday.

### Probe into Belfast shooting: The Royal Ulster Constabulary began an investigation Thursday into the police shooting of an IRA man in west Belfast, police said, AP reports from Belfast.

Patrick Jordan, 22, was shot and killed Wednesday evening while running from a car that had been stopped by a police patrol said a spokesman for the Royal Ulster Constabulary, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The spokesman said shots were fired and the driver was fatally injured a short distance from where he had been stopped.

Police would not say how many officers were involved in the shooting or give any more details.

### China to help crash victims: China has announced plans to pay compensation to families of victims of Tuesday's airliner crash which killed all 141 people on board, Reuter reports from Beijing.

The government will pay each Chinese victim's family 26,000 yuan (dollar 17,050), said Thursday evening's edition of the Yangcheng Evening News, quoting an official in charge of compensation.

The newspaper did not mention plans for compensating families of the foreign passengers on board the China Southern Airlines Boeing 737 which crashed near the southern tourist resort of Guilin.

Among the 133 passengers were one Canadian, two Spaniards, nine Taiwanese and one Chinese from the Portuguese-run territory of Macau.

### UNITA signs truce with govt

LUANDA, Angola, Nov 27: Government and rebel leaders have signed a truce and requested expanded UN intervention to halt escalating fighting that has threatened to draw the nation back into civil war, reports AP.

Representatives of the government and Jonas Savimbi's UNITA rebels agreed Thursday to an immediate cease-fire and pledged to abide by peace accords signed last year, Angolan state news ANGOP reported.

Both sides also requested a renewed and enlarged role for the United Nations, which brokered and provided security at the four-hour meeting in the southern port of Namibe.

Another meeting is pro-

jected to an unspecified day next week.

Neither President Jose Eduardo dos Santos nor Savimbi attended the meeting, but government negotiator Fernando da Piedade dos Santos said a summit can take place as soon as UNITA chooses a site, ANGOP reported.

UN representative Margaret Anstee said the talks were "the most important sign" yet that Angola might avoid renewed war.

Angola's 16-year civil war erupted on the eve of independence from Portugal in 1975 and became a Cold War proxy battle that claimed more than 350,000 lives. It ended with 1991 peace accords that

paved the way for elections in September.

UN observers deemed the voting generally free and fair. But Savimbi, trailing in the presidential polls, called the elections, rigged and re-grouped his troops.

Fighting broke out three weeks ago, leaving 2,500 dead in Luanda alone. The United Nations brokered a cease-fire that has mostly held.

In Luanda, Angola's 220-seat, multiparty parliament, based on the results of the September balloting, convened without UNITA's 70 deputies.

Jorge Valentim, a hard-line UNITA official, said Wednesday that rebel deputies would attend only when the capital was safe.

### Salvadoran rebels blame military for conspiracy

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador, Nov 27: Leftist rebels have accused rightist military officers of conspiring to seize power to stall a purge of the armed forces that is part of El Salvador's peace process, reports AP.

A news release by the Farabundo National Liberation Front rebels on Thursday called on all its fighters and sympathisers to go on an immediate alert, and urged moderate elements within the military not to "join in this dangerous game."

President Alfredo Cristiani denied such a conspiracy was brewing, saying: "There are no signs of about anything of this kind."

### Selling of babies a profitable business in Brazil

CURITIBA, Brazil, Nov 27: For most of her 23 years, Dalva da Silva clung to the hope that she, her mother and three sisters would break the grip of poverty and escape the two-room hovel in a hillside slum outside Curitiba, reports AP.

An unwanted pregnancy took the hope away. She had no husband, no schooling, no skills. Her life would be a series of low-wage jobs, her home always a slum.

Then Dalva learned that the baby might be her ticket out of poverty.

During a checkup at a maternity hospital, an off-duty nurse told her to turn the child over to an agency that matched infants with rich couples. The nurse said the baby was worth 1,000 dollar as

much as Dalva could earn in 18 months.

One night, Dalva wrapped 28-day-old Felipe in a sweater, slipped out of her house and took a bus to the Sao Carlos Hospital, where four members of a baby-smuggling ring waited in a station wagon.

They were to drive the boy 520 miles (837 kilometers) north to Rio de Janeiro, collect 30,000 dollar from an Italian couple and put Felipe on a plane for Rome, but the plan went awry. An anonymous informant called federal police, who arrested Dalva and the baby smugglers. Felipe was taken to a child-care center.

The case attracted national attention to the shadowy network of lawyers, judges, doctors and nurses who sell in-

fants to foreign couples for huge profits.

"It's a stinking business," said Joao Noronha, chief of the anti-kidnapping division of the federal police in Curitiba, capital of Parana, one of the states where baby-trafficking is most common.

Noronha also indicted four other members of the ring involved with Dalva and Felipe, including Ariete Hilu, 47, the gang leader.

Police say Hilu, a Parana lawyer who illegally arranged at least 500 adoptions for Israeli couples, was arrested in 1988 for selling an infant girl to an Israeli couple in Paraguay for 10,000 dollar.

Hilu, released on probation in 1990, set up another baby-smuggling operation in four

states of southern Brazil, police said, and sold more than 60 babies before she was arrested again.

Adoptions by foreigners are legal in Brazil, but arranging them for profit is punishable by up to four years in jail.

Each year, thousands of single mothers sell their babies to smugglers. The mother receives up to 3,000 dollar or sometimes an apartment, a car, stereo equipment, even food.

In 1991, Ceara state police found that Maria Ferreira do Nascimento, 21, had traded her infant daughter for 6 pounds (2.7 kilograms) of rice, 6 pounds (2.7 kilograms) of beans and a sack of coffee.

Foreigners generally do not know paying fees to middlemen is illegal, said Jose Batista

### Off the Record

#### She's nation's most public but private figure

LONDON: She's Britain's most public figure but her fortune is the nation's most private, reports Reuter.

Queen Elizabeth's offer on Thursday to pay tax on her private income, a concession intended to quell a public outcry over the cost of the monarchy, has set tongues wagging about one of royalty's greatest taboos — money.

But the extent of her personal wealth, from sources that range from share dividends to winnings from race horses, can only be guessed at — literally.

Estimates range from 50 million pounds (dollar 76 million) at the lowest end of the scale to up to seven billion (dollar 10.6 billion). Prince Edward, the Queen's youngest son, breached the secrecy that traditionally shrouds royal riches this week but only to dismiss one figure — 6.5 billion pounds (dollar 9.9 billion) as 'absolute crap'.

"Where do people get this figure from? It is madness. Anyway, if the family does have 6.5 billion pounds, where is it all? That's what I would like to know," newspapers quoted the Prince as saying.

The US magazine Fortune ranked the Queen sixth in its list of the world's richest people published in August. It credited her with \$ 11.7 billion but most of it is in real estate and the crown jewels.

#### Monaco Princess gives birth to a boy

MONTE CARLO, Monaco: Princess Stephanie of Monaco has given birth to a boy, named Louis, and both mother and child are doing well, the principality's press office said Friday, reports AP.

The baby was born at 10:10 pm Thursday at the Princess Grace Hospital, weighing 3.1 kilograms (6.8 pounds), the press office said.

"Princess Stephanie and the child are doing well," the press office said. It added that there would be no official communique about the birth.

The 27-year-old Stephanie entered the hospital Thursday on the arm of her boy friend, her former bodyguard Daniel Ducruet, with whom the Princess has been living.

The palace made official announcements of the births of the children of sister Princess Caroline.

A large police detachment took up position outside the hospital to keep the press at bay, but failed to snare one photographer who disguised himself as a policeman and got several yards from the maternity ward before being arrested.

More than a dozen photographers have camped in front of the hospital for several weeks.

A doctor at the hospital, speaking on condition of anonymity, said that Stephanie and Ducruet arrived at the maternity ward mid-afternoon Thursday. She was admitted under the care of chief obstetrician Hubert Harden, who assisted at Caroline's deliveries. The doctor predicted that the child would be born Friday.

#### They reject abortion

DUBLIN, Ireland: Irish voters were rejecting a proposal to allow abortion to save the life of the mother, initial official results from key cities showed Friday, reports AP.

With 15 per cent of the abortion referendum votes counted, initial reports suggest the final margin of 'no' vote in Ireland — where a blanket ban on abortion is enshrined in the constitution — could be 2 to 1 or more.

In the key constituencies in Dublin and Cork, the country's second-largest city, the total vote in the first seven constituencies to report was 69 per cent against allowing abortion when the pregnancy threatened the life of the woman.

#### Cameroon's opposition leader held

YAOUNDE, Cameroon, Nov 27: Opposition leader John Fru Ndi, who has been under house arrest since claiming he won last month's presidential elections, was taken away by soldiers Thursday night, sources in his Social Democratic Front said, reports AP.

Authorities refused to say where Fru Ndi was taken.

President Paul Biya's government placed Fru Ndi under house arrest and imposed a state of emergency in his Northwest Province stronghold shortly after the October 11 elections.

The government says Biya won the election with 39 per cent vote, and Fru Ndi finished second. Other opposition candidates split the rest of the vote.