Pakistan has 7 nuclear weapons: Benazir was overthrown for protest

Blast rocks Manchester

MANCHESTER, Dec 3: An explosion rocked central Manchester Thursday morning, injuring four people and damaging office buildings, police and fire services said, reports AP.

News reports, quoting police sources, said the blast was caused by a suspected car

Manchester police, in statement, said an anonymous caller had telephoned a waring before the explosion and warned that three other devices had been planted in the

"This call is being taken scriously and the area has been evacuated," the statement said. The explosion occurred in the city's Parsonage district at rush hour.

Pindi planned to drop N-bomb on India in '90 WASHINGTON, Dec Pakistan readted a nuclear weapon to drop on India in the spring of 1990 when the Indian army was conducting

says Reuter. The network, which reported on Tuesday that Pakistan has at least seven nuclear weapons that can be assembled and dropped within a matter of hours, said that the plan was to use a C-130 cargo plane to drop the device.

war games near the border,

NBC reported on Wednesday.

The Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto said she was alerted to the nuclear plan by the US Ambassador to Pakistan. She protested to the military and was then overthrown.

"I have no proof for this but I feel that someone may have turned on the (nuclear) switch in the spring of 1990 to justify the dismissal of my government and, now, having done that, does not know how to turn that switch off and explain to the people who turned it on that she was right and they were wrong," Bhutto told

But Pakistan's Foreign Minister, Shahryar Khan, dismissed her claim.

"Can you really believe that the Prime Minister is doesn't even know that certain things are happening in this sensitive area?" he asked.

US Senator Larry Pressler

told NBC the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) had described the Pakistani nuclear programme to him.

"... They'd have the capability within a matter of hours to have a bomb in an aeroplane and flying someplace and dropping it," Pressler said.

NBC said Pakistan was able to buy sophisticated nuclear technology in the United States and Europe with the approval of the Reagan administration because of its role in helping US backed rebels in neighbouring Afghanistan. ->

AP adds, a US government spokesman on Wednesday expressed continued concern over Pakistan's nuclear capabil-

ity and said American officials are still unable to certify that Pakistan has no nuclear bomb.

"We've addressed those concerns repeatedly to the Pakistan government and we've also.... been actively engaged both with Pakistan and with India in efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation in South Asia," said State Department spokesman Richard Boucher.

He was responding to questions about the Pakistani government's dental earlier in the day that it possesses any atomic bombs. An NBC television network report on Tucsday reported that Pakistan had components to make seven nuclear bombs.

same," Boucher said, "that we are unable to certify that Pakistan does not possess a nuclear explosive device."

He said US policy prevented him from commenting specifically on intelligence information and he could not say whether US officials have evidence that Pakistan has a nuclear bomb.

Congress PMIW-W7-V a non-nuclear certification by the US president before aid can be resumed to Pakistan. Military and economic assistance, which had reached 500 million dollar a year, was cut off in October 1990.

"We've urged both countries to join nuclear non-prolifera-

tion regimes, to begin confidence-building steps, and to participate in multilateral discussions aimed at averting a regional nuclear arms race. Boucher said.

In Islamabad, Pakistani Foreign Ministry spokesman Javeed Hussein said the country's nuclear programme is "for peaceful purposes and not weapons-oriented." He denied the NBC report.

Earlier this year. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said Pakistan had the ability to make atomic bombs but would not. India - which fought, wars against Pakistan in 1948, 1965 and 1971 - exploded a nuclear device in 1974.

dissolved in Algeria

54 city govts

ALGIERS, Dec 3: Seeking to tighten control as violence continues, the military-led government on Wednesday dissolved 27 more city governments and announced a curfew beginning this weekend, reports AP.

That brought to more than 54 city administrations setzed by the government of Prime Minister Belaid Abdessalam since it announced a new crackdown over the weekend.

Nearly one year after the government cancelled parliamentary elections the Islamic Salvation Front was about to win, more than 2000 police and soldiers have been killed by militants.

BRIFFIY

Khmers urged to free UN troops: The United States urged the Khmer Rouge to free six United Nations peacekeepers seized while aboard a boat in the Stoeng Sen River where they were observing troop

movements, reports AFP from Washington. "We certainly call upon the Khmer Rouge forces to release there men immediately," said State Department spokesman Richard Boucher. Three of the abducted men were from Britain, two from the Philippines and one from New Zealand. Boucher declined to conclude that the incident constituted a new reversal for the Cambodian peace process.

under UN aegis. He called on the Khmer Rouge, the most militarily powerful group among the four Cambodian factions, to "comply fully" with UN resolutions regarding Cambodia.

already threatened by the Khmer Rouge refusal to disarm

UN teams' new mission in Iraq: Two teams of UN weapons inspectors, including nuclear

experts, are due to start a new mission to Iraq Friday in a bid to discover the names of Baghdad's foreign weapons suppliers, a UN spokesman said Wednesday, reports AFP from Manama.

The nuclear team will be headed by Maurizio Zifferero, an Italian, who has led several missions into Iraq to inspect suspected nuclear sites.

He will try to obtain information on Iraq's foreign weapons suppliers, notably those who provided it with nuclear-related arms and equipment, Baghdad has refused to identify its suppliers.

Swedish chemical expert Johan Santesson, a member of the World Health Organistion (WHO), will lead a second group of inspectors specialised in broader weapons systems.

CIS summit likely Dec 25: The next summit of Commonwealth leaders is likely to be held on December 25, the head of the 10-nation block's coordination group said on Wednesday, reports Reuter from Moscow.

"All state leaders have so far agreed on this date but it is subjects to change," Ivan Korotehenya said by telephone from the Belarus capital Minsk.

.The summit, to be held in Minsk, was originally set for December 4-but last month was put back until December 18 to avoid clashing with a session of Russia's supreme legislature, which opened on Tuesday.

3 Argentine ministers resign: Argentina's ministers of the interior, labour and education resigned unexpectedly, the official news agency Telam

reported late Wednesday, reports AP from Buenos Aires. The three are Interior Minister Jose Manzano, Labor Minister Rodolfo Diaz and Education Minister Antonio

Salonia. No reasons were given for the resignations, but Salonia has been criticized for his handling of the transfer of federal

schools to provinces and cities without adequate budgetary provisions. Diaz has been undercut by powerful Economy Minister Domingo Cavallo in his attempt to win congressional approval

of key labor reform legislation.

Abkhazians kill 8: Eight people were killed and 37 wounded in an artillery attack by Abkhazian separatist forces on the main market of the Black Sea Port of Sukhumi on Wednesday, a senior Georgian official said, reports Reuter

from Moscow. Interfax news agency quoted Georgy Khaindrave, the Georgian minister responsible for the Abkhazia region, as saying one shell hit an ambulance in the attack.

Shells were also fired into the residential areas in Sukhumi, the regional capital, causing heavy casualties, he said in a statement.

Khaindrave said the Abkhaz positions from which the attack was launched were close to Russian military installations. "Any use of force from the direction of the Russian positions can be regarded as direct aggression against

sovereign Georgia," his statement said. Plane crashes in Stockholm: A small airplane carrying three people crashed into an apartment

building in a Stockholm suburb Thursday morning, Swedish radio reported, says AP from Stockholm.

The plane was only a few minutes away from Stockholm City Airport at Bromma went it went down. Police and rescue workers reported that one of those

aboard was killed while the other two were missing. There

were no reports of other casualties but one flat in the building

talks, reports AFP. Rio group summit said that an Round of the General

The final statement of the agreement in the Uruguay Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) has "a fundamental importance" and would help establish "A free, stable, open and non-discriminatory international trade system without discrimination."

Eleven heads of state and government of the 14-country Tuesday.



President George Bush (R) and Vice President Dan Quayle (C) meet on Wednesday with US Sen. Bob Kerry (L), D-Mass, in the White House Oval Office about Kerry's recently concluded trip to Southeast Asia in search of information about American POW/MIA's. Kerry, and other Congressmen who accompanied him, told President Bush it was up to - AFP/UNB photo Washington to encourage further cooperation from Hanoi.

Americans invited to celebrate Clinton's installation

WASHINGTON, Dec 3: "All Americans" are invited to take part in five days of festivities that will mark the assumption of office January 20 of Bill Clinton as President of the United States. They can even come to the White House "to shake his hand," reports AFP.

A 200 kilometer (120 mile) but trip January 17, lunch the day after with average Americans and a three-hour open house at White House January 21 at which the Presidential couple will shake hands with "ordinary citizens" - those are some of the plans for the inauguration.

Officially unveiled in Washington Wednesday and dubbed "an American reunion: New beginnings, renewed hope," the programme strikes the same populist tone that

Discovery crew

releases spy

satellite

Dec 3: Discovery's crew of five

astronauts released a secret

military satellite, then awak-

ened Thursday to work on the

open portion of their seven-

The astronauts, who nick-

day mission, reports AP.

Control's Carl Meade said.

"Good morning, Carl. Dogs

Mission Control announced

of war are wide awake," com-

mander David Walker replied.

late Wednesday, nearly seven

and half after the shuttle's

liftoff, that the Pentagon satcl-

lite had been released.

"Jingle Bells."

SPACE CENTER, Houston,

characterised Clinton's campaign for the presidency.

"The whole thing will look very much like America," said Ron Brown, he Democratic Party Chairman who was named by Clinton to head the committee organising the inaugural ceremonies.

"It's going to be an open, accessible, but dignifies inaugural," he said.

The committee's goal was to demonstrate that the arrival to power of Clinton and his Vice President, Al Gore, represents a "real change, more than a generation change," after dozen years of Republican rule.

Compared to previous inaugural ceremonies, the change will be evident in two ways, according to Brown: There will be more public events and Clinton and Gore will be more accessible to the people.

"We have invited all Americans to participate," he added. Only 10 balls, tickets for which will cost 125 dollars, will not be free. CONCESSION. Americans also were invited

to turn cut along the 20 kilometre (120 mile) route from Washington to Moniticello, Thomas Jefferson's residence near Charlottesville, Virginia, Clinton, Gore and their wives will make the trek by bus.

For the moment, the President-elect is still in Little Rock, Arkansas, where he is holding meetings on the formation of his new government

The first appointments, filling top economic posts, were expected before Christmas, and possibly before a conference in Little Rock to review the state to the US economy.

Panic's candidacy uncertain

BELGRADE, Dec 3: A top electoral official said Wednesday that moderate Yugoslav Premier Milan Panic failed to produce documents qualifying him to run against hard-line Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic in December 20

elections, reports AP. named themselves "the dogs of As the deadline for listing war" because their flight suppresidential candidates passed posedly is the last shuttle Wednesday, Zoran Djumic, mission devoted to Defence head of Serbia's electoral Department work, were commission, said on Belgrade roused by a canine rendition of television that Panic, a Serbborn California businessman, "Crew dogs, wake up. We had failed to prove he had got work to do, Mission been resident in Serbia for one

year as required. But a formal ruling on Panic's candidacy was not expected until Saturday because of legal technicalities and a possible court ruling on the issue, electoral commission sources said.

given us today, he does not fulfil the requirements needed for the candidacy," Djumic

Sources at Panic's campaign headquarters said they have provided documents proving the premier has been doing business in Yugoslavia since June 1991. But they apparently failed to provide a residence

Panic had thrown down the gauntlet to Milosevic, accusing the president of creating only problems for Serbia and Montenegro, the only republics left in Yugoslavia after Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Slovenia and Macedonia se-

Panic's candidacy would pose the most direct threat to Milosevic since he came to power in Serbia in 1987. Eleven other candidates also "According to what he has are vying for the presidency.

Israeli move to repeal ban of meet with PLO

JERUSALEM, Dec 3: The government of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, which has ignored violations of a law prohibiting contacts with the PLO on Wednesday asked parlia ment to formally repeal the ban, reports AP.

Justice Minister David Libai said the move did not mean Rabin was softening his opposition to allowing the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) to take part in Mideast peace talks. The PLO is officially excluded from the talks, although it openly advises the Palestinian negotiating team.

A 1986 amendment to Israel's anti-terror law, enacted under the previous, right-wing government, bars meetings with members of terrorist organizations, which is how Israel defines the PLO. Violators face up to three years in prison, and several Israelis have served time.

Palestinians living in the occupted West Bank and Gaza Strip and annexed east Jerusalem technically are also banned from meeting with PLO officials.

But Israel has turned a blind eye to meetings between Palestinian negotiators and the PLO because it doesn't want to impede the peace process, Libai said.

A change in the law was expected after Rabin took office in July. Rabin decided to hold up the bill until after the US presidential election in November.

Rabin reportedly feared an earlier repeal would have encouraged the Bush administration to renew its dialogue with the PLO, suspended after a 1990 terror attack on Israel.

Greece closes border with Macedonia

SKOPJE, Dec 3: Greece closed its border with its northern neighbour Macedonia on Wednesday, Macedonian radio reported, according to Reuter.

"Greece, having shipped 20,000 tonnes of oil to Macedonia from Saloniki, closed its borders again this

evening," the radio said. Independent confirmation of the border closure was not immediately available.

Greece decided last week to allow shipments of 20,000 tonnes of oil to energy-starved Macedonia, as most of the industry, accounting for 70 per cent of the republic's industrial output, was about to shut down for the lack of fuel.

The day Greece starting shipping oil, heating plants in the Macedonian capital Skopje ran dry.

The latest border closure seems bound to increase tensions between the two countries, relations are already strained by Greece's refusal to back Macedonia's international recognition.

Off the Record

Don't drive in public

MANAMA: American servicewomen have been ordered not to drive in public in Saudi Arabia to avoid conflict with the kingdoms rigidly Islamic society, US military sources disclosed Wednesday, reports AP.

The , insisting on anonymity, said US commanders introduced the ban three weeks ago in Dhahran, the Gulf-side base of US Air Force units.

They said similar orders earlier had been issued to women serving with US units deployed elsewhere in the kingdom, like Riyadh, the capital.

They did not say when exactly the prohibitions were introduced, or explain why they had been kept secret. Women serving with US forces in Saudi Arabia now can

only drive inside the military compounds, the sources said. No specific incident was cited as the reason for the ban, which was not applicable during the Gulf crisis when the size of American forces in the kingdom reached half a million.

They are not interested in 'safe sex'

LONDON: Many people in Britain and France are not practicing 'safe sex', leaving them and their partners at risk of getting the AIDS virus, according to two studies published Thursday, reports AP

The reports in separate articles in the December 3 issue of the journal Nature parallel findings of recent surveys in the United States, Norway and Denmark. In the French survey, one-third of heterosexual men, half

of heterosexual women, and a quarter of men who were homosexual or bisexual had sex without using condoms in the past year. There was no comparable figure on condom use in the

British results, which were based on a preliminary analysis. A final report will be published next year. The British findings showed that among two groups whose members can be at high risk of getting acquired immune deficiency syndrome homosexual men and intravenous drug users — more than half had not been tested to learn whether they are infected with

The researchers said 6.1 per cent of the British men and 4.1 per cent of the French men reported having at least one sexual experience with a man. Homosexual men risk AIDS infection primarily when they have anal intercourse without a condom. Drug users are at high risk when they share needles.

Kids are too sure of their ability

WASHINGTON: The US government has found what parents already knew: Kids who smoke are too sure of their ability to stop, reports AP.

They misjudge the addictive power of cigarettes. They want to quit but can't.

In fact, almost none of them kick the habit, said Abigail J. Moss who led the research team for the National Centre for Health Statistics. "It's depressing," she said Wednesday as the government released its findings.

The study, based on interviews with 9,965 teen-agers, found that kids whose friends smoke were far more likely to become smokers than were those who hung out with nonsmokers. Three per cent in a non-smoking crowd start smoking versus 50 per cent for those with smoking friends. And older brothers and sisters were more likely to be a



CHILDREN OF A LESSER GOD: A group of Myanmar teen-aged girls reportedly sold by their parents, due to acute poverty, is seen with a social worker, after they were rescued from Thai brothels. They were forced to - Star TV photo prostitution.

Latam summit ends

was on fire, police said.

BUENOS AIRES, Dec 3: Leaders of 11 Latin American nations concluded a two-day summit Wednesday pledging to strengthen democracy and fight poverty, and endorsing efforts to conclude world trade

Rio group, representing Latin American and Caribbean states. opened their meeting here

Asians pushing for a new definition of human rights commentators Ramos' state- health care is more fun-MANILA, Dec 3: Stung by meeting for the Vienna con- bluntly warned the west not to that is keeping them poor. ference scheduled to be held "dictate its concept of democ- In some countries like Shri ment smacked of a shift to a damental than its right to vote.

what they see as bossy western moralising about human rights, the newly-affluent nations of Asia are pushing for a new delinition of human rights they say is rooted in their own cul-

ture and values, reports IPS. This has pitted nations like Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia and even China against industrialised nations of the north, which argue that the basic concepts of human rights are universal. Argue that the basic concepts of human rights are

The disagreement threatens to be as divisive for a big international conference on human rights next year in Vienna as the dispute over tropical rainforests was for the Earth Summit in Brazil in

in Bangkok in October was postponed because of widely divergent views on the agenda.

At the heart of the dispute is the argument that western definition of human rights emphasise individual choice and civil liberties, while eastern cultures put more value on community rights, discipline and respect of elders.

Although the two viewpoints need not be mutually exclusive the debate has generated much heat at recent ASEAN gatherings, starting with the Non-Aligned Movement summit in Jakarta in September and the meeting of European and south-east Asian foreign ministers in Manila

early November. Non-Aligned leaders in regional preparatory their Jakarta declaration racy and human rights... on others.

And in Manila, minister of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) took the sting out of European efforts to highlight Indonesian crackdowns in East Timor and military excesses in Myanmar. They also scuttled efforts to link development aid to human rights and democracy.

Governments of poorer nations in the region whose former colonial masters grafted western concepts of democracy and human rights in their constitutions, now seem less zealous about keeping those freedoms intact. Dazzled by Singapore's glittering authoritarian capitalism, they wonder if it is perhaps too much political freedom

Lanka, India and Indonesia

which are battling separatist insurgencies, state sponsored suppressing of freedoms is justified on grounds of national security. And every report by international rights groups like . Amnesty International is ritually labelled "biased".

Philippine President Fidel Ramos told ASEAN and European ministers in Manila this month: "There must be a balance between the rights of the individual and the rights of the community. Each society must find that delicate balance for itself, in accordance with the tradition, character and history of its people.

Despite a past violations, the Philippines has long been champion of US style civil liberties and for some Manila common ASEAN position on human rights that is heavily influenced by richer members like Singapore, Indonesia and "We should not spit on our

heritage", said Manila's Globe newspaper in an outraged editorial. "That heritage of liberty and respect of human rights is the Philippines' single claim to respect from the rest of the world."

Human rights advocates say a distinction between individ ual and community rights is absurd. But when pressed about violations like East Timor and Tiananmen at international meetings, Indonesian and Chinese delegations argue that a community's right to food, shelter and basic

South-east Asian officials

bristle when concepts like democracy and human rights are measured by standards set in Europe or the United States. They say these stan-Hards are applied inconsistently and want ASEAN to come up with its own yard-

repression Myanmar, which activists say must be condemned by any yardstick, has brought up sensitive issues of sovereignty.

Even here, international law could be changing. According to the controversial Boutros-Ghali doctrine named after the UN Secretary General, the international community may not regard national frontiers as barriers to "humanitarian intervention".

Survivors observe Bhopal disaster

BHOPAL, India, Dec 3: Survivors of the Bhopal gas disaster on Thursday burnt effigies and marched through the strects to condemn Union Carbide Corp. on the eighth anniversary of the world's worst industrial accident, reports AP. Protestors burnt dozens of

rag-and-straw figures of

Carbide's former chief executive, Warren Anderson, facing charges of culpable homicide from the deaths of 4,000 people by the poisonous gas that leaked out of a pesticide plant owned by the company's Indian subsidiary. Anderson has ignored

summonses by a Bhopal court to face the charges.

More effigies were tied to

lamp posts on the road leading to the abandoned fartory.