

## Nagas kill 10 more

NEW DELHI, Sept 29: Tribal militants with automatic guns raided a rival tribe's village in northeastern India and killed 10 people on Wednesday, a news agency reported, says AP.

The attack by Naga guerrillas apparently avenged the killing of four comrades earlier Wednesday by fighters of the rival Kukis tribe, United News of India said.

The killings were the latest in a series of daily clashes between the two groups in the remote hilly state of Manipur. The area is 1,650 kilometres (1,000 miles) east of New Delhi.

More than 300 people have been killed in the past year in the war between the two tribes. In the most brutal attack so far, a group of Nagas hacked, burned and shot to death 90 Kuki civilians on September 14.

The decades-old enmity between the two tribes is over control of land. Also, the Nagas, once a headhunting tribe, see the Kukis as an obstacle in their goal to set up an independent nation, which proposes to include some predominantly Kuki areas.

The Nagas have been fighting a low-key insurgency with Indian security forces for the last 40 years. The Kukis have recently begun campaigning for a separate state within India.

## Pak election campaign gets momentum

# Benazir, Sharif go neck and neck

ISLAMABAD, Sept 29: Campaigning has picked up after a slow start as the countdown to Pakistan's parliamentary elections begins, reports AFP.

The main contenders, Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif, were addressing an average half a dozen rallies each day on whirlwind tours up and down the country.



Benazir Bhutto

Both former Prime Ministers, on helicopter campaigns, were drawing equally huge crowds, making a clear assessment of the outcome difficult.

Corruption is the main theme of the campaign for October 6-9 national and provincial elections, the third in

five years in this South Asian Muslim nation of 128 million people where democracy is still skin deep.

Accusations flow thick and fast in fiery speeches as the rivals engage in a brutal war of words.

At a rally in Gujranwala on Monday, Bhutto reportedly alleged that Sharif had collected 2,000 million rupees (about 67 million dollars) from drug barons, smugglers and big industrialists for his electioneering, a charge he has denied.

During his 30-month rule until mid-July, Sharif "plundered" the country and added nine big factories to his industrial empire through "ill gotten" money, she was quoted in the local press as saying.

Hussain Haqqani, Sharif's former Ambassador to Sri Lanka and now a close aide of Bhutto, said Sharif imposed a culture of money.

"Corruption has been institutionalised for the first time in this country," he said.

Sharif, fighting back, has blamed Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party (PPP) for the 1971 split of Pakistan, and has also accused her of hatching a "conspiracy" with former President Ghulam Ishaq Khan to

grab power. Since its creation in 1967, the PPP has been working against Pakistan's integrity and solidarity, he was quoted as telling a crowd the same day, pledging to fulfil his "mission of finishing the anti-Pakistan party."

While the two main parties engage in bitter verbal jousting, a third party, the Pakistan Islamic Front (PIF) led by fundamentalist Qazi Hussain Ahmed, has condemned both of them as American puppets. Bhutto and Sharif are indistinguishable, he says.

Sharif is campaigning on a pro-business ticket, trying to capitalise on his past performance.

"Other leaders promise but Nawaz Sharif delivers," a newspaper AD says, highlighting his liberalisation of the economy, improvements in communications and an employment scheme for jobless youths.

Another Sharif AD attacks the PPP leadership for allegedly taking millions of rupees in a secret sale of party nominations to candidates while Bhutto's husband Asif Zardari is accused of abetting terrorism and receiving kickbacks during her 20-month rule which ended in

August 1990.

A code of conduct, drafted by the election commission and endorsed by all parties, prohibits the use of abusive language, the fanning of ethnic or linguistic sentiment, including calling opponents traitors or saying they were disloyal to Islam.

Complaints are pouring in daily at the commission's office



Nawaz Sharif

about code violations, an official said.

The commission said it had issued notices to both Bhutto and Sharif to answer allegations of violations.

Commission officials said the two parties had lodged six complaints each.

## US Senate says 'no' to abortion

WASHINGTON, Sept 29: The Senate, in a defeat for abortion-rights supporters, Tuesday refused to lift the 17-year-old ban on federally financed abortions for the poor, reports AP.

By a 59-40 roll call vote, senators voted instead to slightly liberalize current restrictions. Medicaid can now be used to pay only for abortions for women whose lives are in jeopardy; under the bill, funds would also be provided when pregnancies result from rape or incest.

The vote signalled defeat of this year's effort by abortion-rights advocates to use the Ascension of President Clinton to the White House to dramatically expand the use of federal funds for abortions. The House last June refused to drop the ban and settled for the same restrictions that the Senate approved today.

When the year began, abortion-rights supporters had high hopes. Gone were the veto threats Republican Presidents Reagan and Bush had issued for the past dozen years every time efforts were made to expand access to federal abortion assistance.

Supporters were also bolstered by the addition of four women to the Senate in last fall's elections, all of them Democrats and backers of abortion rights.



US First Lady Hillary Clinton testifies before the House Ways and Means Committee on Tuesday on Capitol Hill. Mrs. Clinton implored members of Congress "as a mother, a wife, a daughter, a sister, a woman," to work with the administration to overhaul America's health care system. — AFP photo

## BRIEFLY

**Four Russian judges resign:** Four Judges from Russia's Constitutional Court announced their resignations Tuesday in protest at the "Political games" being played by the court's President Valery Zorkin, AFP reports from Moscow.

Nikolai Vitruk, the court vice-president, and judges Ernest Ametkov, Tamara Morshchakova and Anatoli Kononov said they would boycott the court, the Itar-Tass news agency reported.

Earlier Ametkov had said that the "complacency and influence of the court had led the country into a legal impasse."

**Rabin starts China visit Oct 10:** Yitzhak Rabin will make the first visit to China by an Israeli Prime Minister next month as the two countries, which established relations only last year, move rapidly to cement their ties, Reuters reports from Beijing.

Rabin will make an official goodwill visit from October 10 to 14 at the invitation of China's Premier Li Peng, the Foreign Ministry said in a statement issued through the official Xinhua news agency Wednesday.

China, long a staunch supporter of the Palestinian cause, established diplomatic relations with Israel in January 1992.

**One executed in Texas:** An inmate was executed by injection early Tuesday for the slaying of a college instructor who was abducted, raped and then run over with her own car, AP reports from Huntsville.

Antonio Bonham, 33, went to his death just after midnight after asking the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles and Governor Ann Richards to commute his sentence to life without parole. He had no final statement.

He was convicted in the 1981 murder of 62-year-old Marie McGowan.

**One gunned down in S Africa:** Gunmen with AK-47s opened fire on a black commuter taxi Tuesday, killing the driver and injuring eight passengers, police said, AP reports from Johannesburg.

The attack occurred on a road south of Johannesburg that has been the site of several similar attacks linked to political fighting. More than 45 blacks died in those shootings, which occurred over the past three weeks.

**Irish President in Agra:** Irish President Mary Robinson left yesterday for the Taj Mahal town of Agra after ending the official stage of a six-day trip to India, officials said, AFP reports from New Delhi.

Robinson, 49, was seen off at the forecourt of the presidential palace by President Shankar Dayal Sharma, Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao and a host of Indian ministers before an inter service guard of honour.

Robinson, accompanied by her husband, was then taken by the India Air Force to Agra, nearly 200 kilometres (125 miles) south of New Delhi to see the Taj Mahal, a 17th century Moghul architectural marvel.

**21 die in Indian bus mishap:** Twenty-one persons were killed, 18 on the spot, when a bus in which they were travelling overturned near Srisaalam dam in Kurnool district yesterday, PTI reports from Hyderabad.

The bus was carrying 38 persons working in the Srisaalam dam project, police said.

Three persons succumbed to injuries at the Kurnool government hospital, where the injured have been admitted, police added.

**Ranariddh, Hun Sen off to UN:** Cambodia's two prime ministers left for New York Wednesday where they will thank the United Nations for helping bring peace to the war-ravaged country and seek guarantees of financial aid, Reuters reports from Phnom Penh.

First Prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh and second Prime Minister Hun Sen will represent Cambodia at the UN General Assembly for the first time.



Israeli army Chief of Staff Lt General Ehud Barak confers with his officers during a visit to the West Bank town of Jericho (the future seat of the PLO) on Tuesday. Barak said that the army will respect the calendar for its pullout from the occupied territories. — AFP photo

## Dostum fears another Afghan war

MAZAR-I-SHARIF (Afghanistan), Sept 29: Northern Afghanistan's most powerful warlord General Abdul Rashid Dostum says he fears another war may break out soon between the country's rival Mujahideen Guerrilla factions, reports Reuters.

But he said in an interview on Monday, at his base outside the northern Afghan town of Mazar-i-Sharif, that he would remain neutral and try to mediate between the warring factions.

"There might be another war in the country because of the differences between the parties," he said.

He said it might happen

soon and the party emerging victorious in the conflict would take power in Kabul.

He did not elaborate but seemed to be referring to continued squabbling and frequent fighting among the parties for dominance since the Mujahideen took power early last year from a collapsed former Soviet-backed government after a 14-year civil war.

Dostum's switching of sides from then President Najibullah to the Mujahideen helped them take power, but he has often complained of their hesitation to give a share in power to his Jumbish-i-Milli movement controlling large north regions.

In recent weeks, Dostum's militia forces have clashed with its former ally, the Jamiat-i-Islami party of President Burhanuddin Rabbani, in Balkh province, of which Mazar-i-Sharif is the capital.

Dostum's commanders said his forces defeated the Jamiat in Sholgara district, south of Mazar-i-Sharif, on Monday.

"If Mazar-i-Sharif comes under any attack, we have the ability to defend ourselves," the general said in an apparent warning to Jamiat.

Dostum commands a large militia force, and he said he also had 500 tanks and hundreds of BMP infantry combat vehicles, which were supplied to

## N Korea's N-test to offset arms build-up by Japan

TOKYO, Sept 29: North Korea acknowledged Wednesday that it was conducting missile tests to boost its military strength, but said this was to offset a massive arms buildup by Japan, including a nuclear bomb programme, reports AP.

In a report that coincided with the start of Japan's biggest military manoeuvres since World War II, the official daily Rodong Sinmun said, "Japan keeps stationing in her territory huge armed forces targeted against the DPRK," a reference to North Korea's official name.

The Japanese military are "Deploying a large number of latest-type offensive weapons, including sophisticated missiles, and are hastening her nuclear armament," the newspaper said, quoted by the official news agency KCNA monitored here.

"It is only too natural for the DPRK to increase its self-reliant defence capabilities," it said.

Afghanistan by the former Soviet Union.

He opposed an interim constitution that an election commission has drafted in Kabul mainly to demarcate powers between Rabbani and his arch-rival Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar.

"I am against this constitution because it does not give equal rights to all groups and minorities in the country," he said.

He said he also supported the proposal often advanced by Afghan politicians that a traditional "Loya Kirga", or Grand Assembly, of Elders decide Afghanistan's political future.

## Rushdie's appeal to BA

LONDON, Sept 29: Author Salman Rushdie appealed to British Airways (BA) on Tuesday to overturn a decision to ban him from its flights and said he had the backing of Prime Minister John Major in his fight to be allowed on board, says Reuters.

A BA spokeswoman said earlier on Tuesday that the ban on Rushdie, who lives in hiding under the threat of an Iranian death order, was imposed for safety reasons two years ago and his requests to travel have been denied.

## Iraqis fire on Kuwaiti border post

KUWAIT CITY, Sept 29: Iraqis opened fire on a border post in northern Kuwait late Monday but caused no casualties, a Kuwaiti Interior Ministry statement said Tuesday, reports AFP.

The Iraqis pounded the Umm Sedir border post for 20 minutes "despite repeated warnings by the Kuwaitis," said the statement cited by the Kuwait news agency. It did not say if the assailants were civilians or soldiers.

Kuwaiti border guards informed the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observer Mission (UNIKOM), the ministry said, adding that the incident was "a violation" of the Gulf war ceasefire in effect since February 1991.

UNIKOM spokesman Abdel Latif Kabbaj confirmed to AFP that Kuwait informed him of the attack.

The incident comes ahead of a new round of talks in Baghdad.

## Ghali accepts US protection

UNITED NATIONS, Sept 29: UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has accepted US protection beginning today, according to a UN source, reports AP.

A US official had said privately Monday that the US State Department had been concerned about holes in Boutros-Ghali's personal security and had offered to strengthen it.

This has not been formally confirmed, except via a blistering letter by a representative of the United Nations' Security Force.

## Hamm-Bruecher to run for German presidency

BONN, Sept 29: Veteran liberal politician Hildegard Hamm-Bruecher said Tuesday she would run against Chancellor Helmut Kohl's choice for President if picked by her party, the junior partner in Kohl's coalition, reports AP.

The Free Democratic Party (FDP) has rejected Kohl's staunchly conservative candidate Steffen Hettmann, the justice minister in the regional parliament of the East German state of Saxony.

Hamm-Bruecher, 72, told reporters in Frankfurt on Tuesday she had discussed the matter with FDP leader Klaus Kinkel.

If elected she would be Germany's first woman president. Asked if she was up to the job, she replied, "You can see so yourself."

The FDP has not yet taken an official stance on its candidate for the election.

## New US strategy on Somalia soon

NEW YORK, Sept 29: The Clinton administration, casting about for a new and effective strategy on Somalia, still is trying to have warlord Mohamed Farah Aideed arrested but is increasingly determined to withdraw the 4,700 US troops from the African country quickly, reports AP.

"We've wanted to get out of there," a senior US official said here Tuesday, while President Clinton declared in Washington there must be a "date certain" for bringing the troops home.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher, in New York for meetings with visiting foreign ministers, said the US contingent would continue to be reduced. While the United States intends to keep its obligations in Somalia, he said, "we are now in a transition to turn the matter over to the United Nations."

The United States has told the United Nations that a 1,300-man US combat force

stationed in Somalia should be used only for emergencies and not for routine patrolling. The New York Times reported in Wednesday editions.

The newspaper, quoting unidentified senior administration and UN officials, said the American request was conveyed to UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali by Christopher in a letter last week.

Without setting a deadline for a full pullout, Clinton told congressional leaders he wanted the United Nations to develop a political strategy ensuring that starvation and chaos would not return to the East African nation after UN troops withdrew.

When 28,000 troops were sent to Somalia in December by then-President Bush, their mission was to join a UN force protecting delivery of food to tens of thousands of starving people. Now, however, the country is able to produce its own

food again and the force is trying to restore political order.

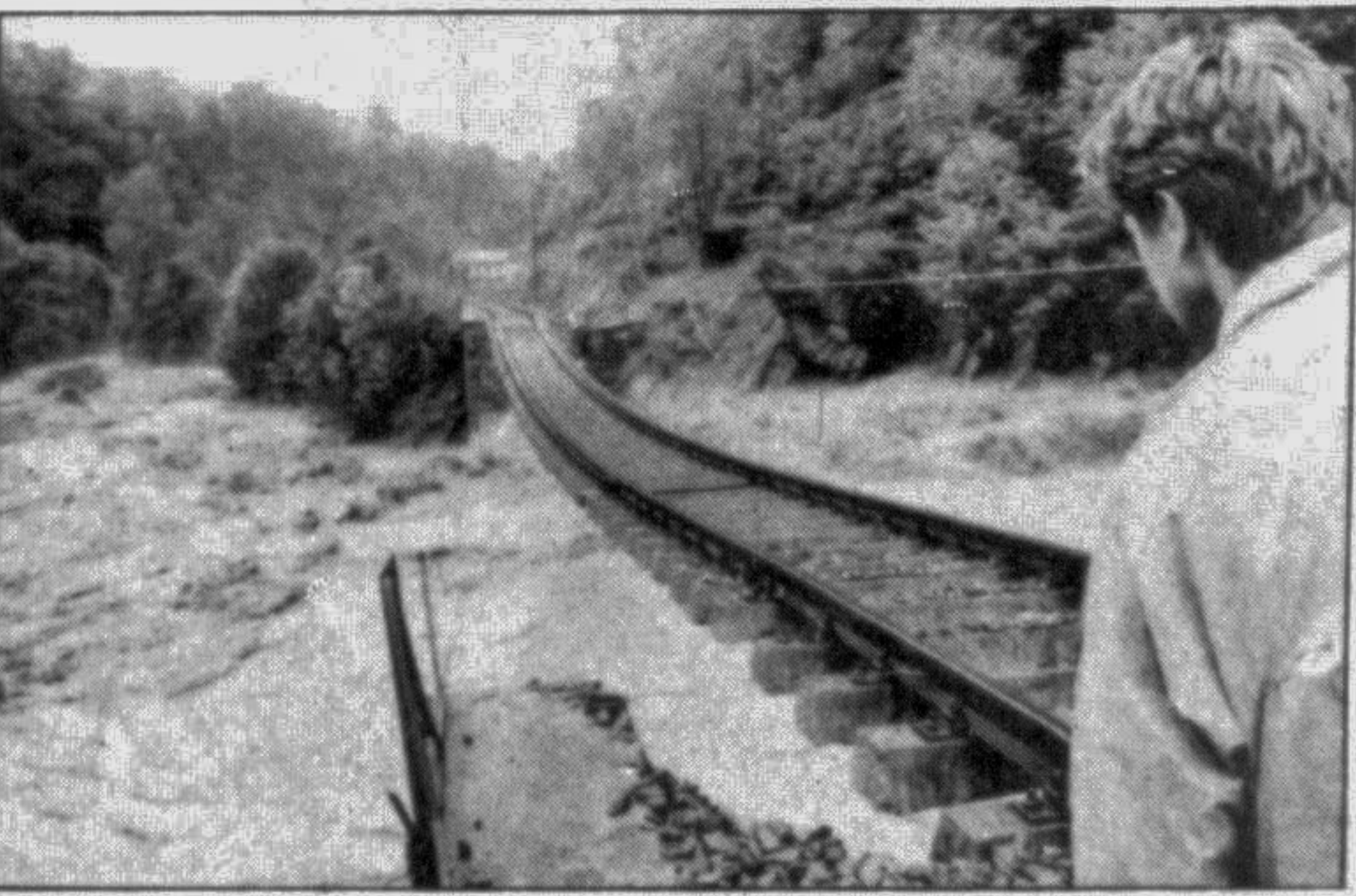
In the meantime, 11 American and 24 Pakistanis are among 56 peacekeepers who have been killed and 4000 US Army Rangers including a handful of Delta Force commandos were sent to Somalia in August to hunt for Aideed.

They have not found him, and the senior US official told State Department correspondents here that "we have to learn not to personalize the situation" in the African country.

Christopher said "the United States has not changed its policy" toward Somalia and that arrest of Aideed under a UN resolution was still a goal.

But, he said, "we definitely need a political strategy."

Congress is pressuring the administration to bring the troops home. There is concern the United States could become mired in a long military engagement in Somalia.



An unidentified worker looks at what is left from a railway bridge connecting the Italian cities of Turin and Ceres in Italy's northwestern Piedmont region on Tuesday. The bridge was washed away when a small river went over its banks due to heavy rainfalls. — AFP photo

## Protests outside Demjanjuk's home allowed

CLEVELAND, Sept 29: Demonstrators will be allowed to march outside John Demjanjuk's house but must schedule their protests with police in advance so that opposing factions don't meet on the street, reports AP.

Common Pleas Judge Daniel Gaul issued the order on Tuesday. It embodies an agreement worked out by the American Civil Liberties Union, representing anti-Demjanjuk demonstrators, and the prosecutor for the suburb of Seven Hills.

Jewish groups and the Ku Klux Klan have demonstrated outside Demjanjuk's empty home in Seven Hills since his return from Israel, where he was convicted and later acquitted of being the Nazi death camp guard Ivan the Terrible.