

Kurdish rebels kill 37 villagers

ANKARA, Oct 5: Turkish Kurdish guerrillas kept up a recent wave of attacks Tuesday, killing 37 villagers in raids on three villages in southeastern Turkey, the interior minister announced, reports AP.

The raids followed a series of similar attacks that have left 31 civilians and five soldiers dead since Sunday.

The attacks were apparently in retaliation to a Turkish military offensive over the weekend to wipe out Turkish Kurdish guerrilla bases some five kilometers (3 miles) inside northern Iraq. The land and air operation was announced Tuesday by the Prime Minister's Office.

S African govt to meet APLA

JOHANNESBURG, Oct 5: The South African government and the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA) will soon meet to discuss the suspension of the insurgent group's armed struggle, a government official said today, reports AP.

Law and Order Ministry spokesman Craig Kotze said details of the meeting were yet to be worked out, but it was being planned for the end of October in a neighbouring African country, probably Zimbabwe.

APLA is the military wing of the militant Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and has vowed to fight Pretoria until there is a "mutual cessation of hostilities"

Israeli PM meets PLO chairman today in Cairo Israel must foil attempts to derail peace process: Rabin

JERUSALEM, Oct 5: Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin will hold his first official talks with PLO leader Yasser Arafat in Cairo on Wednesday, Israeli officials said Tuesday, reports AP.

Rabin and Arafat will discuss implementation of the Israeli-PLO accord that was signed in their presence on the White House lawn in Washington, DC on September 13 said Oded Ben-Ami, Rabin's spokesman.

Also on the agenda will be PLO concerns about Israel's crackdown on hardline activists - including members of Arafat's own Fatah faction of the PLO. More than 50 activists from both Fatah and Muslim fundamentalist groups have been arrested so far.

Rabin and Arafat exchanged brief remarks before the signing ceremony in Washington, but the Cairo meeting would be the first substantive talks.

Israel boycotted the PLO for several decades denouncing the organization as a terrorist group. The policy changed in

the wake of a mutual recognition agreement. Rabin is expected to express his concern at the violence against Israelis that has continued since the PLO said it renounced terrorism.

AFP adds: Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said Monday that Israel must foil all attempts to derail the peace process, after 30 Israelis were injured in a Palestinian suicide attack.

"We must show we are standing firm and foil all attempts to hinder peace, like this suicide operation perpetrated by a fanatical terrorist," Rabin said in comments reported by the Israeli Itim news agency.

The attack left 28 soldiers and two civilians wounded, with four of the injured in serious condition. The attacker, who drove his car into a packed bus, was blown to pieces.

The army's Chief of Staff, General Ehud Barak, said Israelis should be prepared for more bombings.

"They come from individuals,

most likely militants from Hamas or the Islamic Jihad, who are hungry to kill Jews, regardless of whether they are civilians or soldiers," Barak said.

He added that Israelis should expect more attacks from Islamic fundamentalists opposed to the peace deal struck September 13 by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation. Military sources said the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) carried out the attack, while both Hamas and the Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility.

Around 100 Jewish settlers held a torch-lit demonstration in front of Rabin's offices here late Monday, calling for the prime minister's resignation.

The demonstrators said they were protesting the government's inability to protect settlers in the occupied territories.

Meanwhile, Syria said in the United Nations Monday that there could be no peace in the Middle East without its

participation and argued that all states must be satisfied for any peace agreement to last.

Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq Al-Shara also attacked the United States in a speech to the General Assembly, accusing it of using the United Nations to further its own political ends.

He reaffirmed Damascus's position that lasting peace in the Middle East cannot be achieved unless Israel makes peace with all its Arab neighbours, rather than pursuing agreements with each individually.

"We think that the most serious threat the peace process faces are the Israeli attempts to give the impression as if peace has been achieved in the region" after signing an autonomy agreement with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) last month, he said.

Syria is demanding that Israel return the Golan Heights which it seized in the 1967 war, in exchange for peace.

Inter-Korean N-talks bogged down

SEOUL, Oct 5: The first North-South Korean talks in nine months on their nuclear inspection dispute bogged down Tuesday as the North revived preconditions it had dropped, South Korean officials said, reports AP.

Tuesday's meeting at the border village of Panmunjom, the first inter-Korean dialogue since January, ended in two hours with little progress, but the two sides agreed to meet again on October 15, they said.

The North's positions are highly contentious and may delay the implementation of an agreement to exchange special envoys, chief South Korean delegate Song Young-dae told reporters.

Tuesday's meeting was called after North Korea, changing its earlier position, dropped two preconditions to reopening inter-Korean dialogue, including a demand that Seoul halt joint military exercises with the United States.

The Communist North also put aside a demand that South Korea promise not to seek an alliance with the United States to put pressure on it over nuclear issues.

Suspicion that the North is developing nuclear weapons

have deepened because of its refusal to accept international or inter-Korean inspections of its nuclear facilities. Despite its insistence that it has no plans to build nuclear arms, the UN International Atomic Energy Agency urged it last week to resolve the issue by accepting inspections.

Some Western analysts believe that the North has the capability to develop one or two nuclear bombs by 1995.

77 Kuki houses gutted in Manipur

IMPHAL, Oct 5: In the continuing ethnic conflict in Manipur, two Kuki villages were set afire and at least 77 houses destroyed today in separate incidents in the Naga dominated Ukhrul district, reports PTI.

Officials sources said that the arsonists surrounded the Thwal Kuki village in the Phyngyar police station area in the wee hours and set it on fire, destroying all 42 houses.

Exactly 10 minutes after the incident, some armed persons attacked the Sangai Kuki village, under Litan police station in the district, and set it afire, leading to all 35 houses gutted.

BRIEFLY

ROK fires 2500 govt officials :

Some 2,500 government officials have been fired or disciplined in an anti-corruption campaign in the first five months since South Korea's new civilian government took office, a government report said Tuesday, AP reports from Seoul.

Those who mismanaged their officials duties topped the list, followed by bribe-takers and negligent officials, according to the report released by the Prime Minister's Office.

President Kim Young-Sam, a former dissident, has pushed a strong reform drive since he took office in February as South Korea's first president with no military background in four decades.

New Editor for People's Daily:

The People's Daily, mouthpiece of China's Communist Party, has a new editor-in-chief, sources at the paper said Tuesday, reports AP from Beijing.

Fan Jiny, 61, editor of the Economic Daily since January took over from Shao Huaze who retains his position as director, the sources said.

No explanation for the change was offered.

Shao, aged 60, replaced ultra-conservative director Gao Di in December 1992 following the party's 14th congress.

Kuwaiti voters go to polls :

Voters on Monday went to the polls to revive the Kuwait City Council which was dissolved seven years ago by the Emir, AFP reports from Kuwait City.

Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah dissolved the last council in 1986 at the same time as he scrapped parliament which was becoming increasingly critical of his government.

Some 82,000 Kuwaitis have to choose 10 representatives from among 53 candidates for the 16-seat council. The other six will be appointed by the government.

Filipino major killed :

A Philippine army major was killed, two soldiers wounded and six others believed taken hostage after communist guerrillas ambushed an army patrol, military reports said here Tuesday, AFP says from Manila.

The soldiers, on board two vehicle, were on patrol Monday in the guerrilla-infested Bicol region southeast of the capital when they were ambushed by members of the New People's Army (NPA).

A fierce gun battle ensued after which the guerrillas withdrew, taking with them an undetermined number of dead and wounded, the reports said. Six soldiers were later found to be missing and are believed to have been taken hostage.

Madam Mitterrand to visit Bosnia:

Danielle Mitterrand, the wife of French President Francois Mitterrand, is to visit Sarajevo on Tuesday in the name of the humanitarian group France Libertes which she heads, the group said, AFP reports from Paris.

She is scheduled to meet Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic and visit the offices of the city's Oslobodjenje newspaper, the group said in the statement Monday. The visit will be her first to Bosnia-Herzegovina since the conflict began.

19 drown in China :

At least 19 people were drowned and 40 missing after being swept away by a tidal bore in China's eastern coastal province of Zhejiang, the People's Daily said Tuesday, AFP reports from Beijing.

The victims were among a large crowd that had gathered Sunday at an embankment by the mouth of the Qiantang River near the city of Xiaoshan to watch the annual tidal bore, the newspaper said.

A further 27 people were injured as the tidal wave crashed into the onlookers.

Chiluba arrives in India:

Zambian President Frederick Chiluba arrived here Tuesday on a four-day visit to India, AFP reports from New Delhi.

Chiluba who later had talks with Indian President Shankar Dayal Sharma, will travel to Bombay before his departure on Friday, officials said. He is also expected to meet Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao.

India cancelled a ceremonial guard of honour and a banquet for Chiluba in mourning for victims of the earthquake disaster in the western state of Maharashtra.

Gunmen attack Escobar's family:

Gunmen opened fire on a building housing the family of drug lord Pablo Escobar, but government forces repelled the attack, local TV news reported late Monday, AP says from Bogota.

The report said one government agent was wounded when 12 gunmen attacked the building where Escobar's wife and two children live under the protection of the federal prosecutor's offices. The agents repelled the gunfire, but did not manage to make any arrest.

But a paramilitary group called the PEPES - or People Persecuted by Pablo Escobar - has been killing the drug lord's associates and attacking his properties since the beginning of this year.

200 hurt in Japan as train derails:

A computer-controlled train derailed yesterday after crashing into buffers at a terminal in Osaka, western Japan, injuring about 200 passengers, police and press reports said, AFP reports from Tokyo.

About 250 passengers were aboard the remote-controlled four-coach train when it overran a platform at Suminoe Park at the end of a 6.6-kilometre (four-mile) state-of-the-art computer line, the reports said.

Many of the passengers sustained light injuries. There were no reports of fatalities.



Dead bodies of those who were killed inside the Russian Parliament building in Moscow Monday lay on the ground near the parliament after it was captured by troops loyal to President Boris Yeltsin. — AFP photo

Myanmar, KIA likely to sign ceasefire

YANGON, Oct 5: Myanmar is close to signing a ceasefire with the Kachin, Independence Army (KIA) in the north of the country, a military spokesman said here Monday, following a high-level meeting, reports AP.

The spokesman said the meeting was the "next to the last step" before a formal agreement on a ceasefire is reached.

"All the ground-work for the peace agreement has already been laid down and the only formality which now remains is an official meeting with Kachin, Independence Council (KIC) chairman Brand Seng and our side," spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Kyaw Thein said.

'It's like polls time'

NARANGWADI, India, Oct 5: Mali Shivamurthy has stopped counting the number of politicians who have visited his devastated village since an earthquake last week, reports AP.

"It is like election time. Every hour a leader will come in his car, hold our hands and drive away," said Shivamurthy as he built a tin shed that would be his new home.

Hundreds of politicians - from local town leaders to Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao - have visited the southwestern state of Maharashtra where so many people died in Thursday's quake.

Official figures say 10,000 bodies have been identified so far, but unofficial estimates put the death toll at 30,000.

The campaigns in four important states pit Rao's Congress Party against the Bharatiya Janata Party, which is gaining power by promoting Hindu nationalism and fundamentalism. But many residents of the area destroyed by the quake are beginning to ignore the visitors, saying they only sympathize with the victims to gain publicity but do little to help.

Kunturkar, accompanied by aides in another car, folded his hands in the traditional Indian way of greeting and said: "Is there anything you need? Don't be worried. We will get you everything you need."

After spending five minutes, he drove to the next village on the road, repeating the same scene.

Since the quake, almost

Georgian forces recapture Khoni

TBILISI, Oct 5: Georgian government troops have recaptured the strategic town of Khoni from rebel forces and repelled an attack at a crucial crossroads, the Defense Ministry said Tuesday, reports AP.

Khoni and the town of Vani were taken Sunday by rebel forces loyal to ousted President Zviad Gamsakhurdia. The towns are strategic because they are near Kutaisi in western Georgia, the nation's second largest city.

There was little resistance when government forces recaptured Khoni Monday, and the ministry said gunfire was unnecessary to take the town.

On Monday night, Georgian troops repelled an attack at the crucial road junction at Samtredia, midway between Kutaisi and the port city of Poti, which was taken over by Gamsakhurdia's fighters on Saturday.

Japan to support Africa's reforms

TOKYO, Oct 5: Africa's needs cannot be ignored because of developments elsewhere in the world, Japanese Prime Minister said Tuesday in opening an international conference on that continent's economic development, reports AP.

Hosokawa said he hoped African countries would express their determination to pursue self-help efforts, and other conference participants would show a commitment to support those efforts.

"Japan will continue to actively support Africa's political and economic reforms in the political sphere, we intend to play a greater role through our cooperation with the United Nations and other organs," Hosokawa told.

Anti-N protest held outside Major's office

LONDON, Oct 5: Several hundred anti-nuclear protesters dressed in black and wearing skull masks lay down in the street outside Prime Minister John Major's Office on Monday, reports Reuter.

The Greenpeace environmental group, which organised the protest, said there would be 600 deaths from leaks over the next 10 years if a new nuclear reprocessing plant in north-west England won government approval and the demonstrators were trying to highlight this.

The thermal oxide reprocessing plant at Sellafield was originally due to open early this year to treat spent nuclear fuel from Britain and elsewhere.

Off the Record

Time regrets phony photos

NEW YORK: Time magazine acknowledged a series of photographs purporting to show child prostitutes in Moscow was staged, reports AP.

"Although both the pimp and the boys still insist to us that they were and are engaged in child prostitution, one boy has denied it to others," the magazine said in its October 11 edition. "Had we known this at the time, we would not have run these pictures. We regret the error."

Time said the free-lance photographer, Alexey Ostrovskiy, admitted staging some of the pictures.

The six-picture spread in the June 21 issue showed the boys, ages 8 and 9, dressed as girls, and their pimp, "Sasha". Time reported the boys were street urchins who ended up in Sasha's hands because of social upheaval in Russia.

Luxury cruise passenger raped by a waiter

WASHINGTON: The Supreme Court let stand on Monday a ruling that says cruise lines always are legally responsible when ship passengers are injured by crew members, reports AP.

The justices, without comment, cleared the way for a federal trial in which Carnival Cruise Lines is being sued over the alleged rape of a luxury cruise passenger.

Susan and William Morton sued Carnival over an alleged incident on the ship *Tropicale* in February 1989, (D. Bono).

The lawsuit contended that the rape occurred in their cabin while Morton was gambling in the ship's casino.

The suit alleges that Joaquin De Oliveira, their dining room waiter, went to the cabin with a bottle of wine, and that Mrs. Morton invited him in to share it. Mrs. Morton alleged that De Oliveira had drugged the wine and attacked her when she became dizzy.

Mrs. Morton did not report the rape to ship authorities, and did not tell her husband about it for several weeks.

Priest accused of molesting children

NEW BEDFORD: A former Roman Catholic priest accused of molesting dozens of children three decades ago pleaded guilty to sexual assault Monday as his victims watched in a crowded courtroom, reports AP.

James A. Porter, 58, who left the priesthood in the 1970s, pleaded guilty to 41 counts in Bristol County Superior Court, where his trial had been scheduled to begin later this month.

Judge Robert Steadman read the charges against Porter, who said he understood the indictments and didn't dispute them. Sentencing was set for December 6, and Porter did not make any statement to the court aside from his plea.

Porter had been charged with abusing 32 children who are now adults, and only began publicly telling their stories less than two years ago when one of the victims began building a case against them.



19-year-old Amanda Johnson (C) from Derby, winner of the Miss United Kingdom 1993 contest in London Monday night, is flanked by runners-up Lucky Kennet (L) from Essex and Natasha Taylor (R) from Sussex. — AFP photo

'New World Order' appears elusive

WASHINGTON, Oct 5: In a single day, Moscow witnesses its worst political violence since the Bolshevik Revolution and Washington loses still more American lives in a peacekeeping effort where peace refuses to be made, says AP.

Bosnia seems to approach extermination. Civil war starves millions in the Sudan. Pakistan and India scrap over Kashmir, and that conflict if it turns hot, could turn nuclear.

The Kurds are threatened by Iraq. Eduard Shevardnadze, once foreign minister of the Soviet empire and now leader of a disintegrating state of Georgia, flees for his life.

What has happened to the "new world order" that was to follow the collapse of the superpower rivalry and the defeat of a Persian Gulf potentate?

People who study world conflict say this about that: The promise of a "new world order" was unfulfillable. As long as the world is an anarchical, hostility and conflict will be part of it.

"The world is definitely more unstable, a place of greater uncertainty, but the Soviet empire truly represented an evil idea that had been foisted upon an enormous section of humanity," comments Fareed Zakaria, editor of Foreign Affairs magazine.

Canadian Fen Hampson, a former international affairs professor, now a scholar of the government-supported US Institute of Peace, says only some of today's conflicts result from the aftershocks of the Soviet collapse.

What the world must now decide, says President Clinton,

is where to intervene and where to stay out.

"If the American people are to say 'yes to UN peacekeeping,'" Clinton told the UN General Assembly last week, "the United Nations must learn to say no."

The criteria? He said the United States will intervene "to enlarge the circle of nations" that live under market-based democracies.

"Where it matters most and where we can make the greatest difference, we will, therefore, patiently and firmly align ourselves."

Clinton deplored the fresh loss of the lives of US servicemen in Somalia but noted that before the United States lost over 300,000 people had lost their lives to warfare or famine.

UN peacekeeping is accumulating a proud, if not much noticed, record. Last month, the largest and most expensive UN peacekeeping preparation ended, having planted democracy in the killing fields of Cambodia.

The United Nations stopped the fighting, restored civil authority or sponsored free elections in Namibia, El Salvador, Cyprus and in the Golan Heights in the Mideast.

Even the old ethnic conflict in Bosnia shows that the world has changed, says editor Zakaria. In the past, European nations would have intervened to grab pieces of the territory.

"Hundreds of thousands have died," he says, "but it has not turned into a general war in Europe in which tens of millions would die."

That's progress, of a sort.