

BRIEFLY

Jesus Zerbini dead: Euryclides de Jesus Zerbini, who performed the first heart transplant in South America, has died, reports said Sunday. He was 81. Zerbini died Saturday of skin cancer, the reports said, AP says from Rio de Janeiro.

As a student at Sao Paulo University, Zerbini got sick while watching his first surgery and told colleagues he was thinking of abandoning his studies because he couldn't stand the sight of so much blood.

But he persisted and on May 26, 1968, carried out a heart transplant five months after the world's first was done in South Africa by Christiana Barnard.

Kozyrev leaves for Ireland: Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev left yesterday morning for Dublin on the first official visit to Ireland by a Russian foreign minister head in 70 years, the ITAR-Tass news agency reported, Xinhua says from Moscow.

In Dublin, the capital of Ireland, Kozyrev is scheduled to meet Irish President Mary Robinson, Minister Albert Reynolds and other government officials.

According to the ITAR-Tass, the Russian foreign minister is also expected to sign a joint Russian-Irish declaration during his trip.

Plane crash claims 9 in NZ: Nine people died when their light plane crashed on a glacier on the west coast of New Zealand's South Island Monday police said, Reuter reports from Wellington.

Wreckage was spread over a wide area near the top of the Franz Josef Glacier, 13 km (eight miles) long. All those on board the Nomad aircraft died, said senior sergeant John Shirley of the Greymouth police.

He said it was too early to identify the dead but noted that the glacier was a major attraction for foreign tourists.

Turkish cabinet shuffled: Turkey's Interior Minister was removed from his post Sunday after criticism he has been incompetent in leading the government's war against Kurdish guerillas, AP reports from Ankara.

As part of a cabinet shuffle by Prime Minister Tansu Ciller, the Interior Ministry post went to Mahit Mentese, who had been serving as Education Minister in her four-month-old center-right coalition. The Interior Minister, Mehmet Gazioglu, was appointed state minister.

Two other ministers from Ciller's True Path party were involved in the shuffle. Defence Minister Nevzat Ayaz was appointed the new Education Minister and his post was given to State Minister Mehmet Golhan.

7 Filipinos die in a shoot-out: A former policeman wanted for murder was killed along with six others in a shoot-out when the suspect resisted arrest, authorities said Monday, AP reports from Manila.

The gunfight occurred Saturday in General Aguinaldo town in Cavite province about 30 miles (50 kilometres) south of Manila as a police investigation team tried to serve an arrest warrant on former Sgt Atanacio Bersabe.

A report received by the national police headquarters in Manila said Bersabe was playing mah jong at his hideout when the officers arrived.

Jackson arrives in Mexico: Pop superstar Michael Jackson arrived in Mexico City Sunday, three days ahead of schedule after cancelling concerts in Chile and Peru, the state agency Natimex reported, Reuter says from Mexico City.

Jackson is scheduled to perform in four concerts in Mexico city between October 29 and November 4 as part of his "Dangerous" world tour which included previous stops in Asia.

BJP blasts govt for Kashmir crisis

NEW DELHI, Oct 25: India's main opposition party today attacked the government for the Kashmir crisis, and warned it against internationalising the Muslim separatist campaign in the sensitive border state, reports AFP.

The Hindu-revivalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Indian People's Party, said the "dithering and defeatism" of Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao's government was to blame for the deteriorating situation in Kashmir.

"My party's charge is that there is a bankruptcy of policy, utter lack of coordination between New Delhi and Srinagar and within New Delhi over Kashmir," BJP President Lal Krishna Advani told reporters here.

"If there is still some containment of damage, I would give credit to the army and paramilitary forces," said Advani, releasing a 20-page party statement ahead of elections in five Indian states next month.

Tens of thousands of army and paramilitary troops have been used to quell a bloody campaign by Muslim guerillas

for the secession of Kashmir, India's only Muslim majority state.

More than 50 Kashmiri Muslims were killed on Friday when troops opened fire on demonstrators opposing the continuing army siege of Srinagar's Hazratbal Mosque, where Muslim militants have been holed up for the past 10 days.

Advani accused the government of ignoring intelligence reports warning of a possible militant takeover of the mosque, Kashmir's holiest Islamic shrine.

"Where decisiveness should have been the order of the day, the government is overwhelmed by a mood of dithering and defeatism," he said.

"Rather than declaring to the world that India will not allow any kind of separatism in Kashmir, the government has persisted with bogus and non-viable proposals to increase the autonomy given to Kashmiris," Advani said.

"It is in the context of the government's own sense of defeatism and lack of political will that outside forces have felt encouraged to pressure India into

yielding ground to the secessionists," the veteran MP said.

Advani, touted by the BJP as a future Prime Minister, said Rao blundered by suggesting to his new Pakistani counterpart, Benazir Bhutto, that he was willing to discuss Kashmir.

"I am not opposed to talking to Pakistan," he said, referring to Rao's proposal after Bhutto took office on October 19. "I am opposed to having talks in the present circumstances."

Advani said Kashmir was an internal matter for India, "and people expect from the Indian government this issue should not be internationalised in any form."

India and Pakistan dispute the ownership of Kashmir and both hold parts of the picturesque province. The separatist campaign, which has left about 7,000 people dead, is confined to the state's southern two-thirds held by India.

Advani declined to condemn the federal border security force for shooting down 44 Muslims in Kashmir's Bijnihara town and eight elsewhere on Friday, saying "some excesses" might be committed in a war-like situation.



Local residents make their way past a Border Security Forces (BSF) bunker set up in the centre of town on Monday. A strict curfew imposed in Srinagar, following an Indian army siege of the Hazratbal Mosque. — AFP photo

Power supply restored in Kabul

KABUL, Oct 25: Lights were switched back on in Kabul on Sunday after a two-week blackout caused by heavy faction fighting around a nearby hydroelectric dam, reports Reuter.

The power cut had developed into a war of words between Afghanistan's President Burhanuddin Rabbani and Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, with each blaming the other for the problem.

Electricity supplies have been erratic since faction fighting erupted after the Mujahideen guerillas took power from the former communist government in April 1992, power was cut again during this month's fierce clashes near Sarobi, 50 Km (36 miles) east of Kabul.

Commanders of Hekmatyar's Hezb-i-Islami party said the electricity was cut two weeks ago when government jets bombed their positions near the Sarobi Dam to try to halt the fighting in which more than 100 people, including many civilians, were killed.

Presidential spokesman Abdul Aziz Morad said the lines were reconnected last week and accused Hezb-i-Islami of delaying restoration of power by asking for payment to switch on the supply.

\$12,000 jail suite for Abdel-Rahman

NEW YORK, Oct 25: The government is spending about 12,000 dollars to build a two-room jail "suite" for Sheikh Omar Abdel-Rahman, reports AP.

Besides the standard bed, sink and toilet, Abdel-Rahman will have his own shower and a conference room with table and chairs in the Metropolitan Correctional Centre, according to jail's spokeswoman Sandra Burks. The Muslim cleric has sought a transfer from an upstate federal prison to be closer to his lawyers while awaiting trial.

Abdel-Rahman, 55, of Jersey City, NJ is accused of masterminding a terrorist conspiracy that included the February 26 World Trade Centre bombing and a plot to blow up other New York City landmarks. Six people were killed and more than 1,000 injured in the Trade Centre bombing.

1,500 more Pak troops for Somalia

ISLAMABAD, Oct 25: Pakistan will dispatch 1,500 troops to Somalia, the first of significant reinforcements to the more than 5,000 Pakistanis already with the United Nations peace-keeping mission there, a military spokesman said today, reports AFP.

The troops will be despatched from this week, said the spokesman.

A newspaper, The Nation, said as many as 20,000 Pakistani troops would be sent to Somalia in coming months to take over progressively from United States forces there.

Foreign Ministry sources said the figure of 20,000 was "very exaggerated."

Clinton visits soldiers wounded in Somalia

WASHINGTON, Oct 25: President Clinton, who has been publicly criticised for his handling of US policy in Somalia, privately visited several wounded soldiers Sunday, reports Reuter.

Clinton spent about 90 minutes at Walter Reed Army Medical Center visiting nine soldiers wounded in Somalia, including some who were hurt during the October 3 clash with supporters of Mohamed Farah Aided in which 18 Americans were killed.

That battle touched off a firestorm of criticism against Clinton's handling of the US role in the international peace-keeping mission there.

Clinton met the convalescing soldiers individually and without the usual complement of reporters and aides. Only a staff doctor accompanied him during the visits, an aide said.

Off the Record

Boy survives seven-storey fall without breaking a bone

NEW YORK: A 5-year-old boy fell from a seventh-floor apartment Sunday and survived without breaking a bone, reports AP.

Paul Rosen was in critical condition, said New York Hospital spokeswoman Carolyn Nigloire. She said he had no broken bones and no external injuries, but was being evaluated for internal injuries.

"It's amazing to us that he survived this," said the boy's mother, Christine.

Paul fell from a bedroom window around 8 am, and was hungry 10 hours later. "At 6.15 tonight he realised he didn't have any breakfast today," Mrs Rosen said.

There were no guards on the windows of the Rosens' Upper East Side apartment, said Sgt Nick Vreeland, a police spokesman. City law requires window guards in apartments where children under 10 live.

Police said they were treating the fall as an accident and would investigate, but doubted charges would be filed.

Mrs Rosen said her husband, Arthur, heard a moan and went to the child's room to investigate. She said he noticed the window open, looked down seven floors and saw Paul trying to get up.

Son cuts off father's penis

COLOGNE, Germany: A man faces a manslaughter charge for cutting off his father's penis so that he bled to death, police said Sunday, reports AP.

The crime occurred early Friday after a long argument between the son, a 35-year-old cook, and the 74-year-old blind father, said Klaus Lidert, chief investigator in the case.

Lidert said in a statement the son lived in France but had been visiting his father for several weeks in Cologne, on the Rhine River in western Germany. Early Friday the son telephoned a man who helped the blind father and said he had found his father dead.

The emergency doctor who responded to the call found serious head injuries but said the father died because his penis had been cut off so that he bled to death, the statement said.

The names of the pair were not released, as is often the case in German police practice. Lidert said a judge had issued an arrest order to hold the son, accusing him of manslaughter.

The son claimed he had been too drunk to remember what happened but said no one else had attacked the father, police said. The severed penis had not been found, they said, and it was not clear whether a knife or sharp scissors was used in the attack.

First clinic for fats

BEIJING: China's first clinic for fat people has opened in the northeastern city of Shenyang, where traditional Chinese medicine is being used to help club members lose weight, the official Xinhua News Agency reported Sunday, says AP.

As living standards rise and diets contain more meat, sugar and junk food, obesity has become a growing problem, particularly among urban Chinese. Short-term camps for fat schoolchildren began opening up several years ago, but this is the first such programme for adults.

The club member are middle-aged women with waist lines of around 90 centimeters (36 inches), Xinhua said. It said they automatically leave the club when they become slimmer, but did not say what measurement they need to reach.

The club, set up by a beauty center, uses a computerized weight-loss machine that uses the theories of traditional Chinese acupuncture and massage. Xinhua said without giving other details.

Croat forces seize two Bosnian helicopters

ZAGREB, Oct 25: Croat forces seized two Bosnian army helicopters on Sunday, preventing the evacuation of wounded Muslims to a hospital in central Bosnia, UN sources told Reuters.

The two helicopters were captured after landing at Medjugorje in southwest Bosnia, near the Croatian border, where the pilots hoped to collect some 60 wounded Muslims from the nearby city of Mostar and transport them to central Bosnia, the UN military sources said.

Croatian radio reported the helicopters were met by Croat refugees who prevented the pilots from taking off.

In response to the Croats' action, Muslim forces were refusing to force with agreed exchanges of wounded patients until the Croats handed over the helicopters, according to the United Nations.

The demonstrators, reported to be family members of Croats detained by Muslims in Bugojno, Mostar and other Bosnian towns, demanded the release of their kin before allowing the evacuation to proceed, according to Croatian radio.

Nazarbayev pledges to ratify NPT \$80m US aid for Kazakhstan

ALMA ATA, Oct 25: The United States will give Kazakhstan up to 80 million dollars to help dismantle strategic nuclear missiles, a joint statement issued here said Sunday at the end of a visit by US Secretary of State Warren Christopher, reports AFP.

Washington is also to provide 140 million dollars in economic aid by the end of the year, and technical and financial help in cleaning up the environment in the former Soviet Central Asian republic whose Aral Sea is considered an ecological disaster zone.

A total of 104 SS-18 intercontinental missiles with more than 1,000 warheads are deployed in Kazakhstan, one of the four former Soviet republics with nuclear arms. The others are Russia, Ukraine and Belarus.

The two countries also forged an agreement to cooperate in nuclear security and non-proliferation of nuclear arms, the statement said.

Christopher and Nazarbayev had planned to sign an accord on dismantling Kazakhstan's strategic nuclear missiles, but decided to leave this to the two countries' heads of state or government because of the complexity and importance of the issue, Christopher said.

Nazarbayev meanwhile pledged to ask Kazakhstan's parliament to ratify the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) by the year end.

Christopher said US President Bill Clinton has "deep interest in this part of the world."

ROK may suspend copter purchase from USA

SEOUL, Oct 25: South Korea is considering revising plans for a major purchase of advanced attack helicopters including the US-made AH-64 "Apache" military officials said Monday, reports AP.

The proposed change followed an extensive government probe of South Korea's multibillion-dollar weapons deals, the prime target of President Kim Young-sam's sweeping anti-corruption campaign.

A Defence Ministry official, speaking on condition of anonymity, indicated that no agreement had been reached within the military yet on

whether to go through with the purchase.

The Kookmin Ilbo, a Seoul newspaper, said the military's final decision could come next year, based on the helicopter's prices and efficiency. The newspaper said South Korea had planned to buy 36 "Apache" helicopters.

The military has reported to Parliament that it needs more powerful attack helicopters than the AH-1S "Cobras", which have been in operation.

Past military-backed regimes kept military deals under wraps until the inauguration of Kim's new civilian government,

PLO has kept its pledge: Rabin

JERUSALEM, Oct 25: Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said on Sunday the PLO has kept its pledge to stop guerilla attacks since signing a peace pact with Israel last month, and that violence in the occupied territories, is down by half, reports Reuter.

But Rabin, touring Jerusalem on a campaign swing for Mayor Teddy Kollek, warned that opponents of the Palestinian self-rule agreement would "do everything they can to heighten terror."

"The PLO of Tunisia (PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's mainstream Fatah wing) has kept its promise — since the 13th of September there was not a single terror attack by

this organisation in Israel, Rabin said, referring to the date he and Arafat signed the pact in Washington.

Rabin said since the signing of the accord, under which Israel is to withdraw from the occupied Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho beginning in December, "the violence and terror have decreased by about 50 percent," in the territories.

He said Israel "will clearly distinguish between those who support the PLO's stop of all terror activities and (rejectionist Palestinian) groups that want to destroy and undermine the agreement."

Israel is to start freeing 760

Palestinian prisoners on Monday under an agreement with the PLO to boost Palestinian confidence in the pact.

The first batch will include only the sick, old, young and women. State television said on Sunday opponents of the Israel-PLO peace will not be released in the first stage.

Israel police say Israel holds about 13,000 Palestinian prisoners.

During the campaign tour of the city, rightist Israelis prevented Rabin and Kollek — Mayor of the city since 1966 — from stumping for votes in central Jerusalem's pedestrian mall.

Angola won't take part in UN-sponsored talks with UNITA rebels

LISBON, Oct 25: Angolan government representatives will watch but not participate in a UN-sponsored meeting with UNITA rebels on ending Angola's 18-year civil war, officials said, reports AP.

The UN representative to Angola had planned to meet separately with both sides when the talks opened Monday, hoping to discuss restarting face-to-face peace talks. There was no UN response to the Angolan government's stand.

The government officials said they would be "closely following the meetings," with an observer delegation, but would not actually take part. Their statement was broadcast on Angolan state radio on Sunday, monitored by the British Broadcasting Corp.

The government also said it

hoped the talks would clarify what it called "ambiguous and contradictory" peace proposals forwarded by UNITA this month.

UN representatives Aloune Blondon Beye left Angola on Sunday for Lusaka, the Zambian capital where the talks are to be held. A top-level UNITA rebel delegation, headed by Jorge Valentim and Gen. Paulo Gato, arrived there Saturday.

US, Russian and Portuguese diplomats also were to attend the talks.

The Angolan government is demanding the rebels pull back troops from occupied areas, accept the results of last year's multiparty elections that UNITA lost, and recognise government authority.



A militiaman loyal to Mohamed Farah Aided to fire a rocket-propelled grenade during heavy fighting against supporters of rival warlord Ali Mahdi Mohamed on the Green line dividing Mogadishu on Monday. — AFP photo

'US behaves like world policeman'

NEW DELHI, Oct 25: The United States is behaving like a world policeman and is assisting India's longstanding rival Pakistan, a senior Indian minister was quoted today as saying, reports AFP.

"With the breakup of the Soviet bloc, there is only one force now that is assuming the role of a policeman in the world," Home Minister Shankarrao Chavan told troops of a paramilitary force here Sunday.

"There is a new atmosphere in the world today in which countries don't interfere directly,

Koreas eager to improve relations by exchanging envoys

SEOUL, Oct 25: Efforts by North and South Korea to exchange special presidential envoys made progress Monday, raising hopes that nuclear tensions on the divided peninsula might be resolved through dialogue, reports said, says AP.

At a border meeting, the rival Korean states failed to reach full agreement on when and how to exchange special envoys but agreed to meet again November 4 to iron out their differences, pool reports said.

An agreement to exchange special envoys would be a breakthrough in efforts by the Koreas to resolve a dispute

stemming from North Korea's refusal to accept international inspections of its nuclear facilities.

Local pool reports said delegates discussed for the first time term for exchanging presidential envoys charged with resolving nuclear and other pending issues.

The North's willingness to discuss the terms of its proposal was the first indication that it might agree to the exchange, and Seoul officials saw it as an encouraging sign that a breakthrough could be made.

During the two-hour session, Song Young-dae, chief

South Korean delegate, proposed that the North send its special envoy to Seoul in November. The northern delegate, Kim Young Su, insisted that South Korea send its envoy to Pyongyang first, reports said.

The most contentious issue was a North Korean demand that South Korea pledge not to hold annual joint military war games with the United States, they said.

South Korea said it would discontinue the exercises only after a final agreement is reached on the exchange of special envoys, the reports said.

The United States and South

Korea are expected to make a decision at a security consultative meeting in Seoul November 3-4 on whether to hold the 1994 exercises.

The consultations will be attended by the two nations' defence secretaries, Les Aspin and Kwon Young-hae.

A halt to the joint "Team Spirit" military exercises, which started in 1976, has been a longstanding demand by North Korea, which claims they are preparing for nuclear war.

Two similar inter-Korea border meetings failed recently, mainly because the North revived a demand that a full-

fledged dialogue between the Koreas be reopened to include other pending demands. South Korea has insisted nuclear issues be settled first.

The North's demands included a promise from Seoul not to seek an alliance with the United States and other countries to pressure it over nuclear inspections.

Local newspapers had predicted that Monday's inter-Korea meeting could produce a breakthrough because of a recent series of secret talks in New York between the United States and North Korea.

In the talks, North Korea re-

6 girls killed in Taipei bus accident

TAIPEI, Oct 25: Six girls were killed and 32 others were injured when a tourist bus carrying students and faculty of a Christian college plunged into a valley in central Taiwan, police said today, reports AFP.

Bus driver Yu Chun-Hui, who suffered slight injuries, told police the vehicle's engine stopped suddenly and the brakes failed on a mountainous road in Taichung Sunday.

The bus was taking about 50 girls students and teachers from the Great Tiding's Bible College back to campus