39 burned to death in Vietnam: At least 39 people burned to death when a leaking gasoline pipeline exploded into flames in Quang Ninh, northeast Vietnam, the Vietnam News Agency (VNA) said yesterday. AP reports from Hanoi

Most of the 39 killed and 62 injured in Tuesday's tragedy were local residents who had flocked to the site to collect the gasoline pouring out of the pipeline, owned by a state petroleum distribution company, VNA said.

Jackson puts off another concert: bad tooth has forced pop signer Michael Jackson to postpone another Mexico City concert, the second cancellation in two

days, news reports said Wednesday, AP reports from Mexico. Jackson's doctors said the singer had to postpone a concert scheduled for Thursday night because he needed another day of rest after having a molar pulled, news agency Notimex re-

The Gloved One canceled his Tuesday night show at the city's Giant Azteca Stadium after the infection forced him to have the tooth out.

2 Palestinians shot in Gaza: Israeli troops, fearing they were about to be blown up by a car bomb, shot and wounded two Palestinians whose vehicle crashed into their own in the occupied Gaza Strip on Wednesday, military sources said, Reuter reports from Jerusalem.

The driver of the Palestinian car was seriously wounded and his son was slightly hurt, the sources said, describing the crash as a traffic accident.

Clashes leave 10 dead in Congo: At least 10 people were killed on Wednesday in clashes between

Congolese security forces and opposition militants in the capital, hospital sources said, Reuter reports from Brazzaville. A nurse said 10 bodies had been brought to the morgue in Brazzaville's main hospital. Five were soldiers and the rest were civilians or members of opposition militias.

The Red Cross said the toll could be higher as medical teams could not enter the site of the clashes in the Bacongo district.

Car bomb explodes in Paris: A car bomb that police said was placed by common criminals exploded Thursday in a poor neighbourhood of the French

The bomb exploded outside a clothing shop that has been closed several months in the down-scale 10th district. The shop entry crumbled and windows in the block were blown out."

capital. No one was injured. AP reports from Paris.

77 fundamentalists killed in Algeria

ALGIERS. Nov 4: Algerian security forces have killed 77 armed Muslim fundamentalists in different parts of the country over the past 10 days, 10 of them on Tuesday, the forces said Wednesday evening, reports AFP.

On Tuesday, five fundamentalists were killed in Mostaganmen, in the west, four in Larbaa, near Algiers where three French consular employees were recently held hostage. and one in the nearby village of Sidi Moussa, security forces

On Wednesday, the security forces carried out a wide sweep in eastern parts of the capital and there was intermittent gunfire as special army units' backed by police and paramilitary police moved into the area.

Soldiers standing 30 metres (yards) apart ringed the area and military units manned major intersections in an operation overseen by helicopter.

Monstrous traffic jams built

up as vehicles and passengers were searched at road blocks. People were unable to get in or out to go to work until the road blocks were lifted early in the

Prime Minister Redha Malek has blamed the kidnapping of the three French, released at the weekend, on an armed Islamic group (GIA) headed by Afghan was veteran Mourad Si Ahmed, 29, who is one of four people the authorities are hunt-

responsibility for the kidnapping when it issued a statement 24 hours after the French were seized to say what had happened. It termed the kidnapping a drop of water in the ocean of

have given foreigners in Algeria one month to leave the country or face sudden death according to a copy of the warning obtained by AFP Wednesday.

The GIA implicitly claimed

Meanwhile the kidnappers

Tehran on November 4 1979. "The aim of the US in negotiation with Iran is to tarnish the image of Imam Khomeini and that of the Islamic Revolution and also to frustrate the oppressed nations of Asia, Africa and even Muslims in Europe and America," Khamenei said.

"Although we don't want to have relations with the US, Washington is setting precon-

US delegate Herbert Gelber said the United States strongly

supports the condemnation of the military and demands that the elected government be restored to full power. The resolution "will send a clear signal to all that the international community is unanimous in its support of Burundi's democratic transition, and will condemn any attempt to reverse it."

Burundi, United Nations report

NEW YORK, Nov 4: The

General Assembly Wednesday

condemned the coup in

Burundi and supported the ef-

forts of Secretary General

Boutros Boutros-Ghali and the

Organisation of African Unity

(OAU) to promote the return of

constitutional order and protect

democratic institutions, reports

consensus, the assembly de-

manded that the military who

attempted the coup lay down

their arms and return to their

barracks, and that democracy

be restored immediately. It also

asked nations and organisation

to provide emergency humani-

tarian assistance "or any other

assistance" to the people of

TEHRAN, Nov 4: Iran's spiri-

tual leader Ali Khamenei yes-

terday strongly attacked the

Iranians who support talks with

the United States to resume

Terming those Iranians as

"naive, coward and ignorant",

Khamenei said those people are

unfamiliar with political issues

and unaware of the dangers

that such negotiation will entail.

that the Muslim people of Iran

kicked out of their home single-

handedly. So there is no need

for us to talk with dictators." He

said in a meeting with a group

of Iranian students on the eve

of the anniversary for the

takeover of the US embassy in

"The US is the same dictator

relations, reports Xinhua.

Adopting a resolution by

"We note with satisfaction that the coup attempt has apparently failed and several suspected coup plotters have been arrested or have fled the country." Gelber said. "Prime

PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat (R) being greeted by Senegalese President Abdou Diouf upon his

Khamenei against ties with US

ditions for re-establishment of

tie," he said, adding that if rela-

tions are to be restored one day.

Iran shall be the one to set pre-

a long criminal record through-

out the world and in Iran in

Americans should express re-

pentance of all tragedies they

have created worldwide, he

establishing a huge blood-

thirsty dictatorship in the world

under the cover of democracy,

Khamenei said "unfortunately it

(the US) has made the tool of

the UN and Security Council to

Nouri also yesterday ruled out

the possibility for Iran to re-

sume ties with the US, saying

that problems between Iran and

Relations and negotiations

between Tehran and

Washington are out of question

because of the unending ag-

gression and brutality of the US

administration throughout the

Iranian Mailis Speaker Natec

achieve its goals."

the US are insolvable.

Accusing Washington of

The condition is that the

particular.

stated.

condition for the US which has

arrival at Dakar Airport on Wednesday for a one-day visit.

Minister Kinigi and other members of the cabinet have taken important measures to reassert control over the country," said USIS today.

He said the United States applauds the bravery of the prime minister, foreign minister and other government officials who persevered throughout the crisis and are now working to consolidate the government's control over the situation.

"We are shocked and deeply saddened by the violence and mounting casualties in Burundi. We urge all sides to refrain from violence and respect the authority of the elected government," he added.

Despite the assembly s reso-

lution, a top UN official said November 2 that the UN is unlikely to send any peacekeeping force into the country to help the government restore control.

Discussing his recent factfinding trip to Burundi. Undersecretary General James Jonah said the UN is overstretched in its peacekeeping operations and the costs are mounting, thus "all indications are that the council will not want to" send a peacekeeping force to Burundi "because of cost and the danger it presents to member states.

He said he looks "to the OAU to undertake new responsibilities," but he added that it would need logistic and other help

Chretien takes over as Canada's Prime Minister

Kim Campbell, who became Canada's first woman prime minister after the resignation of Brian Mulroney only to be pulverised at the polls four months later, was offering her government's resignation to the governor-general Thursday morning.

FAO to choose its new chief

ROME, Nov 4: UN's biggest agency, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) will choose its first new chief in 18 years on Monday from among eight candidates who are all promising a shakeup, reports Reuter.

The candidates - an Australian government minister, a FAO assistant directorgeneral from Chile, a Senegal ambassador; FAO officials from Bangladesh and India and three Europeans - call for reform of the agency, long criticised as an

"The FAO has more than 6,000 people in its payroll. This is obviously excessive," said a diplomat watching the election.

Member states will on Monday elect a new Director General who replace Edouard Saouma of Lebanon, leaving after three six-year terms of what critics have called auto-

from nations outside Africa.

OTTAWA, Nov 4: Jean Chretien, whose Liberal Party was swept to power by voters dissatisfied with the Canadian economy, was expected to move quickly to start creating jobs after taking over as prime minister Thursday, reports AP.

After nine years in opposition, the left-of-center Liberals are anxious to get off to a fast start. Chretien is expected to announce a meeting with provincial premiers to being implementing his 6 billion dollars (4.5 billion US) public works programme to create 120,000 jobs.

Monday

overstaffed bureaucracy.

cratic leadership.

BRIFFY UNGA blasts coup in Burundi Islamic states may be targets of western attack: Mahathir

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 4: Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad today said Muslim radicalism could make Islamic nations targets of Western Attack, reports AFP.

There are indications that the West now regards Islam as a threat," he said, adding that this view had been shaped by a small group of Muslims who had led Westerners into believing that violence was the Islamic way of life.

Mahathir was addressing the annual meeting of the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO). Malaysta's largest political party which dominates the ruling 11 party National Front Coalition.

The 47-year-old UMNO's 1.9 million members are almost all Muslims

Mahathir, who is Prime Minister by virtue of being UMNO chief, said that there was real danger of the Western powers targeting Muslims for attack following the end of the cold war and the collapse of communism.

"There is a real possibility that we will become the direct targets of Western attack and we can be totally destroyed because of our weakness," he

Mahathir, 68, Prime Minister since 1981, is widely viewed as a Muslim moderate and an outspoken critic of Muslim fundamentalism which he has said threatens to retard the economic progress of ethnic Malays.

The fundamentalist Parti Islam or Islamic Party, UMNO's

main rival, has failed to make much headway in Malaysia except in northeastern Kelantan state where it won power three

years ago. Mahathir told some 3,000 delegates and observers at the assembly's opening that Muslims were themselves to



Mahathir Mohammad

blame for the bias and prejudice of non-Muslims.

The wealth bestowed on the Islamic nations has not benefitted them and instead has triggered wars among Muslims, turning Islamic countries into testing grounds for Western weapons," he said

As such Muslims were helpless when fellow Muslims in Bosnia and Somalia were daily shot at, murdered and driven from their homes. Mahathir

Gaddafi, Mubarak talk Lockerbie issue

SIDI BARRAMI, Egypt, Nov 4: President Hosni Mubarak and Libyan leader Moammar Gaddafi held talks on the Lockerbie affair Thursday ahead of an expected UN Security Council meeting to toughen sanctions against Libya, reports

Gaddafi arrived at a military base in the Mediterranean town of Sidi Barrami on the Egypt-Libya border in a white BMW car accompanied by dozens of bodyguards and more than 80 vehicles.

The Libyan leader, wearing loose brown pants and a shirt under a white abaya, met with Mubarak in a tent pitched on the base, 570 kilometers (356 miles) northwest of Cario.

UN officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said this week that the Security Council could meet as early as Friday on the Libya case after Russia agreed to support new sanctions under pressure from US and British diplomats. Russia, one of the council's

threatened to veto a freeze on Libya's assets abroad and a ban on the sale of oil equipment to the country. It was worried that, with the new measures, Libva would not pay a US dirs 4 bil-Libya has been under UN

five permanent members, had

air, arms and diplomatic sanetions since April 1992 to force it surrender the suspects in the bombing, which led to 270 A deal recently collapsed to

have the men stand trial in Scotland, Arab and Western diplomats say the hitch was that the West refused to guarantee that high-ranking Libyan officials would not be implicated.

Gaddafi, who came to power in a 1969 coup, is now isolated internationally and facing internal turmoil. His troops quelled a rebellion within the army last month that opposition figures say was aimed at top-

Major's Bosnia policy appals Thatcher

WASHINGTON, Nov 4: Former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher said Wednesday she was appalled by the policy of her successor, John Major, and other world leaders toward Boshia, reports Reuter.

Interviewed on CNN's Larry

King Live. Thatcher excluded

President Clinton from her criti-

cism. She said he had tried to have an arms embargo lifted so the Bosnian Muslims could defend themselves but had been rebuffed by European leaders.

Asked directly whether she was disappointed in major's

Guerillas shell SLA positions

MARJAYOUN, Lebanon, Nov. 4: Syrian-backed guerrillas fired rockets and morter shells at the Israeli-allied South Lebanon Army on Thursday, provoking return fire on villages in south Lebanon, reports AP.

There was no immediate report of casualties in the guerrilla attacks even though they targeted the largest number of SLA posts in a single day since Palestinians and Israelis signed their Sept 13 peace accord.

TUNIS, Nov 4: PLO leader

Yasser Arafat has set up a fi-

nancial body to oversee invest-

ment of foreign aid in the West

Bank and Gaza Strip, reports

Qureia to head the Palestine

Emergency Development Reco-

nstruction Authority which will

be responsible for building up

the territories, according to PLO

sources Wednesday who

demanded anonymity.

Arafat appointed Ahmed

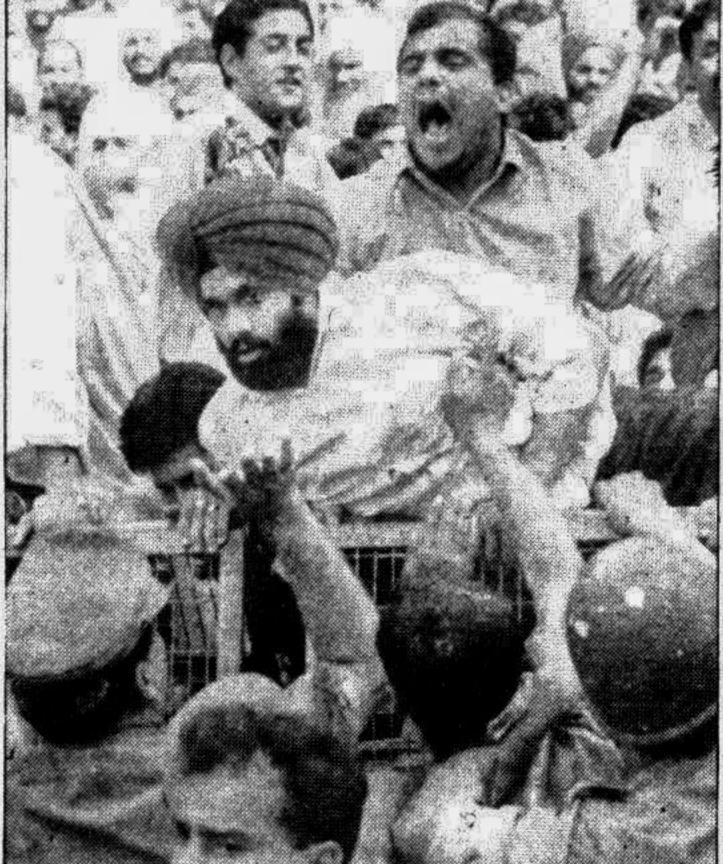
performance, Thatcher said. am disappointed, worse than disappointed. I am appalled that the scenes we've seen on television haven't inspired and instigated some actions greater than just trying to get aid to the She said the way the world

had handled the war in the former Yugoslavia showed its leaders had failed to absorb the central lesson of the 20th century, which was "Never appease an aggressor." The interview was part of a

brief tour by Thatcher to promote her autobiography "Margaret Thatcher - the Downing street years." Security on her visit began

Wednesday, is extremely tight after an upsurge of IRA violence in Northern Ireland and in mainland Britain. Thatcher repeated her prise for former President Ronald Reagan and her somewhat less

was still very early to judge. Thatcher also gave a plug to the North American Free Trade Agreement, saying free trade was only way to build property.



Activists of India's ruling Congress (1) Party shout anti-American slogans and try to break a police barricade outside the US embassy in New Delhi yesterday. Several thousands youths demonstrated to protest a senior US official's questioning of Indian rule over Kashmir.

Demonstration outside US embassy in Delhi

NEW DELHI, Nov 4: Several thousands members of the Youth wing of India's ruling party demonstrated outside the US embassy here today to protest at a senior US official's remarks questioning Indian rule over Kashmir, reports AFP.

world, Nouri said

Meanwhile, local Daily

Jomhuri Islami yesterday urged

the Iranian authorities to seri-

ously confront with the US

agents trying to pave the way

for the revival of the US diabolic

who pretend to be sympathizers

of people and the Islamic re-

public system but in fact sup-

port the US objective- on behalf

of their own interest, the daily

show that campaign against the

US has faded away and the sit-

uation is ripe to enter a new

phase to establish relations

with Washington, the Jomhuri

agents in every position, the

daily called on the Majlis offi-

cials to isolate them in the

Tehran University students

shouted slogans that the US

agents in the Iranian Mailis

should be rooted out but they

In an anti-US rally Tuesday.

house of the nation.

did not give names.

Urging the dismissal of such

Islami said.

The US agents intended to

"There are still some people

hegemony over the country.

But club-wielding riot police foiled the protestors attempt to march on the mission, erecting five layers of steel barricades in the high-security diplomatic enclave. Several demonstrators jum-

ped over the barricades but police picked them up and threw them back, witnesses said. Trucks mounted with water

cannon surrounded the protestors, who were urged by their leaders to calm down and not fight with the security forces, averting a confrontation.

The demonstrators, led by the president of the Youth Congress (I) Party, Maninder Bitta, marched to the diplomatic quarter, chanting 'US down, down" and Clinton, do not meddle in Indian affairs."

Bitta met with US embassy representatives and gave them a letter of protest condemning the highly objectionable, unfriendly and uncalled-for remarks made by the US official.

The letter said the remarks had served to encourage Muslims militants campaigning for Kashmir's separation from

Today's protest was called by the Youth Congress (I) after the US official, during a background briefing for reporters in Washington last week, questioned the validity of Kashmir's 1947 attachment to India for the first time.

New Delhi strongly protested at the remarks and summoned US Charge d'Affaires Kenneth Brill to the foreign office.

India and rival Pakistan hold parts of the Himalayan territory, and Indian-held Kashmir has been ravaged for the past four years by a violent secessionist campaign by Muslim militants.

The separatist rebellion in India's only Muslim -majority state has left more than 7,000 people dead since 1989. India and Pakistan have gone to war twice over the region since independence from Britain in 1947.

BEIJING: China announced Thursday that panda diplomacy

two zoos, the official Xinhua News Agency reported.

Taiwan is the seat of the rival Chinese Nationalist government, and mainland China's Communist rulers long have con-

human encroachment on their mountain homes in central and southwestern China. In the 1970s and 1980s, China sent pandas around the

ZURICH: The so-called Crown Jewel of Philately, an envelope

The envelope, known as the Bordeaux cover, and found by a French schoolboy in dusty archives in 1902, was bought at a Zurich public auction by a middle-aged woman who declined to

MANILA: Rolito Go wasn't in court Thursday to hear the judge sentence him to life in prison for murder. He had fled his

Go, a wealthy construction company owner, was convicted Thursday of murdering college student Eldon Maguan in a traf-

his sentence? For all we know, he is already out of the country. Go escaped Saturday after drinking alcohol with his jail In a letter sent to a columnist after his escape, Go accused

Grace. What's the use of his being guilty if he's not here to serve

of buying a conviction and state prosecutors of unfairness. But Go's case already had attracted publicity because of special treatment by his guards. Last year, tho of his guards were

for corruption by jail authorities and squalid conditions. Government investigations have shown that well-to-do con-

enthusiastic assessment of former President George Bush Asked about Clinton, she said it

- AFP photo Financial body to oversee US envoy asks Somali clans to give up arms

WASHINGTON, Nov 4: American envoy Robert Oakley. nearing the end of another mission to Mogadishu, is urging. 15 competing clans in Somalia to give up their weapons. He is telling them that would help stabilise the African country and bring foreign assistance.

reports AP. But so far, the results are disappointing, the States Department spokesman, Michael McCurry, said Wednesday in a report on Oakley's trip. Oakley is due to return here this

weekend. Oakley is pursuing a diplo-

orderly withdrawal of US peacekeeping troops by March 31. He has talked with aides of Mohammed Farah Aideed, but

slaying in June of 24 Pakistani peacekeepers. Secretary of State Warren

Christopher on Tuesday described Somalia as a "failed state" and said "we need to have a national dialogue on how far we ought to go in expending our natural and national resources" in dealing with it and Haiti, which he placed in the same category.

Oakley is working against a backdrop of fears that the US withdrawal could weaken US peacekeeping efforts and lead to more civil strife in Bosnia.

give up their weapons, Oakley is depending on their voluntary cooperation. US peacekeepers would not try to force them to comply, officials said.

had been "more or less placed on the shelf," is now back in play as a framework for an overall settlement, McCurry said. Nearby African governments are cooperating in the approach.

However, the US official said, "overall, the progress on disarmament has been disappointing. We recognize that."

But, he said, "if we continue to press that process and continue to engage the various clan elders in a discussion about the need to disarm, that could · Ambassador Oakley has on his agenda."

ternational support and economic assistance, which depends on conditions of security in Somalia, particularly the capital, Mogadishu, McCurry

Off the Record

Pandas to go on tour as friendship envoys

is coming to the Taiwan Straits, reports AP. A pair of rare giant pandas will be sent next month to the island of Taiwan, where they will spend a total of six months in

sidered it a renegade province. The panda exchange is the latest sign of easing tensions across the Taiwan Straits. There are only 1,000 to 1,500 pandas left in the wild in China their only native home. They are dying out because of

globe as furry friendship envoys. But the United States now refuses to import the pandas, citing international law on endangered-species protection, and panda diplomacy has reduced to a trickle.

Envelope sold for \$3.3m

with two stamps sent from Mauritius to Bordeauzx in 1847, was sold on Wednesday for five million Swiss francs (3.3 million dollars), a record for one postal item, reports Reuter.

say who she was.

Murderer flees jail 5 days before judgement

jail five days earlier, reports AP.

fic altercation in 1991. We are sad and happy at same time, said the victim's sister,

guards. The guards are under investigation. the judge of trying to extort money from him, the Naquan family

fired after allowing him out of his cell to attend a Gloria Estefan concert. Jailbreaks are common in Philippine prisons, notorious both

victs are allowed the use of cellular phones, beepers and occasional liberties for a fee.

The new body was required

Qureia is currently directorgeneral of the PLO Economic Department in Tunis.

give aid to the Palestinians. The bank had set November 5 as a deadline before the two

billion dollar pledged at a global aid conference last month in Washington begins to funnel in over a period of five years. The outpouring of pledges

on limited autonomy. Arafat also named several West Bank businessmen and analysis to the organisation, including economist Yousif Sayegh and West Bank millionaire Maher Misri.

-by the World Bank before it recommends that donor countries

was prompted by the PLO's September 13 accord with Israel

> matic solution to the strife in Somalia to set the stage for an

not with the warlord himself, McCurry said. The United Nations has called for Aideed's arrest in the

In asking the clan leaders to revive a March agreement to

The March agreement, which

prove fruitful, and that's clearly one of the things that The incentive for the clan