



Miss Jamaica Lisa Hanna, 18, poses after she was crowned Miss World at Sun City superbowls on Saturday in South Africa. Miss South Africa, Jacqui Mofokeng, 21, was first runner-up and the Philippines' Sharmaine Gutierrez, 19, in third. — AFP photo

Return of Russian N-sub handicaps Indian navy

BOMBAY, Nov 28: India must acquire nuclear-powered submarines to emerge as a truly deterrent force in the Indian Ocean for effectively discouraging foreign interference and safeguarding its vital offshore assets and outlying islands in the Andamans, according to naval experts, reports PTI.

The return of 'chakra' a leased Russian nuclear-powered submarine, after expiry of the lease period, has handicapped the Navy noted experts at the 'College of Naval Warfare' in Karanja, off Bombay while talking to a visiting PTI correspondent, on the occasion of 'navy week'.

The manpower trained in operating the nuclear submarine would be wasted unless other such submarines are inducted into the fleet soon, the experts noted. A neighbouring country had as many as seven nuclear-powered submarines which greatly enhanced its range of operations, they said. Theoretically, a nuclear-powered submarine could be lurking anywhere between the gulf of Hormuz to the Cape Comorin in view of its capacity to traverse thousands of nautical miles.

Researchers at the college, which is the highest seat of academy in the Indian Navy pointed out that the diversion of the US Seventh Fleet to the Bay

of Bengal during the 1971 operations exerted great pressure on India. But the pressure was relieved when Soviet nuclear submarines surfaced there posing a strong deterrent factor to any intended intervention.

Chinese military team to visit Pakistan in Dec

ISLAMABAD, Nov 28: A high level Chinese military delegation is to make a week-long official visit to Pakistan next month, diplomatic sources said today, reports AFP.

The five-member delegation due to arrive here Wednesday will be led by chief of the general staff of the People's Liberation Army, General Zhang Wan Nian.

The delegation will meet President Farooq Ahmed Leghari, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and Chiefs of Pakistani Army, Navy and Air Force, besides touring various military establishments in the country.

The Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese people's political consultative conference Li Rui Huan, is also scheduled to visit Pakistan for a week from December 4.

Bhutto is to make an official visit to China in the last week of January.

any intended intervention. In striking contrast Russia was not in a position to break the US naval blockade during the Cuban missile crisis in the early 1960s as Soviet power at sea was then limited. Therefore the projection of power at sea which can be boosted by nuclear-powered submarines, should not be underestimated, they observed.

According to Commodore Y Suresh, Director of the college, who earlier headed in Veerbahu the submarine depot at Visayapatnam, Asian economies are steadily becoming stronger and their combined economic potential would outstrip that of any of the present big powers. They could logically afford to have a strong naval presence.

Commodore Suresh noted that the USA could play an effective role during World War II largely because of the growth of its Navy. On the importance of the Indian ocean he pointed out that a former director of the American College of Naval Warfare Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan had held that "he who rules the Indian ocean will rule the world in the 21st century."

Asked about the American naval base at Diego Garcia, he said it gave the USA a strategic point of control in the Indian ocean.

Abu Nidal group members in India to kill Hosni Mubarak

NEW DELHI, Nov 28: Several members of the hardline Palestinian group Abu Nidal have entered India and intend to assassinate Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak during the Group of 15 summit here next month, a newspaper said today, reports AFP.

The Pioneer, which did not identify the source for its report said that Egyptian security authorities had been in contact with their counterpart in India concerning the alleged threat to the Egyptian leader.

Government spokesmen here were not immediately available for comment.

Mubarak, who has come out in support of the Israel-PLO's autonomy accord opposed by Abu Nidal, is scheduled to arrive in New Delhi on December 13 for the Group of 15 meet.

The Pioneer said that Indian government agencies "believe that some members of the Abu Nidal faction might have already slipped into India."

It said the possibility of an assassination attempt against Mubarak had sparked "panic" among government departments responsible for the security of visiting dignitaries.

China releases two bishops

HONG KONG, Nov 28: China has released two Roman Catholic bishops from an old people's home where they had been kept for three years following their imprisonment, a Hong Kong-based human rights activist said Sunday, reports AP.

John Kamm, an American businessman who works for the release of Chinese prisoners of conscience, said bishops Chen Jianzhang, 73, and Shi Enxiang, 71, were released November 19 in the northern province of Hebei.

Bishop Chen, 73, who suffers from diabetes and whose right side is paralysed from a stroke, was sentenced to life imprisonment in 1954 and paroled in 1980.

Catholic sources said Shi, the bishop of the Yixian diocese in Hebei, was detained in 1990.

Human rights groups have called for the release of the two bishops and German Chancellor Helmut Kohl mentioned their plight when he visited China earlier this month.

The communist government in China bans worship outside of state-supervised churches, which are restricted in what they can preach. Catholics are not allowed to acknowledge the Pope's religious authority.

However, relations between China and the Vatican show signs of improving with the visit to Beijing in September of Cardinal Roger Etchegaray.

Off the Record



The youngest engaged couple of the year in Jordan is Palestinian eleven-year-old Ala'a (R) and twelve-year-old Mariam standing hand-in-hand Saturday after the engagement ceremony on Friday. — AFP photo

Iran allows women's higher education

TEHRAN: Iran has lifted restrictions on the subjects women can study at university, a newspaper said on Saturday, reports Reuter.

"Female applicants are allowed, from now on, to take part in university entrance exams of all branches. There will be no limitations on admission based on sex," Keyhan newspaper quoted a Ministry of Higher Education statement as saying.

It was not immediately clear what the old restrictions were but in July the Iranian newspaper Hamshahri said that in 1991 women students were excluded from more than half of all mathematics courses and about a quarter of the humanities and experimental science courses.

In this academic year more than one million women took University entrance examinations but only about 90,000 were admitted to institutes of higher education.

There were some restrictions on women entering university before the Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979. The Islamic government imposed further restrictions in 1982.

Diet rich in animal fat cause of breast cancer

SHANGHAI: Chinese scientists have demonstrated a strong link between breast cancer and daily diet, especially those rich in animal protein and fat, reports Xinhua.

The conclusion was drawn after a comparative study of 1,923 cases in east China's Shanghai city in the last 11 years by a research group led by Lu Ruffang, professor of the Shanghai Medical Sciences University.

The scientists found that of the top 10 causes of breast cancers at least four are related to daily diet.

Their research has proven that cancer can be caused by a high fat and animal protein diet over a long time or by excessive intake of mono-unsaturated fatty acid.

BRIEFLY

Street robbers kill one in NY: Street robbers tore the leather jacket off a pregnant woman, then fatally shot her husband while she watched, AP reports from New York.

Alexander Ortiz died early Saturday, his 22nd birthday, police Sgt John McCluskey. The couple was walking in the borough of Queens late Friday when two armed men approached. The men demanded, then forcibly tore off the 23-year-old woman's leather jacket. She is seven months pregnant.

Ortiz was shot twice, once in the neck and once on the left side. His wife, whose name wasn't released, wasn't hurt. The robbers fled by car.

Gunmen to free US linguist: An American linguist abducted by Muslim gunmen in the Southern Philippines will be freed soon, a senior military officer said, Reuter reports from Philippines.

Lieutenant-General Thelmo Cunanan, Commander of the Armed Forces Southern Command, said in an interview on Saturday evening the kidnapers of Charles Walton may find it difficult holding on to him.

"Walton will be released soon, well and alive," Cunanan said adding that negotiators were continuing talks with the kidnapers.

3 Georgians with uranium held: Turkish police seized 4.5 kg (10 lbs) of what they suspect is Uranium and arrested three Georgians trying to sell it, Anatolian News Agency reported on Saturday, Reuter says from Istanbul.

The suspected material was sent to the Atomic Energy Laboratory in Istanbul for further examination after it was seized in the northwestern town of Bursa on Thursday, it said.

Police acting on a tip contacted the Georgians as potential buyers. The Georgians demanded 150,000 US dollar for per kg of Uranium and were arrested after a brief struggle, Anatolian said.

Commandos kill 2 Tamil guerillas: Sri Lankan police commandos killed two Tamil guerillas in a firefight in the Eastern Amparar district on Saturday night, military sources and residents said yesterday, Reuter reports from Colombo.

One police officer was badly injured in the clash which occurred when the rebels, fighting for independence in the island's north and east, ambushed a police patrol approaching their hideout, they said.

Pak dyer thrown into boiling vat: A Pakistani cloth dyer was thrown into a boiling vat of his own dye by a man he tried to stop from pinching passing women, local officials said on Saturday, Reuter reports from Islamabad.

Shabbir Ahmed, a dyer in the central Pakistani village of Gakhar Mandi, infuriated Mehboob by telling him to stop "eve-teasing" — a local term for pinching, ogling and harassing women in the street, one official said by telephone.

An angry Mehboob tossed Ahmed into a boiling pot of his own dye, he said. Ahmed was admitted to hospital with burns.

Turkey frees 10 Britons: Ten Britons held by Turkish gendarmes for 26 hours in the southeast were released on Saturday, the British embassy said, Reuter reports from Istanbul.

The Britons, most of them women, were detained by the security forces in Diyarbakir town when they went to investigate the Kurdish separatist insurgency in the area.

Floods claim 22 in Cuba: Authorities said Saturday that 22 people died and 11 more were missing after floods hit eastern Cuba this week, sweeping away bridges and damaging homes, crops and utility lines, Reuter reports from Havana.

A statement by the civil defence headquarters listed extensive damage in the provinces lashed for three days by torrential rain — Guantanamo Holguin and Santiago De Cuba.

The floods the worst in some district of Holguin for 30 years were a blow to the Communist-rule Caribbean island's crippled economy.

BSF rushes reinforcements in Kashmir Curfew imposed in Sapore

SRINAGAR (India), Nov 28: Paramilitary reinforcements were rushed today to the northern Kashmir town of Sapore where a clash between Muslim militants and Indian troops left 15 people dead Saturday, police said, reports AFP.

A strict curfew was in force today in the Muslim militant

stronghold north of Kashmir's summer capital, a police spokesman said.

Funeral ceremonies for the 15 people killed in a day-long clash between the security forces and Muslim guerillas in Sapore Saturday were expected to be held today despite the curfew.

The paramilitary Border Security Force (BSF) rushed reinforcements to Sapore to prevent trouble during the burials, the spokesman said.

Sapore, an apple-growing centre 50 kilometres (31 miles) from Srinagar, is a stronghold of the Hizbul Mujahideen, the largest of the Muslim militant organisations opposed to Indian rule over Kashmir.

The army and BSF threw a cordon around Sapore at dawn Saturday to try to flush out militants, triggering a fierce gunbattle which officials said left 15 rebels dead and six soldiers, including an army and a BSF officer wounded.

Twenty-five homes, six shops and a Sikh temple were gutted in fire which raged through two sections of the town.

The Defence Ministry here

accused militants trying to escape the security dragnet of setting the fire as a diversion.

The military operation was called off after about 15 hours but police said the town remained tense Sunday and BSF troops erected roadblocks on the main road leading to Sapore from Srinagar.

Muslim militant groups described Sapore as a "liberated zone".

More than 7,000 people have died in Kashmir, India's only Muslim majority state, since Muslim militants launched a violent secessionist campaign four years ago.

A number of militant groups, including the Hizbul Mujahideen, favour joining Muslim Pakistan while the other major group, the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front, wants independence for the Himalayan region.

India accuses Pakistan of arming and training the militants battling the Indian security force. Islamabad denies the charges but describes the Muslim militant campaign as a legitimate struggle for self-determination.

China continues support for Palestinians

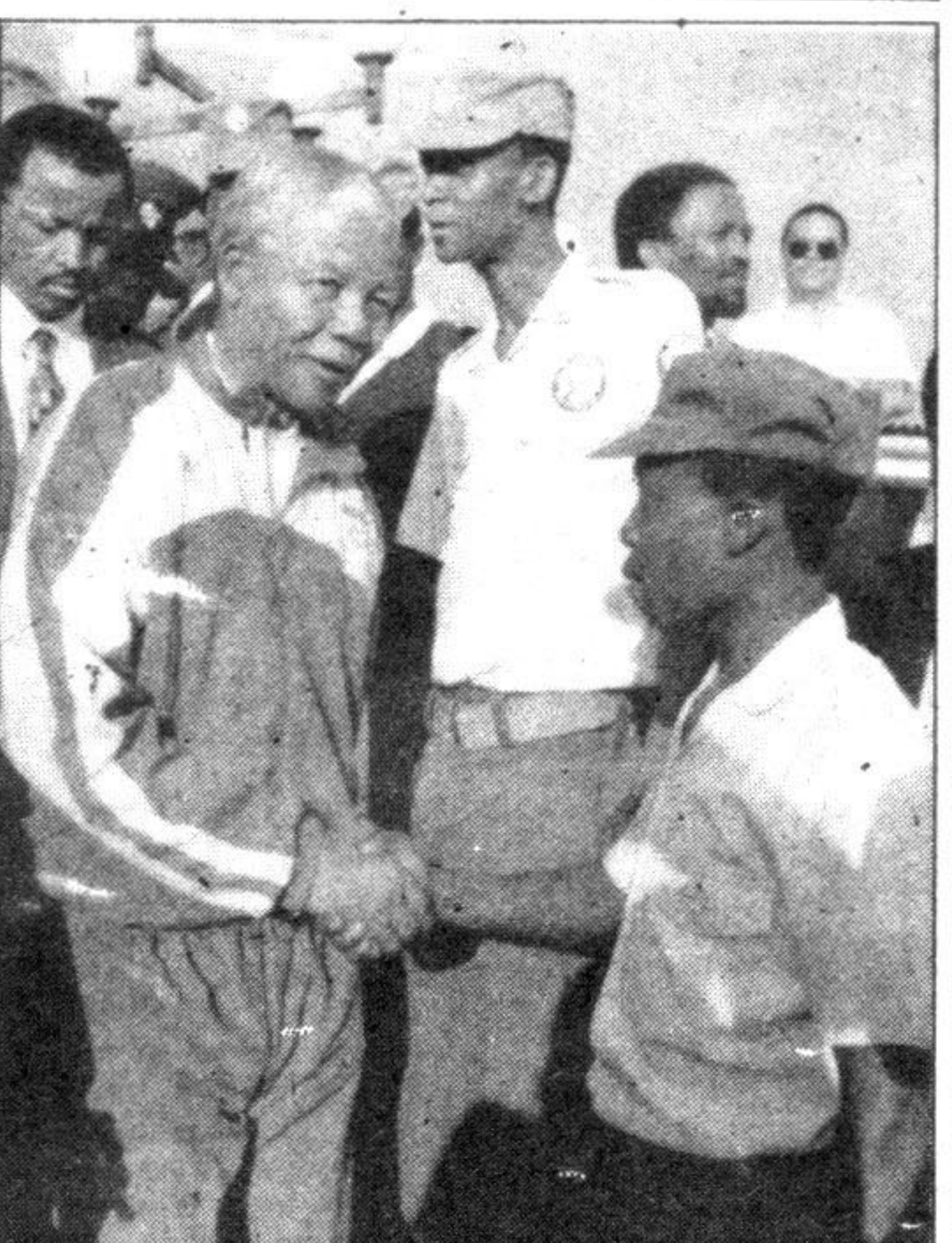
BEIJING, Nov 28: China has pledged to make further efforts to push forward the Middle East peace process in a message to mark and International Day of Solidarity for the Palestinian people, Xinhua reported today, says AFP.

Premier Li Peng sent the message on behalf of China, a traditional supporter of the Palestinian "just struggle" — to a meeting planned for Monday in New York to commemorate the Day of Solidarity.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Israel mutual recognition in September and the agreement on limited self-government for the occupied territories was an important outcome of the protracted struggle waged by the Palestinian people as well as a wise move by leaders of the PLO and Israel, Li said.

He expressed China's support for this major breakthrough in the Middle East peace process and urged all parties to continue the search for a comprehensive just and reasonable solution.

"The Chinese government and people have all along supported the Palestinian people in the just struggle and actively backed and promoted effort by the Arab countries.



Nelson Mandela, President of the African National Congress (ANC), meets members of the ANC-aligned Police and Prison Warder's Civil Right's Union (POPCRU) at a meeting in Eldorado Park on Saturday during his tour of the Witwatersrand area. — AFP photo

Khmers offer to cease hostilities

BANGKOK, Nov 28: Cambodia's Khmer Rouge guerillas offered today to cease all hostilities and give up all zones of control including the gem-rich hills of Pailin in the west and the Preah Vihear temple on the border with Thailand, in return for senior government positions, reports AFP.

The proposal in a broadcast on Khmer Rouge radio was apparently a response to an offer by King Norodom Sihanouk, who reversed today an earlier vow not to include the Khmer Rouge in the elected government and offered them senior posts if they surrendered.

Sunday's Khmer Rouge offer came in a radio message broadcast here from the faction's nominal leader Khieu Samphan to King Sihanouk who is currently undergoing treatment for cancer in Beijing.

Khieu Samphan said the guerillas would immediately cease all hostilities, including attack on government positions, roads and train, as well as the laying of landmines. If they were given senior government posts in return.

The government must accept to give position such all co-ministers, co-deputy ministers, co-secretaries of state and advisors to personnel of the party of Democratic Kampuchea, the radio said, using the guerrilla group's official name.

Aideed to boycott Ethiopia confce

MOGADISHU, Nov 28: Somali warlord Mohamed Farrah Aideed is boycotting this week's conference in Ethiopia, his spokesman said Sunday, threatening to ruin a chance for the nation's rival factions to reconcile their differences, reports AP.

Aideed would only attend the conference if the United Nations releases three of his top aides, the spokesman, Abdi Ghabdidd, told an organised rally of Aideed supporters in Mogadishu. UN and American officials have said the men likely won't be released soon.

Without Aideed, chances for reconciliation may be ruined. And without some promise of peace, the world could write off Somalia and shift its resources to countries more capable of helping themselves, UN officials and international relief workers have said.

Ghabdidd said instead of Aideed, 24 representatives would fly to Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian city where the conference starts Monday, to press for the release of Osman Ato and two other Aideed aides. Ato is

Aideed's main financier and has a large following.

The UN Security Council removed Aideed from its wanted list two weeks ago while it investigates the Somali slayings of 24 Pakistani troops in Mogadishu in early June. The three aids are suspected of masterminding subsequent attacks that killed at least 24 Americans and scores of other UN troops.

UN Secretary General Boutros-Ghali last week appointed a commission to investigate the attacks, most of which took place in Mogadishu between June and October.

UN and US officials have said the men could be released in the meantime, but they expressed doubt they would be freed in time for the conference.

Donor nations and relief groups are gathering in Ethiopia to discuss resettlement of displaced people, trade, economic management and health and education. Somali politicians are expected to meet on the sidelines Tuesday and Wednesday.

Major reshuffle in NZ cabinet

WELLINGTON, Nov 28: New Zealand Prime Minister Jim Bolger announced a major cabinet reshuffle today, dumping monetarist Finance Minister Ruth Richardson after his conservative government was narrowly re-elected in a general election earlier this month, reports Reuter.

Bolger appointed his close ally Birch to replace Richardson, who had led three years of sweeping economic and social reforms in New Zealand, abolishing many of the country's comprehensive welfare services to drag it out of recession.

Britain acknowledges secret contact with IRA men

BELFAST, Nov 28: The British government admitted Saturday it had communicated secretly with the Irish Republican Army (IRA) this year after the outlawed organisation signalled its willingness to lay down arms, reports AP.

The British government took a February message from the IRA seriously and responded to it the following month, but the violence continued despite "their original approach," Britain's Northern Ireland Office said in a statement.

"They have continued to inflict untold misery and grief upon the public. It is for them to explain this. There can be no

excuse for such terrorism, their duty is to end it at once," the statement said.

The IRA's most public supporter, however, called the statement a "transparent attempt to distract from the facts." Gerry Adams, president of the Sinn Fein party, said the British government had already told lies in previously denying contacts with the IRA.

Adams said the British were "squandering an opportunity for peace—the total cessation of violence in Northern Ireland that he and moderate Catholic politician John Hume have been seeking in confidential talks together.

The government's surprise disclosure appeared certain to be a damage-limitation exercise as substantive rumours circulated in Belfast political circles of continuing diplomatic feelers between Sinn Fein officials and at least one senior British politician.

It came five hours after Hume, architect of an initiative to bring the IRA in from the political wilderness, said Prime Minister John Major holds "the key of peace."

The Northern Ireland Office statement said the IRA's February message indicated that the conflict was over.

The government "obviously

had to take that message seriously, though we recognised that actions not words would be the real test," the statement said.

It said the response "reinforced and split out in a private message what the government had consistently said publicly. There had first of all to be a genuine end to violence."

The Observer newspaper said Sunday that the British reply came on March 22, two days after an IRA bombing in Warrington, northwest England, killed two boys and injured 56 people in a shopping district.

Sinn Fein deputy leader Martin McGuinness, the re-

ported recipient of the British document, said IRA contacts with the British government were continuing regularly "at a high level" with Major's full knowledge.

In an interview for broadcast Sunday on the BBC—dubbed by an actor's voice in keeping with government restrictions on broadcasting Sinn Fein spokesman—McGuinness called on Britain to "stop the hypocrisy and recognise we have rights too." The IRA wanted to be part of a peace process that involved compromise on all sides, he said, and "the British government have to realise that they can no longer

deal with us in a back room."

Both McGuinness and Adams were part of a 1972 IRA delegation that was secretly flown to London to meet British minister in ultimately unsuccessful cease-fire negotiations.

Less than two weeks ago Britain's leading official in Northern Ireland, Sir Patrick Mayhew, denied Sinn Fein.

Peter Robinson, deputy leader of the Rev. Ian Paisley's hard-line Democratic Unionist Party, called for Mayhew to resign.

Hume, however, said Saturday night's disclosures demonstrated that the IRA wanted to end its campaign.

'Iran danger to ME peace'

MILAN, Nov 28: Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said on Saturday most Arab states now regarded Iran as the greatest danger to peace in the Middle East, reports Reuter.

"The clouds that hang on the skies of the Middle East are fundamentalist clouds and not Israeli one," Peres said in a speech to the Italian-Israeli Association in Milan.

"But fundamentalism is not a new religion. It's an old protest against poverty and corruption," he added. Peres urged Middle East countries to cut spending on arms and create together an economic block.