

# BRIEFLY



A model in Madrid presents an outfit with plastic 'Barbie doll', lycra top in yellow and mini-skirt with matching cape by designer Manuel Fernandez on Tuesday at the Spring/Summer '95 previews, as part of the Pasarela Cibeles fashion show. — AFP photo

**'Mossad killed Maxwell':** The Israeli secret service Mossad killed British tycoon Robert Maxwell after he tried to blackmail them, according to a new book written by a former agent, AFP reports from Jerusalem. Maxwell fell overboard from his yacht off the Canary islands in November 1991 as his financial empire crumbled. Viktor Ostovsky claims in "The Other Side of Deception" that the Czech-born fraudster threatened to reveal several Mossad plots unless they paid him large but unspecified sums of money.

**3 hanged in Singapore:** Two Malaysians and a Singaporean convicted of drug trafficking were hanged at dawn at Changi Prison in Singapore yesterday, the Central Narcotics Bureau (CNB) said, AFP reports from Singapore.

Their hanging comes exactly a week after Singapore proceeded with the execution of Dutchman Johannes Van Damme despite an 11th hour plea for clemency by the Hague. A CNB statement said the Singaporean and two Malaysians were found guilty by the High Court last year and their appeals against conviction were rejected by the Court of Criminal Appeal.

**Taiwan fireworks factory explodes:** An explosion at an illegal fireworks factory in southern Taiwan completely razed the building and killed at least four people inside, a local newspaper said on Friday, Reuters reports from Taipei.

Police said they were unsure whether they would find more victims because of the extent of the damage, the United Daily News said.

**Russian plane crashes, 6 die:** A passenger plane with 19 people aboard crashed while trying to take off from an airport in Russia's Far East, killing six people, authorities said, AP reports from Moscow.

The Antonov-8 went down at the Chaibukha airport in the Khabarovsk region, said Anatoly Streltsov, a spokesman for the Russian Ministry for Emergency Situations. Among the 19 people aboard were 12 passengers and seven crew members. The plane also carried 5.5 metric tons (6 short tons) of vegetables, the Interfax news agency reported.

**Brunei, Israeli FMs meet:** The foreign ministers of Israel and Brunei met for the first time on Thursday to discuss future political ties between their states, Reuters reports from United Nations.

Prince Mohamed Bolkiah of Brunei, a wealthy Muslim Sultanate on Borneo Island in the South China Sea, told Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres he was encouraged by the Middle East peace process.

**4 Abkhazian cops shot dead:** Four Abkhazian policemen were shot dead on Thursday near the town of Gali in the south of the rebel Georgian province, Itar-Tass news agency said, Reuters reports from Moscow.

Tass quoted information officials in the province as saying they were killed when their patrol car was ambushed by a Georgian sabotage group.

**Angolan talks may fail:** UN envoy Aloune Blondin Beye conceded Thursday that Angolan peace talks would fail to produce an agreement to end the 19-year civil war by the Friday deadline he set, AP reports from Lusaka.

But Beye, the UN special representative to Angola, insisted he was not disappointed by the lack of an agreement in talks that began in late 1993 in the Zambian capital.

**Cholera claims 112 worldwide:** As cholera raged on in Eastern Europe, another 112 people worldwide died of the disease in the past week, the World Health Organisation (WHO) said in Geneva Thursday in its weekly report, says AFP from Geneva.

Since a week ago Thursday, 1,773 new cases have been reported worldwide, bringing the total number of cases since the start of the year 236,351, of which 7,504 have died.

**Typhoon loses strength:** Typhoon Orchid began losing strength over the Japan Sea after pummeling central Japan with deadly winds and heavy rains, authorities said Friday, AP reports from Tokyo.

At least two people were killed as the typhoon, packing gusts of up to 108 kilometers per hour (67 mph), cut a swath through the north and central region of Japan's main island of Honshu on Thursday and early Friday.

**300 die in Angolan train mishap:** Three hundred people died and 147 were injured when a train plunged into a ravine in southern Angola, according to an official toll published on Thursday, AFP reports from Lisbon.

The toll from the disaster, which happened last Thursday in Huila Province, updated figures released on Monday giving 146 dead and 80 injured, said the Angolan ANGOP agency monitored in Lisbon.

**Iran violates UAE sovereignty:** The United Arab Emirates says Iran is violating its sovereignty by operating commercial flights to a disputed island in the Gulf, Reuters reports from Dubai.

This step by Iran is considered a violation of the UAE sovereignty over Abu Musa Island and contradicts with principles of friendship and good neighbourliness, the official Emirates News Agency WAM quoted an unidentified official source as saying in a statement on Thursday.

## Japanese parliament session begins Opposition boycotts PM's speech

TOKYO, Sept 30: Japan's newly unified Opposition Bloc today boycotted Prime Minister Tomichi Murayama's policy speech on the opening day of parliament, the first such walkout in three decades, reports Reuters.

The Opposition Bloc formed on Wednesday by 10 small parties and led by three former Prime Ministers staged the boycott to demand that the government hand over the post of vice speaker of the lower house to an opposition candidate.

It was the first boycott of the prime minister's policy speech since 1986 when the Socialists, then the largest opposition party and now in the ruling coalition with their cold

war foes the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), refused to attend premier Eisaku Sato's opening address over a political funding scandal.

"Boycotting the plenary session is a relic of the old days," said LDP Secretary-General Yoshiro Mori in a statement. "This sharply contradicts former Prime Minister (Tsutomu) Hata's drive to reform parliament."

Murayama was to outline his major policy and parliamentary goals in his speech, major issues during the 65-day session include enacting the last phase of political reforms and a major tax package.

AP adds: The disputes indicated that Japan is in for a period of confrontation between Murayama's Socialist-conserva-

tive coalition and a newly united bloc of opposition parties.

But the confrontation is not over policies. The coalition is dominated by the conservative Liberal Democrats and the opposition is led by ex-Liberal Democrats.

Both sides claim to support reforms such as cutting government waste and opening Japan's market to freer competition, but neither has offered specifics yet.

Friday's feuding involved procedural issues and the question of whether the opposition was entitled to the ceremonial post of lower house vice speaker.

When the coalition pushed through its own proposals by

majority vote, the opposition boycotted Murayama's policy speech.

The prime minister did not offer any new initiatives, repeating his slogan of "politics gentle to people." He asked legislators to ratify during the fall session the international agreement creating a new World Trade Organisation.

He also asked for early approval of his tax programme, which extends an income tax cut demanded by the United States while raising the national sales tax from 3 per cent to 5 per cent in 1997.

Of those legislators who did attend the speech, several took naps while others held impromptu conferences among themselves in the chamber.

### US concerned about HR situation in Saudi Arabia

WASHINGTON, Sept 30: In unusual criticism of a key trading partner, the State Department said on Thursday it has serious concerns about the human rights situation in Saudi Arabia, reports AP.

The comment by deputy spokeswoman Christine Shelly followed the arrest on Monday of 110 Muslim fundamentalists described by Saudi authorities as "agitators."

Saudi authorities, she noted, have indicated that the arrests were made on the basis of evidence that the individuals were seeking to disrupt internal security.

### Rebels kill 4 Lankan soldiers

COLOMBO, Sept 30: Tamil rebels killed four soldiers in northern Sri Lanka, officials said Friday, two weeks before the first peace talks with the guerrillas are scheduled to begin, reports AFP.

The troops were discussing an ambush plan when rebels threw three grenades that also wounded six soldiers Wednesday night.

The attack occurred on Kays, an island off the rebel-held Jaffna peninsula, said Douglas Devananda, a politician in Colombo.

Four government officials plan to visit Jaffna on October 13 and 14.

### Indonesia bans "True Lies"

JAKARTA, Sept 30: Indonesian censors have banned a US comedy-action film, "True Lies," after some Muslim leaders said it insults Islam, reports AP.

The film, which had been playing to full houses for the past two weeks, will be pulled out of theaters on Saturday, Soekanto, executive director of the Film Censorship Board, told reporters on Friday.

Starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, True Lies is about an American hero's fight against a Middle Eastern terrorist group called the Crimson Jihad.

### Iran vows to stop freeing Iraqi POWs

TEHRAN, Sept 30: Iran has vowed to stop freeing Iraqi prisoners from the 1980-1988 war unless Baghdad proceeds with the release of Iranians detained in Iraq, The Iranian News Agency IRNA said on Thursday, reports AFP.

The chairman of the POW Commission, Mohammad Ali Nazaran, told IRNA that Iran would "from now free one Iraqi prisoner in exchange for the release of one Iranian" held in Iraq.

Tehran has unilaterally released hundreds of Iraqi POWs during the past years as a "goodwill" gesture to Iraq and in a bid to encourage Baghdad to reciprocate.



A traffic policeman directs traffic in Surat city on Friday with nose and mouth covered. Surat residents cover their faces to prevent inhaling plague bacilli that is transmitted through the air. — AFP photo

## King Hussein, Rabin hold surprise summit

AMMAN, Sept 30: King Hussein and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin ended a surprise summit on Thursday saying they hoped a peace treaty would be concluded soon after resolving the key issues of water, boundary and security, reports Reuters.

A joint communique issued at the end of the talks said both leaders expressed hope that the negotiations on the treaty of peace would be successfully concluded after finding mutually acceptable solutions to those outstanding issues as soon as possible.

The communique said the two leaders discussed "the issues pending in the negotiations on the treaty of peace including water, boundary and security."

They agreed several issues remained to be resolved.

Negotiations on these issues would resume on October 20, following a Washington meeting next Monday between Jordan's crown prince, Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and US President Bill Clinton.

It was hoped in subsequent negotiations to be held in the region the resolution of all outstanding issues will result in the achievement of a treaty of peace, it said.

Another report adds: Sally Khalifa, court spokeswoman, said the meeting in the Jordanian port of Aqaba began in the evening and a communique would be issued when it ended. She would say only that the meeting was part of the continuing peace process.

King Hussein was accompanied at the meeting in his Red Sea palace by Crown

Prince Hassan and Prime Minister Abdul-Salam Al-Majali.

Rabin was joined by Elyakim Rubinstein, the chief Israeli peace negotiator with Jordan, both sides brought their heads of the armed forces.

Khalifa said this was the first meeting this week between Rabin and the King, although high-level meetings were widely thought to have taken place earlier in the week.

Majali and the Crown Prince were both reported as being in Aqaba on Monday, fuelling speculation of secret negotiations. The Jordanian port adjoins the Israeli Red Sea resort of Eilat and there have been reports of secret contacts there in the past.

## No progress in US-DPRK talks

GENEVA, Sept 30: Chief negotiators from the United States and North Korea left their deputies to battle on alone Friday in talks aimed at opening up the communist country's secretive nuclear programme, reports AP.

After failing to achieve a breakthrough after a week of discussions, chief US delegate Robert Gallucci was heading back to Washington for consultations.

He and his North Korean counterpart Kang Sok Ju would resume talks Tuesday or Wednesday, he told reporters late Thursday.

"Our discussions have been substantive and businesslike," he said. "We know more about

the positions of the other side and the reasons for them and I believe they know more about ours."

But Gallucci said no headway was made on the crucial issues.

The United States wants North Korea to allow wider inspections of its nuclear facilities to clear up suspicions that Pyongyang has been making atomic weapons. North Korea denies the charge and says the United States wants to see what it considered off-limits military sites.

In return for cooperation, the United States would arrange international assistance to help North Korea replace its nuclear reactors with more modern equipment that is less

suitable for producing bombs. The United States would also move towards normal relations with the reclusive country.

North Korea is anxious for better relations and has said it is willing to change its reactors. But it has rejected a US proposal under which South Korea, the North's capitalist rival, would build the reactors.

The latest round of talks began in an atmosphere of recriminations.

North Korea was angered by the deployment of US warships off Korea; US delegates said North Korea had gone back on some of the agreements it had made at the last round of Geneva talks in August.

# Off the Record

## Bush won't do it a la Carter

WASHINGTON: Former First Lady Barbara Bush says her husband, George, would take on a foreign trouble shooting mission as former President Jimmy Carter did on Haiti, but with a difference, reports Reuters.

In excerpts of a taped TV interview with David Frost released Thursday, Barbara Bush said her husband would take on a mission for some Republican president.

"... if his president asked him to do something I guess he would do," she said. "But he certainly wouldn't come home and bad-mouth the policy."

Carter, who led a delegation to Haiti that reached a deal with military leaders there that averted a US invasion a week ago, criticised on his return UN policy on Haiti, taking particular aim at the State Department.



## Winking can be deadly

KUALA LUMPUR: Winking can be deadly as four fun-loving Malaysian men found out — one was killed and two others badly wounded after a woman they winked at on a Karaoke lounge set her angry boyfriend after them, a newspaper reported yesterday, says AFP.

Chong Wai Meng, 29, died while his two unidentified friends were recovering in hospital after being attacked Thursday with long, sharp knives for the flirtatious act. The New Straits Times daily reported.

The fourth man in the group managed to escape. The incident occurred after Chong and his friends, who were leaving the lounge, were confronted by a group of men led by one who claimed Chong's party had winked at his girlfriend.

## 'The sex war of air waves'

PARIS: Delighted Paris tabloids call it 'the sex war of the air waves' — a head-on duel between two raunchy, youth-oriented radio call-in shows, one of them hosted by a 20-year-old former porn-film star, reports AP.

She's tough-talking Tabatha Cash, a high school honours student, before she ventured into X-rated filmdom. Since September 7, Cash has been host of a 7 pm-10 pm programme each weekday on Skyrock radio, going head-to-head against the popular "Lovin' Fun" show of archrival Fun Radio.

Only a few months ago, "Lovin' Fun" mobilised huge support from listeners to ward off an attempt by government censors to suppress the show's often bawdy language. Now Cash is mocking the "Lovin' Fun" hosts as over-the-hill moralists while flaunting her own expertise.

"Nowadays, listeners are interested in talking about sex over the air," she told Le Parisien in one of several recent tabloid interviews. "And Tabatha Cash is well-placed to talk about it... I've had experiences that few others know."

Many of her calls are from youths who, belying the stereotype of French *savoir-faire*, reveal sexual awkwardness and naivete. She graphically counsels young men on their love-making techniques, discusses contraception options, occasionally dabbles in social commentary.



John Wayne Bobbitt (L) poses with adult film star Tiffany Lords Thursday after the benefit screening of Bobbitt's new X-rated movie, "Bobbitt Uncut," an autobiographical film about events leading up to when his wife, Lorena cut off his penis. Lords announced that she was impregnated by Bobbitt during the filming of the movie. — AFP photo

## Russian helicopter gunships hit Chechen airport: 8 die

MOSCOW, Sept 30: Opposition forces killed eight people in an attack on the airport of the Chechen capital today and issued an ultimatum for President Dzhokhar Dudayev to step down, a Dudayev aide told AFP.

Interfax news agency reported that opposition forces took control of the city's airport and issued an ultimatum to Dudayev to surrender by 4:30 P.M. (1530 GMT).

"There will not be any hostilities in the city before the ultimatum expires," said a leader of "Peace Group," one of the groups making up the opposition led by Ruslan Khabulov, the former Speaker of the Russian Parliament.

If Dudayev does not lay down his arms by 4:30 we will

continue our offensive into Grozny," added the "Peace Group" official.

Earlier, eight people were killed in Grozny when four Russian helicopter gunships launched a dawn attack on the city's airport, Dudayev advisor Movien Salamov said.

The dead were all members of airport staff, Salamov added. Airport buildings were partially destroyed and the runway was severely damaged in the attack, said the advisor speaking on the telephone from Grozny.

Salamov added the Russian helicopter gunships had taken off from the Mozdok military base in the neighbouring Caucasian republic of North Ossetia.

For his part, the "Peace Group" leader told the Interfax agency the airport was

now in opposition hands and "all Dudayev's military aircraft have been destroyed."

The Itar-Tass agency confirmed gunfire had broken out early this morning on the outskirts of Grozny. The airport, closed by order of Moscow for several weeks, is around 10 kilometers (six miles) from Grozny city centre.

Salamov added fighting between government and opposition forces was also underway today in the northeastern Nadterechny region, stronghold of the "Provisional Council," another opposition group, which is supported by Moscow.

Khasbulatov, himself a Chechen, travelled to Moscow last week to plead for more Russian support.

## Afghan fighting leaves 17000 hurt in 3 weeks

GENEVA, Sept 30: Fighting in the Afghan capital has claimed 17,000 wounded, mostly civilians, in three weeks, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) announced on Thursday, reports AFP.

The ICRC has been trying to negotiate a limited ceasefire to allow civilians to leave the combat zones and be taken to hospitals but five weeks after its latest appeal for civilians to be spared, warring factions "are totally indifferent" to their plight, the ICRC said.

Since the fall of the Communist government in April 1992, bloody clashes between the country's armed factions have caused the death of thousands, with hundreds of thousands of people fleeing the country.



Self-exiled Bangladeshi writer Taslima Nasreen attends the International Parliament of Writers meeting on Thursday in Lisbon, Portugal. Nasreen at one point ordered the press to leave the meeting explaining she was unwilling to accept media publicity. Some writers protested the order and left the room. — AFP photo