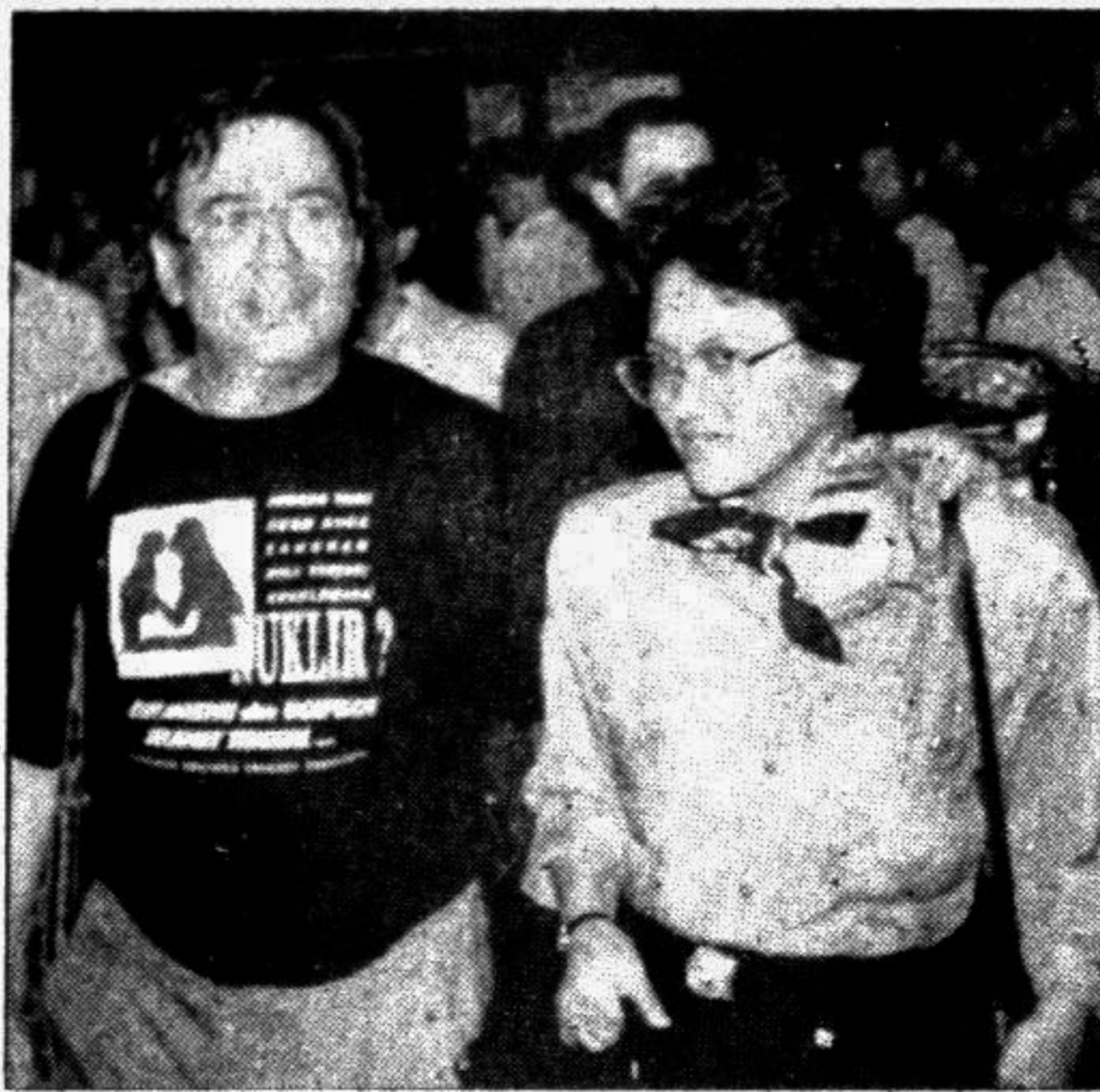


BRIEFLY



Academic George Aditjondro (L), a vocal environmental and human rights activist, is met by his wife Esti Aditjondro (R) at Jakarta's Sukarno-Hatta international airport shortly after his arrival from Germany late Saturday. Indonesian police are seeking to question Aditjondro over remarks on the country's leadership succession made during a discussion at a private university in central Java in August which authorities viewed as insulting them. — AFP photo

Akihito, Michiko in Spain: Japan's Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko arrived in Palma De Mallorca Saturday from France as guests of King Juan Carlos and Queen Sophia for a private weekend ahead of a two-day state visit. AFP reports from Spain.

The Spanish royal couple met the emperor and empress at San Juan Airport on this Spanish Mediterranean island.

Aftershock shakes N Japan: A strong undersea earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of 7.3 shook northern Japan Sunday. AP reports from Tokyo.

There were no immediate reports of damage or injuries from the quake, which was believed to be an aftershock from the 8.2 magnitude earthquake last Thursday, which left more than 10 people dead.

The Central Meteorological Agency issued warnings for minor tsunami waves of up to about a foot (less than half a meter) high for the eastern coast of Hokkaido and northeastern Japan.

Diarrhoea claims 25 in Java: A diarrhoea epidemic sweeping through nearly 90 villages in Indonesia's densely populated Java island has killed nine people and infected nearly 2,000. The official Antara news agency said yesterday. Reuter reports from Jakarta.

Local authorities were grappling with the problems of inadequate medical facilities and hospital beds, treating some patients in community halls and in their homes, Antara said.

King Bhumibol's donation: Thailand's King Bhumibol Adulyadej will donate four million baht (160,000 dollars) to Bangkok authorities for flood control and efforts to solve traffic problems, the Nation newspaper reported yesterday. Reuter says from Bangkok.

The donation, to be given to the city on Monday, comes as authorities warned that a combination of high tides and heavy rains might cause widespread flooding in the capital.

4 die in Australian plane crash: Four people were burnt to death yesterday when their light aircraft crashed near a small airport in rural Australia, a police spokesman said. Reuter reports from Sydney.

The twin engine Cessna 337 with three passengers and a pilot aboard crashed and burned near the main runway at Walgett Airport, 500 km (310 miles) northwest of Sydney, in the state of New South Wales.

Afghan general killed: An Afghan army general was killed fighting opponents of President Burhanuddin Rabbani on Friday, the official Kabul radio said on Saturday. Reuter reports from Islamabad.

General Amir Mohammad, an army commander in the northern province of Kunduz, was killed in a "face-to-face battle with opposition militias", the broadcast, monitored in Islamabad, said.

Nobel laureate Jerne dies: Niels Kaj Jerne, a Danish immunologist who shared the 1984 Nobel Prize in medicine, has died in southern France, family members said. He was 82. AP reports from Paris.

Jerne died Friday at his home in Castillon du Gard near Nimes.

Jerne shared the Nobel Prize with Georg Koehler of Germany and César Milstein of Britain for their theories on the structure and mechanism of commands of the immune system, and the production of immune system components known as monoclonal antibodies.

Arafat's close associate dead: Khaled al-Hassan, a close associate of Palestine Liberation Organisation leader Yasser Arafat and a founding member of the PLO's Fatah movement, has died, the PLO office here said Saturday. He was 66. AP reports from Rabat.

Al-Hassan, who spent most of his time in Morocco, died Friday after a lengthy illness, the PLO office said.

Tornados hit Philippines: Two tornados struck the Philippines, flattening 72 wooden houses and injuring dozens of people, police said yesterday. Reuter reports from San Fernando, Philippines.

Twenty-five people were hospitalised and 40 houses destroyed when a tornado on Saturday swept through San Pedro Cutud district in San Fernando town 60 kms (37 miles) north of Manila, police superintendent Aniceto Franny said.

Abducted Frenchman found dead: A Frenchman who had been kidnapped four days ago was found dead Saturday with his throat slit, Algerian officials reported. AP reports from Algiers.

Jean-Pierre Maniere, 59, an engineer who had lived in Algeria for 25 years, was kidnapped Tuesday by gunmen near Meftah, 15 kilometers (nine miles) southwest of Algiers.

His body was found Saturday near Reghaia, about 30 kilometers east of the capital. Algerian officials said.

Austrians go to polls: Austrians vote Sunday in elections that will determine the next government. A political realignment is expected that could bring a right-wing populist to power in 1998. AP reports from Vienna.

Joerg Haider, head of the No. 3 Freedom Party, dominated the lackluster campaign with his folksy tirades against foreigners, corruption and party politics.

He had an easy target in the government coalition of Chancellor Franz Vranitzky, Austria's most popular and prestigious politician.

OAS backs Peruvian First Lady: An Organisation of American States panel ruled that first lady Susana Higuchi should be allowed to run for president against her husband, a newspaper reported Saturday. AP reports from Lima.

The OAS human rights commission ruled that the government should allow Higuchi to appeal a law that bans the president's immediate family members from seeking national office. La Republica reported.

UN observers step up patrols along Kuwait-Iraq border

KUWAIT, Oct 9: United Nations observers have stepped up armed patrols along the Kuwait-Iraq frontier on orders from the UN Security Council following an Iraqi troop build up in southern Iraq, a spokesman said today. Reuter.

The border demilitarised zone, a strip 10km (six miles) wide on the Iraqi side and five km (three miles) wide on the Kuwaiti side, remains quiet. The spokesman for the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observer Mission (UNIKOM) added.

"The number of armed patrols has increased and we are keeping our vigilance," a spokesman told Reuters by telephone from the border.

"Everything is quiet. The DMZ remains calm and we have no reports of any violations."

The United States says up to 64,000 Iraqi troops backed by hundreds of tanks have massed in southern Iraq and some of them have advanced towards the Kuwait-Iraq border.

The United Nations set up the demilitarised zone and deployed UNIKOM along it in 1991 after a US-led alliance drove Iraqi troops out of Kuwait in the six-week Gulf War. Iraq had invaded Kuwait in 1990 and claimed the emirate as its own.

UNIKOM is required to ensure that no military personnel or unauthorised armed people enter the zone. The only armed people allowed in the zone are Iraqi and Kuwaiti police, who may carry sidearms only, and UNIKOM personnel.

AFP from Dubai says, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) on Saturday sent troops from its joint force the peninsula shield to Kuwait to confront the threat posed by Iraq, diplomats in the Gulf said.

The units, based in Hafr-Al-Batan in the northeast of Saudi Arabia left Saturday for Kuwait following a meeting of GCC army chiefs-of-staff in Riyadh.

The diplomats did not say how large a force had been sent, but the peninsula shield is mostly a symbolic force of several thousand men which proved ineffective when Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990.

In a statement issued from its Riyadh headquarters, the GCC condemned a build-up of Iraqi troops near the border with Kuwait as an act of aggression.

It said they were "following with deep concern the developments in the region in the light of the threat posed by a concentration by the Iraqi regime of its troops on the border."

Meanwhile, the whole of northern Kuwait bordering Iraq was declared a military zone until further notice on Saturday by the Kuwaiti government.

The official agency Kuna quoting an Interior Ministry statement said it was "forbidden to stay, circulate or approach this zone."

The statement came as the entire Kuwaiti army was ordered to deploy along the border to ward off any threat from Iraqi troops massed near the Emirate.



US President Bill Clinton (R) walks with National Security Advisor Anthony Lake Saturday in the premises of the White House after speaking to the press about the Iraqi troops near the Kuwait border. Clinton admonished Saddam Hussein not to misjudge "American will or American power." — AFP photo

DPRK threatens military action against ROK

TOKYO, Oct 9: North Korea today threatened military action against South Korea if Seoul did not stop "slandering the North by fabricating facts," reports AFP.

"Unless the 'civilian' warmenace, who outdistance the military dictators, is removed, the nation can hardly avoid the scourge of war," North Korea's official Minju Joson journal said, according to the Korean central news agency (KCNA), in an apparent reference to South Korean President Kim Young-Sam.

Minju Joson said: "The Dictator of the Agency for National Security Planning of South Korea charged the North with extensive activities to infiltrate into the South."

According to the journal South Korea has accused the North of digging tunnels under the demilitarised zone separating the two countries.

Minju Joson did not specify when and where South Korea made the accusation.

"It is quite despicable for the bosses of the agency for National Security planning" and the puppet armed forces to compete with one another in slandering the North by fabricating facts," Minju Joson said.

"If the nation is to be prevented from suffering the scourge of war, the Kim Young-Sam group must be overthrown as soon as possible," it said.

Meanwhile, Rodong Simun, the newspaper of North Korea's ruling Workers' Party, was quoted by KCNA as saying Sunday that the South Korean army was "nothing but a puppet army which acts on orders of outside forces."

KCNA said in a dispatch monitored here that the United States and South Korea

continued "provocative joint air war exercises" against North Korea.

Quoting military sources, it claimed some 490 fighter planes were thrown into the drills Thursday and Friday near the demilitarised zone.

"These war games for leading the situation of the Korean peninsula to a higher tension were a very dangerous provocation," KCNA said.

North Korea and the United States resumed high-level talks in Geneva on Wednesday, focusing on Pyongyang's suspect nuclear programme. But no progress has been reported in the negotiations.

PLO concerned at Iraqi military buildup

GAZA CITY (Gaza Strip) Oct 9: The Palestinians, who backed Baghdad during the 1991 Gulf war, were taking a cautious line today in the new buildup of tension over Kuwait and called for a peaceful solution, reports AFP.

PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's spokesman refused to comment on the massing of Iraqi troops near the border with Kuwait.

"We don't have any official reaction yet," said spokesman Nabil Abu Rudeina.

However Nabil Shaath, the minister for international cooperation said Saturday the Palestinian self-rule authority was watching developments.

He told reporters after a weekly cabinet session that the authority was "greatly concerned" and urged a "peaceful settlement".

Education Minister Yasser Amro added: "We did not discuss the issue."

Situation in Bangalore still tense

Troops in battle fatigues march thru' 9 districts

BANGALORE, India, Oct 9: Army troops today patrolled this southern Indian city as authorities scrapped an Urdu-language news bulletin on television which sparked widespread violence leaving 18 people dead, reports AFP.

Soldiers in battle fatigues marched through nine curfew-bound districts of Bangalore, capital of Karnataka state, helping to maintain peace in a city that police said was still tense.

The troops were backed by hundreds of federal paramilitary forces and police armed with orders to shoot rioters at sight.

"The city is peaceful compared to the last two days but still tense," Bangalore police commissioner P Kodandaramiah said. "We do get tele-

phone calls of sporadic incidents of stone throwing."

The Karnataka government meanwhile announced it was scrapping a 10-minute evening Urdu-language news bulletin on the state-owned television network which sparked frenzied protests on Friday.

"From tomorrow the Urdu bulletin will be stopped," Karnataka Chief Minister Veerappa Moily announced late on Saturday.

Police shot dead seven demonstrators who took to the streets on Friday to demand an end to the Urdu bulletins, which they said was aimed at appeasing the Muslim community. Urdu is spoken in India mainly by Muslims.

The protesters, all Hindus, were drawn from the state's majority Kannada-language

speakers, who alleged that the Urdu bulletins were aimed at winning Muslim votes in elections in Karnataka scheduled in November and December.

The police firing and widespread vandalism that followed instead led to Hindu-Muslim violence across this bustling metropolis of nearly four million in which 11 people were stabbed to death on Friday and Saturday.

Authorities first called in the paramilitary rapid action force and later the army after the local police failed to put an end to the mayhem.

Kodandaramiah said some 300 people were injured in the violence, in which scores of vehicles, shops and houses were attacked and torched.



Madan Lal Khurana (R), Chief Minister of the Indian capital, cleans a New Delhi street of filth and garbage yesterday as part of a cleanliness drive. Authorities said piled up garbage across the city was responsible for outbreak of plague which has killed 56 people in India, including three in New Delhi.

Libya accuses US of 'cheap muscle flexing' in Gulf

CAIRO, Oct 9: Libya is playing down the threat of Iraqi troops massed on the Kuwaiti border and instead accuses the United States of Hollywood-style "cheap muscle flexing," reports AP.

Libya's official JANA news agency Saturday night reported the comments by its political editor, whose editorials usually reflect government thinking.

The editor said everyone knew the United States destroyed the bulk of Iraq's military might in the 1991 Gulf War that expelled the Iraqis from Kuwait.

"What is taking place is merely a storm in a tea cup and cheap muscle flexing in the Hollywood-way in a bid to exert further pressure on the Arabian Gulf grouping solely for further financial blackmail," said the political editor, who was not named.

Taiwanese jet accidentally fires missile

TAIPEI, Oct 9: A Taiwanese fighter plane accidentally fired a missile from an air base in eastern Taitung last month, the mass circulation United Daily News reported today, but no one was injured, reports Reuter.

The missile was launched from an aircraft which was parked and unmanned, the newspaper quoted unnamed officials of the military-run Aero Industry Development Centre as saying.

The missile was used for training and no casualty or injury was reported, the newspaper said.

The accident involving a domestically developed Indigenous Defence Fighter (IDF) happened days before a massive military exercise in Taitung on September 29, it said.

Aid airlift into Sarajevo resumes

SARAJEVO, Oct 9: The international airlift that keeps Sarajevo alive resumed Sunday bringing aid to a mourning city with only three days supplies left, reports AP.

In an effort to build up supplies ahead of winter and a possible Serb shutdown of the airport, 19 UN aid flights and two Red Cross planes were scheduled. Planes from Ancona, Italy and Split, Croatia, began touching down at Sarajevo airport Sunday morning.

The resumption of aid followed a sniper attack on trucks in central Sarajevo Saturday which killed one man and wounded 11, including five children.

Pools of blood stained pavement and two of the empty trucks. UN spokesman Kees Sol said the fire apparently came from Bosnian Serb positions.

The airlift, which provides

about 80 per cent of the city's food, was suspended Saturday, just a day after it was restarted following a two week shutdown. Forces from both warring sides each fired on planes Friday but no one was injured, Sol said.

UN officials reached agreement Saturday with the Muslim-led Bosnian government and the Serbs on security at the airport, said another UN spokesman, Maj. Herve Gourmelon.

Angered over a NATO air strike on one of their tanks Sept. 22, Serb troops had blocked UN movements and kept the Sarajevo airport closed with threats to shoot at planes.

On Friday, Bosnian Serbs refused to give clearance for a convoy carrying nearly 100 tons of food to Sarajevo. The last food convoy to reach the Bosnian capital arrived the day

of the air strike.

Kris Janowski, a spokesman for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Sarajevo, said there were only enough rations in the city to last three days.

On Mount Igman, southwest of Sarajevo, peacekeepers cleared more than 500 Bosnian government soldiers out of a demilitarised zone near where 20 Serbs were killed Thursday in a commando raid, their throats apparently slit.

The Muslim-led government confirmed that its soldiers killed the Serbs in a commando attack.

A Bosnian Serb leader, furious over the slayings, demanded the UN prove its impartiality by punishing the government.

UN spokesman Paul Risley said in Zagreb, Croatia, that the Bosnian Serbs said they would answer by Wednesday whether they will keep cooperating with the United Nations.

The Wednesday deadline made UN officials anxious to get as much aid into Sarajevo as possible in case the airport again shuts down UN officials are dependent on Serb assurances of safety to work in Serb-held Bosnia and in Serb-surrounded Sarajevo.

Bosnian government officials also attacked the United Nations, citing the snipping attack as another example of its alleged inaction.

The Bosnian war began in April, 1992, when Serbs rebelled against a decision to secede from Serb-dominated Yugoslavia. About 200,000 people are dead or missing.

Off the Record

Death threat for ignoring passionate letters

DENVER, Colorado: A woman obsessed with congressman Joseph Kennedy threatened to kill him after he ignored her passionate letters she wrote him, a court was told here, reports AP.

Melissa Reely, 27, admitted Friday making the threats, saying she had fallen in love with Kennedy, 42, when she lived in Boston, Massachusetts.

After waiting for two months for a response to her letters, she wrote, "I am going to kill you... you have ruined my life."

She would "blow up your whole family," Reely said, before writing the next day, "I do not want to kill you. I have been obsessed."

She is liable to a sentence of up to five years in jail and a fine of 250,000 dollars.

Kennedy is the son of Robert Kennedy, late brother of former President John F. Kennedy. He is running in Massachusetts for re-election to the house of representatives next month.

Booker prize dull, obscure?

LONDON: The contenders for Britain's top literary prize, no stranger to controversy in 25 tumultuous years, have been accused this year of being dull, obscure and unsaleable, reports Reuter.

The shortlist for the 20,000 pound (30,000 dollars) Booker prize faced brickbats from critics and even bookmakers, who usually take hefty bets on the result, said gamblers were bored stiff.

In the run-up to Tuesday's announcement, booksellers report flagging sales of the six shortlisted books that range from a tale of homosexual love to the saga of a Sri Lankan houseboy.

"Our members say sales have been disappointing. This is not a classic year," said Gill Cronin, marketing executive at the booksellers' association.

Graham Sharpe, spokesman at bookmakers William Hill, said: "Bet on the Booker is at its lowest ebb for five years and most of the blame for that can be placed at the door of the critics who panned the shortlist for being so boring."

"This year it seems as if anything commercial has been deliberately excluded," complained a spokesman for the Dillons bookshops chain.

'Courteous Driving Day'

BRUSSELS, Belgium: Teams of young people took up position Saturday at road junctions around Belgium urging drivers to say sorry to fellow road users instead of blasting them with the horn, reports AP.

The youngsters distributed cards reading "sorry" and "after you" which drivers should wave from their cars as part of a nationwide "Courteous Driving Day".

The campaign, sponsored by an insurance company, aims not only to cut down noise generated by irate drivers, but also to reduce one of Western Europe's highest road-accident fatality rates.

European Union statistics published this week, showed a yearly death rate from road accidents of 45 people for every 100,000 vehicles in Belgium.

Within the 12-nation EU, only Portugal, Greece and Ireland had higher rates.

LTTE attacks cargo ship 4 days before peace talks

COLOMBO, Oct 9: Tamil rebels exploded mines on the hull of a docked government cargo ship Sunday, and 16 crew members were rescued just before it sank, the military said, reports AP.

The attack came only four days before government officials and the insurgents are scheduled to hold the first round of peace talks in four years in Sri Lanka's brutal ethnic civil war.

The ship also was the first cargo vessel to be attacked in the 11 year insurgency, and that could put pressure on Sri Lanka's new government to delay its planned negotiations with the rebels.

The mines planted on the hull of the Ocean Trader merchant vessel exploded about 4:30 a.m. (2:00 GMT Saturday) as it sat in anchor at the Vellaikeermi military base in

northern Sri Lanka, military officials in Colombo said on condition of anonymity.

The ship was chartered by the state commissioner general of essential services to supply food to the 800,000 civilians in the rebel-held Jaffna Peninsula. Navy vessels rescued the crewmen.

The 1,400 ton vessel operated by Goodwill Marine Ltd of Colombo, was 295 kilometers (180 miles) north of Colombo.

Sri Lanka partially lifted an economic embargo on Jaffna Peninsula in August, but government ships still carry most of the food the areas receives because guerrillas block the main roads.

The cargo ships often carry International Committee of the Red Cross officials, the only relief agency in the area.