

**BRIEFLY**



Picture dated May 22, 1993 of French film director Louis Malle and his wife, American actress Candice Bergen attending the Cannes International Film Festival. Louis Malle has died in California at the age of 63, his spokesman said on Friday. He had been undergoing treatment for lymphoma. — AFP/UNB photo

**Aristide to remain in office:**

Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide on Friday endorsed a proposal that he should remain in office for three more years, but said he wanted more talks with Haiti's business elite and rival political parties before reaching a decision. Reuter reports from Port-Au-Prince. "If you want three more years, I will walk with you," Aristide told several hundred delegates from a national conference held this week to discuss Haiti's political, economic and social problems.

**Earthquake rocks Russia:**

An earthquake measuring up to 8.5 on the Richter Scale rocked Russia's far eastern Sakhalin region on Friday night. ITAR-Tass news agency reported yesterday. Reuter reports from Moscow. It quoted preliminary information from the Emergency Situations Ministry as saying there were no casualties or damage.

**Plane crash kills 6 in Brazil:**

A small cesana-210 plane slammed into two moving cars on an avenue in the northern district of Sao Paulo shortly after take off Friday, killing all six people aboard, firefighters said. AFP reports from Rio de Janeiro. The plane exploded and burst into flames as it rammed into the cars but a taxi driver and other passengers in the vehicles managed to escape unharmed, they said.

**One in 92 has AIDS in US:**

One in 92 American men between the ages of 27 and 39 has AIDS, a ratio that climbs to one in 33 among black men in the same age group, according to a recent study published in the weekly magazine science, AFP reports from Washington. The study said between 630,000 to 897,000 Americans were suffering from Acquired Immune Deficiency syndrome as of early 1993. The disease claimed 227,000 lives between the 1970s and January 1993.

**Strong quake shakes Japan:**

An earthquake measuring 6.6 on the Richter scale jolted east and south Hokkaido, Japan's northernmost island at about 02.24am (1724 GMT) early yesterday, the meteorological agency said, Reuter reports from Tokyo. There were no immediate reports of casualties or damage. The epicentre was off the coast near Otorofu island, one of the four disputed islands east of Hokkaido claimed by both Russia and Japan. No tidal waves were caused by the tremor, the agency said.

**Mahathir won't take action against foreign press**

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 25: Prime Minister Mahathir Mahamad said on Friday he did not plan any punitive action against the foreign press in Malaysia, despite its "dirty tricks" to destabilise his government," reports Reuter. "They are trying to put me against my deputy. They publish pictures of me looking the other side when 'I'm with my deputy, Mahathir told a news conference after opening the annual meeting of his United Malays National Organisation (UMNO). "Why must they use these dirty tricks?" said Mahathir. He did not single out any publishing house. Foreign and local media have been speculating since last year the Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim would challenge Mahathir for the presidency of UMNO next year to become prime minister. But Anwar, who is UMNO deputy president, has categorically denied this and publicly closed ranks with Mahathir. Mahathir said instead of appreciating this deputy's actions, the foreign press had speculated the two leaders had struck a pact. UMNO's powerful youth wing warned on Thursday that the foreign press could be banned for its lies. If the foreign media continues with its derogatory reports, we will press for the closure of foreign media offices in Malaysia said acting youth wing chief Nazri Aziz. Mahathir, has expressed hopes of Malaysia becoming a regional media centre.

**Tigers attack Lankan troops with gas in Jaffna : 84 killed**

COLOMBO, Nov 25: Tamil Tiger guerrillas attacked Sri Lankan troops with gas in the rebel citadel of Jaffna, triggering heavy fighting that left at least four soldiers and 80 rebels dead, the government said today, reports AFP. Guerrillas of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) used an unspecified gas while attempting to infiltrate army lines at Ariyalai near Jaffna Town, in the country's north, late Friday in a sudden attack which lasted until early today. The defence ministry said in a statement that the nature of the gas was not known and it "did not cause a problem to troops as troops were well prepared for gas attacks." It said LTTE radios moni-

tored after the attack showed that the guerilla group's intelligence chief known by his Nom De Guerre Pottu Amman and another top leader known as Balraj were in the area. It was the first LTTE gas attack on Sri Lankan troops since 1990 when the guerillas fired chlorine gas cylinders into a military camp near Batticaloa in the country's east. No one was killed in that attack. The statement said a large number of LTTE guerillas also attacked army units at Colombothurai, on the edge of Jaffna Town, besides Ariyalai with small arms, machine guns and rocket propelled grenades. It said the troops hit back very effectively... with small

arms, machine guns and artillery," forcing the Tigers to withdraw. It said four soldiers were killed in the fighting and put the LTTE's dead at least 80. Some 20 soldiers were also wounded. "It is clearly evident that the terrorists were making a desperate attempt to extricate their cadres trapped within Jaffna Town area," the military added. The attack came two days after thousands of Sri Lankan troops mounted a siege of Jaffna Town. Meanwhile, Tamil Tiger guerillas today slammed the Sri Lankan government for banning boat travel from their northern Jaffna stronghold to the mainland. The London office of the

Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) said in a statement that the ban announced on Wednesday was "an attempt of the government to contain and destroy the Tamil nation." The LTTE said the ban was meant to stop the movement of Tamils from Jaffna, in the island's northern tip, to the mainland. They (authorities) also have a vain hope that the ban on travel would afford a convenient target for their war planes to bomb and annihilate the Tamil people," the statement faxed here said. "The government has failed to realise that the ban would infuriate the people and swell the ranks of the LTTE who are the only protectors of the Tamil people," it added.

**Plan to balance budget in 7 years White House rejects Republican demands**

WASHINGTON, Nov 25: The White House on Friday rejected demands by Republican leaders in Congress that it produce a plan to balance the budget in seven years, saying the confrontational approach would only lead to "gridlock," reports Reuter. President Bill Clinton's chief of staff, Leon Panetta, said in a letter to the leaders that the two sides should instead discuss in detail how to take into account the President's insistence on protecting medical care, education, the environment and fair taxation as part of a long-term plan. Panetta said the agreement between the two sides in their budget row last weekend, which ended a six-day government shutdown,

called for doing two things simultaneously: "Balancing the budget in seven years and protecting the key priorities the President has laid out." "Right now, neither of our balanced budget plans satisfies both objectives. Now we must work together in a good faith effort to see if it is possible to meet all of the commitments contained in the continuing resolution (that reopened the government)." The letter responded to one from House of Representatives Speaker Newt Gingrich, Senate majority leader Bob Dole, House budget committee chairman John Kasich and Senate budget committee chairman Pete Domenici.

**Diana to spend Christmas with royal family**

LONDON, Nov 25: Princess Diana will spend Christmas with the rest of the royal family at the traditional gathering at Sandringham, Buckingham Palace announced on Friday, just days after her tell-all interview with the BBC, reports AFP. The palace said the princess herself decided to bring Crown Prince William, 13, and Harry, 11, to spend the holiday with Queen Elizabeth II at Sandringham, in Norfolk, although previously Diana intended to take them elsewhere. "The arrangements agreed by the Prince and Princess of Wales are that the two Princes, William and Harry, spend Christmas with each of their parents in alternate years," a palace spokesman said. In recent years, the princess has spent Christmas with members of her own family or with friends.



Britain's Princess Diana speaks with Argentine President Carlos Menam on Friday during her visit to the presidential residence in Buenos Aires. Princess Diana is on a four-day working visit to Argentina. — AFP/UNB photo

**Indian goods being smuggled into Lanka**

NEW DELHI, Nov 25: Medicines and food worth thousands of dollars are being smuggled daily from India to Sri Lanka's war-ravaged Jaffna Peninsula, the stronghold of Tamil separatists, the Press Trust of India said today, reports AFP. The news agency quoted unnamed intelligence officials as saying in Rameswaram town in southern Tamil Nadu State that huge consignments of other "essential items" such as candles and matches were also being smuggled on boats. They did not, however, indicate the volume of the illegal trade.

**Peace deal implementation will be a test for NATO: Bosnia**

THE HAGUE, Nov 25: Bosnian Foreign Minister Mohamed Sacirbey warned on Friday that implementation of a peace accord in Bosnia will be a test for the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), reports AFP. "Bosnia is a test for NATO. NATO will succeed in Bosnia if Bosnia survives," Sacirbey said in remarks at the start of the second day of the Global Panel, an annual socio-economic forum. Sacirbey said it was important to "encourage NATO and all the Western countries to think of Bosnia as an integral part of the Western defence umbrella."

"To bring peace to the region one must start with Bosnia," the foreign minister said, adding: Without stability, without prosperity, without peace in Bosnia, there will be no peace in the region and, by extension, there will be no peace in Europe. "Our government, we believe, represents an open society, democracy, tolerance and economic accountability on the free market system," he said, adding that his government feared that the Bosnian Serbs would "seek to perpetuate war and instability in order to stay in power." Commenting on war criminals whom the UN Tribunal

for the Former Yugoslavia has indicted, Sacirbey said: "It is important to bring war criminals to justice." Congratulating chief prosecutor Richard Goldstone and the tribunal's judges for their commitment to justice, Sacirbey said: "I would like to hear the same commitment from the capitals who support the work of the tribunal." Set up in the Hague two years ago, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia has indicted 52 people — including top Bosnian Serb civilian and military leaders Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic.

**Sihanouk donates \$ 10,000 for Sirviyudh's family**

PHNOM PENH, Nov 25: Cambodia's King Norodom Sihanouk has donated 10,000 dollar to support the three traumatised children of his half brother Prince Norodom Sirviyudh who was arrested earlier this week, according to the prince's wife, reports Reuter. Sirviyudh's French wife, Christine Norodom, said that Sihanouk and Queen Monineath had kept in close contact with the family since the arrest of the prince on Tuesday in connection with an alleged plot to kill second Prime Minister Hun Sen. "They were terribly upset and expressed great concern for my family. The king and queen have formally donated 10,000 dollar to help the children out of it all," Christine Norodom told Reuters on Friday.



A petrol dealer waits for customers near the Vatin border crossing to Romania, 100 km from Belgrade on Friday as the first cargo transports entered Serbia after the suspension of United Nations sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro. The price of petrol dropped sharply with the first legal delivery to Belgrade on Thursday. — AFP/UNB photo

**Russia to buy missiles, bombers from Ukraine**

MOSCOW, Nov 25: Russia will buy 32 intercontinental SS-19 missiles and 44 long-range strategic bombers from Ukraine, Russian military officials said Friday, Interfax News Agency reported, says AFP. "The purchase of the missiles will allow the maintaining of Russia's nuclear potential at necessary levels until 2009," General Igor Sergeev, Commander of Russian strategic forces, was quoted as saying. Russian Air Force Chief General Pyotr Denikin, quoted by Interfax, said Russia had decided to buy 19 Tupolev-160 bombers from Ukraine and 25 Tupolev-95 MS bombers, all of them capable of carrying nuclear weapons. Denikin said Russia would also get more than 300

cruise missiles, which have a shorter range. Vladimir Belashov, head of disarmament issues at the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry, told AFP that the 44 planes represented Ukraine's entire strategic bomber fleet and that the cruise missiles were carried by the planes. The sale — neither Russian nor Ukrainian officials would say how much money was involved — came after a year of negotiations that dragged on because Russia was not offering enough. Belashov said. The agreement was reached in the Russian Black Sea resort of Sochi during negotiations between Russian and Ukrainian officials that also touched on future ownership of the Soviet-era Black Sea naval fleet, which is based in Ukraine.

**100,000 Chinese may be infected with HIV positive**

BEIJING, Nov 25: AIDS sufferers suffer ignorance and discrimination in China where experts recently admitted that as many as 100,000 people could be HIV positive, reports AFP. Decrying a lack of tolerance towards people infected with the Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus (HIV) that leads to AIDS, the Workers Daily today cited a case of two sisters and a brother who were wounded out of their work and home. The three, from the eastern province of Anhui, had found jobs in the same factory in southern China, the newspaper said. However, after a random blood test of employees showed all three were HIV positive.

**ROK to enact law to punish masterminds of Kwangju massacre**

SEOUL, Nov 25: In a stunning policy turnaround, South Korean President Kim Young-Sam on Friday said he would enact a special law to punish masterminds of the bloody crackdown on a 1980 pro-democracy uprising, reports AFP. The move paves the way for his predecessors, general-turned-president Roh Tae-Woo and Chun Doo-Hwan to be tried for their alleged role in the 1980 massacre in the city of Kwangju, which left at least 200 dead. "Under the special law, those involved in the killing will be indicted and punished," secretary general Kang Sam-Jae of the ruling Democratic Liberal Party (DLP) said, announcing the decision after a meeting with

Kim Young-Sam. "I understand Chun and Roh are included among those held responsible," he said of the DLP's decision to kick off procedures to submit the law to the DLP-controlled National Assembly next month. The announcement came as Kim Young-Sam, a former dissident, sought to sever ties with the two disgraced former military rulers once and for all. An opposition MP said that the president was "bolting his hunting dogs to eat after the hunt is over," noting that the two had helped Kim Young-Sam win the 1992 presidential election over opposition leader Kim Dae-Jung. Public anger against Roh

and his predecessor Chun is running deep after Roh was jailed on Thursday last week on charges of milking millions dollars from businesses while in office from 1988 to 1993. Roh's predecessor Chun lives in retirement in Seoul, continually harassed by demonstrators demanding his arrest. The decision was largely welcomed by the opposition and human rights activists, but a former general involved in the crackdown voiced strong objections, calling the law "retroactive and unconstitutional." "The new law would be retroactive, which is unconstitutional," said Park Jun-Byong, a retired general who commanded the 20th divi-

sion during the massacre and stands to face punishment. Park, now a lawmaker, recently left the DLP and joined a conservative opposition group. A ruling party lawmaker Chung Ho-Yong, a former defence and home minister who headed the vilified special forces command during the massacre, also faces trial. Main opposition National Congress for New Politics leader Kim Dae Jung welcomed the decision but added that a politically neutral special prosecutor must be appointed for the new law to be effective. The massacre survivors were sceptical. Let's wait and see — we'll believe it when we see it," Kim Sun-Kwon, a member of

the Kwangju Injured Victims Association told AFP. Friday's decision was a shock reversal by Kim Young-Sam, who has until now urged South Koreans to leave judgment of Chun and Roh "to history" for the same of national unity. The Kwangju incident has haunted his government because of Roh and Chun, and has marred Kim Young-Sam's credibility as the country's first civilian president. Since Kim took over from Roh in 1993, students and activists have repeatedly clashed with riot police, charging that Kim was sheltering Roh and Chun. Kang quoted Kim Young-Sam as saying the two generals had "disgraced the nation and the people and tarnished

**Rafsanjani welcomes Bosnian peace deal**

TEHRAN, Nov 25: Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani welcomed the Bosnia peace deal, but complained that the rights of the Bosnian Muslims had not been totally respected, reports AFP. "We must support the establishment of peace in Bosnia... but we think that the rights of the Muslims have not been wholly honoured," he told state television late Friday. It was the first reaction from senior Iranian official to the agreement signed last Tuesday by the Presidents of Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia in the United States. The accord was earlier described here as a "reward to Serbian aggression."

**Off the Record**

**The question is — Does Diana know Spanish?**

BUENOS AIRES: The mother of an Argentine sailor killed by the British during the 1982 Falklands War hurled insults at Princess Diana on Friday on the second day of her visit, witnesses said, reports Reuter. "Bitch you bitch," the woman shouted as Diana was entering a hospital as part of her charity visit. "You daughter of a thousand whores." The woman, in her seventies, appeared to go into shock and was escorted by police into the hospital for treatment. She was released soon afterwards and left on her own. Speaking in Spanish, she told reporters waiting for Diana's arrival that her son was one of the 300 men aboard the General Belgrano, Sunk by a British task force during the Falklands War. Diana, invited to Argentina by a charity, has otherwise been warmly welcomed.

**Poor kid!**

RALEIGH NC: A three-year-old boy was attacked by his family's pet Bengal tiger on Thanksgiving Day and spent 14 hours in an operating room as surgeons treated him for severe head and face wounds, officials said on Friday, reports Reuter. Tyler William Forsythe was in critical condition at Wake Medical Centre's pediatric intensive care unit after emerging from surgical procedures to repair damage to his nerves and eyes. He also required emergency plastic surgery. He did not lose an eye but it's really to soon to say what kind of function he will recover, hospital spokeswoman Liz McRoberts said.

Police say the boy was attacked by a year old 350 pound (0.159 kg) tiger that the family bought last summer from a pet dealer in Goddards North Carolina. The boy's father, Mark Forsythe, kept the declared tiger in a pen near a relative's house outside the Raleigh suburb of Apex and took his three children there to see the animal on Thursday afternoon.

**She's doing fine without knickers**

LIMA: Peruvian lawmaker and former actress Susy Diaz said Friday that she doesn't wear panties (knickers) because they are uncomfortable and give her colds, reports AFP. "When I wear panties, they crawl up and I feel like I am being raped," she said. "That's why I'm sitting with my legs crossed because some other legislators look down on me." Diaz said that she began going without panties when she was just a girl, and that people should not judge her on her underwear — or lack of it. "I have come to work, with panties or without them, for the poorest people in Peru for the people who voted for me, and I believe that I will not let them down."