

**BRIEFLY**

**Pak army officer hanged**

A Pakistani army officer convicted of multiple murder was hanged yesterday at the central prison in southern Hyderabad city, officials said. Reuter reports from Hyderabad.

Captain Arshad Jameel, 34, was executed after President Farooq Leghari and General Jehangir Karamat, the army chief of staff, rejected appeals for clemency, they said. A field court martial on October 31, 1992 convicted Jameel of killing nine villagers from Tando Bahawal, near Hyderabad, after raiding the village on June 5 that year during an army operation in Sindh province.

**Road mishap claims 11 in India**

Eleven persons, including three women and a two-year-old child, were killed and five others seriously injured in a head-on collision between a jeep and a trailer near village Shinde on the Nasik-Pune road, about 10 kms from Nasik Sunday evening, PTI reports from Nasik.

According to police, the collision occurred when the driver of the trailer, which was on its way to Pune, lost control of the vehicle. Police said five people died on the spot and six on way to the hospital.

**24 students held in Seoul**

Police yesterday swooped on a Seoul University campus and arrested 24 radical student leaders wanted for their role in a violent pro-unification demonstration in August, AFP reports from Seoul.

Some 2,000 police were mobilised for the late-morning raid on the Sejong University in eastern Seoul where the 24 key cadres of the Federation of Student Council were holding a secret meeting in a basement, police said.

**Fossilised forest found in China**

Chinese geologists have found a 3.8-square kilometre (1.52 square mile) fossilised forest under the Gobi desert, Xinhua reported yesterday, says AFP from Beijing.

The 150-million-year-old forest, comprising Ginkgo and Birch trees and other primeval plants, was discovered after heavy wind erosion in the Gobi desert revealed a section of the giant fossil. Although palaeontologists have already uncovered evidence that the inhospitable Gobi — which runs from northwest China's Xinjiang region into Central Asia — was once a fertile basin, the fossilised forest is the largest piece of proof yet.

**Palestinian boy beaten to death in Israel**

A 10-year-old Palestinian boy whose father said was beaten by a Jewish settler died in a Jerusalem hospital yesterday, Israel radio said. Reuter reports from Jerusalem.

Police said Hilmi Shosa collapsed while being chased by the security chief of a Jewish settlement near the West Bank town of Bethlehem on Sunday and there were no external signs on his body that he had been beaten. The radio said he died of his wounds after remaining in critical condition overnight. The security officials were arrested.

**Gaddafi to visit Tunisia**

Libyan leader Moammar Gaddafi planned to head Monday to Tunisia, a sympathetic neighbour working quietly to free its North African neighbour of UN sanctions, AP reports from Tunis.

Gaddafi was coming to Tunis, the capital, for meetings with President Zine el Abidine Ben Ali on a visit the Libyan chief described as one "of brotherhood and of work." A Tunisian diplomatic source, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Tunisia was making "constant efforts" to ease the international community's isolation of Libya.

**Mild quakes shake Japan**

A series of earthquakes registering up to 4.7 on the Richter Scale shook Japan's Izu group of islands, south of Tokyo, yesterday the Meteorological Agency said, AFP reports from Tokyo.

There were no immediate reports of damage or injuries, police said. Epicenters of the quakes were located in the sea near Nijima and Kozushima Island, part of the Izu Islands, about 130 kilometres (93 miles) south of central Tokyo.

**4 of a family killed in El Salvador**

Four members of a peasant family were killed and three others seriously wounded in an attack by masked gunmen in a rural village, a week after a similar massacre, police said Sunday, AP reports from San Salvador.

A police report said the Salazar Flores family were attacked Friday night in the village of El Tempisque, about 45 miles (70 kilometres) west of San Salvador in Sonsonate province.

**US asks Bosnia to cut military links to Iran**

SARAJEVO, Oct 28: Bosnia must cut its military links to Tehran or risk losing out on a massive US weapons shipment, a senior US official said Sunday, reports AP.

James Pardew, President Clinton's special envoy for military stabilisation in the Balkans, said Bosnia must decide between Iran and the United States as a key military partner.

The armaments valued at around 100 million dollars were scheduled to be unloaded at the Croatian port of Ploce last Friday, but the United States halted the delivery pending Bosnian compliance with a number of demands.

A central issue is Washington's insistence on the resignation of the Bosnian federation's deputy defence minister, Hasan Cengic, whom the Americans suspect of continued close ties to Iran.

In an interview with Bosnia state-run television, Pardew did not comment on Cengic personally, but said, "What we are concerned about are the military and intelligence ties" between Iran and Bosnia.

Pardew said he understood that Iran had assisted Bosnia during the 1992-95 war, but it

was now time for Sarajevo to cut all military ties with Tehran.

"If you choose Iran, the United States is not willing to move forward," he said.

"We in the United States are very sensitive about Iran," Pardew said. "That is a very emotional issue in my country, and you have a choice here concerning your security relationship."

Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic has confirmed that the US State Department wants a Muslim cleric, ousted but claims this is because of his lack of cooperation and not due to any links he may have with Tehran.

Izetbegovic also said that the US was pushing for the dismissal of Vladimir Soljic, the Muslim-Croat federation's defence minister, who is a Croat.

Bosnia and the United States have so far failed to resolve outstanding difficulties, and talks may be set up in Washington later this week, said a Bosnian official who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The Sarajevo daily Oslobodjenje on Sunday likened US conditions on delivery of the weapons to an 'ultimatum' of 'Cengic or the tanks.'

**During 1996 fiscal year 67,000 illegal immigrants deported from US**

LOS ANGELES, Oct 28: The US Immigration and Naturalisation Service deported a record 67,000 illegal immigrants in fiscal 1996, a 34 per cent increase over 1995, as part of a continuing government campaign to crack down on illegal immigrants, the Los Angeles Times reported today, reports Reuter.

It said in California, deportations of illegal immigrants jumped about 50 per cent to 30,000 during the fiscal year that ended on September 30.

The daily said the INS was expected to announce its year-end deportation report on Tuesday, at a time when Republican presidential contender Bob Dole is aggressively criticising President Bill Clinton for doing

too little to crack down on illegal immigration.

The Los Angeles Times said it got the INS figures in advance from a Clinton administration official who asked not to be identified.

Dole attacked Clinton and stressed the emotional issues of immigration and affirmative action on Sunday as he made an all-out effort in the key state of California ahead of the November 5 presidential election.

Dole criticised Clinton for not doing enough to police California's borders and underlined his support for a controversial ballot initiative to end affirmative action in state hiring, contracting and school admissions.

**Gowda ready to talk to 7 northeastern states' insurgent groups**

NEW DELHI, Oct 28: India is prepared to talk to the scores of insurgent groups in the country's north-east, Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda said in remarks published today, reports AFP.

Deve Gowda said in Guwahati City late Sunday at the end of a six-day tour of the region that he wanted to meet the insurgents to know and understand their "legitimate grievances."

"I am giving an open invitation to individuals, including militants, without any pre-conditions to meet me to discuss their legitimate grievances," The Asian Age and other newspapers quoted him as saying.

"I genuinely wish to understand their point of view and what exactly is troubling them," he told reporters.

Deve Gowda said the seven states in the northeast, bordering Tibet, Bangladesh and Myanmar, suffered from lack of investment, mainly due to unending tribal and separatist violence.

"This has set in a vicious circle of terrorism... leading to growing unemployment which in turn provided recruits to militancy," he said. "The only way out of unemployment or militancy is massive economic development."

There was no immediate response from any of the insurgent groups.



Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak (R) looks at Israeli former Prime Minister Shimon Peres (L) who speaks to reporters after their talks in Sharm el-Sheikh in Sinai Sunday. "The Israeli people, like people in Egypt and other countries want peace", Peres said.— AFP/UNB photo

**BJP rules out alliance with BSP to form UP govt**

NEW DELHI, Oct 28: Hindu nationalists have ruled out an alliance with a party of "untouchables" and instead decided to try forming a government on their own in India's most populous state, newspapers said today, reports AFP.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian People's Party) said it would not team up with the party of Hindu "untouchables," known as BSP, despite informal talks on power sharing in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh.

"There have been informal exchanges, but I do not see these materialising," BJP president Lal Krishna Advani told the Pioneer newspaper.

"We would like to be invited to form the government in Uttar Pradesh," he said. "Otherwise we should be ready for another election." Uttar Pradesh has been put under New Delhi's direct rule after elections to the state assembly in September-

October produced a split verdict.

The Hindu nationalist BJP finished as the single largest party in the assembly with 174 seats, but far short of 213 members required to claim office on its own.

Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda's United Front coalition was the runner-up while a two-party alliance led by the "untouchables" outfit BSP took the third spot with 100 seats.

No single party or alliance has 213 seats to form a government.

The front has refused to join hands with the BSP, while the latter's bid to form a government with BJP's help have now been dashed by Advani for the first time.

The BJP, the main opposition party in the country, has accused Prime Minister Deve Gowda of pressuring Uttar Pradesh Governor Romesh Bhandari not to give a chance to the Hindu nationalists to form a government.

**Pakistan to boycott meet signalling sharp differences over move Regional conference on Afghan crisis begins in Tehran today**

ISLAMABAD, Oct 28: Pakistan on Sunday announced a boycott of a regional conference Iran is hosting this week to seek a solution to the Afghan crisis, signalling sharp differences over the move between the two Islamic neighbours, reports Reuter.

A Foreign Ministry spokesman, quoted by the official AFP news agency, said Pakistan would not attend the meeting, due to begin in Tehran on Tuesday, owing to "shortage of time and lack of clarity about the agenda and proposed list of invitees."

He said Pakistan had received "confirmed information" about the proposed two-day conference only on Friday.

"Pakistan had already maintained that only those countries which were directly concerned with the welfare of Afghanistan should attend any conference of neighbouring or regional countries and such a conference should follow rather than precede an intra-Afghan dialogue," the spokesman said.

He did not elaborate, but Pakistan's objection to the list

of invitees seemed to be directed against the inclusion of its neighbouring arch-foe India among them.

An Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman, quoted by Tehran's state news agency IRNA, said on Friday that Russia, India, Pakistan, China, Saudi Arabia and the Central Asian states would attend the conference.

Also invited are the European Union and the 52 nation Organisation of Islamic Conference, of which both Iran and Pakistan are members.

Pakistan is averse to giving any role to India in the Afghan problem on the grounds that it does not share borders with Afghanistan and had not opposed the Soviet occupation there.

Pakistan and Iran have been working closely together in diplomatic moves over Afghanistan during 17 years of civil war there, but differences appeared between them after the emergence of the Taliban Islamic movement as a new factor in Afghan politics.

Pakistan's objections to the Tehran conference is most open expression of the differences, which both sides have tried to play down in the past.

Iran's media have accused Pakistan of setting up the Sunni Muslim Taliban with backing from the United States and funding from Saudi Arabia to counter the Shi'ite Muslim Iran's influence in the region.

Pakistan denies the charge and says it has no favourites among the Afghan factions, most of whom it helped during their guerrilla war against Soviet occupation in the 1980s.

AP adds: Shortly after midnight Monday fighter jets roared over Kabul dropping three bombs in the area of the airport on the northwestern edge of the city.

There were no immediate reports of injured and because of a night time curfew no one was outside.

Two bombs landed near the airport, and the third a cluster bomb that sends hundreds of tiny shards of shrapnel everywhere, landed on the runway, according to airport workers.

This was the third bombing raid in as many days by anti-Taliban forces arrayed against Kabul's new hardline religious rulers. There have been no reports of any casualties.

Except for one bomb that landed in a park in the centre of Kabul, the bombs have been landing in the vicinity of Kabul's combined military and civilian hospital.

Early on Monday airport workers were sweeping the shrapnel from the runway before opening it for traffic. A United Nations plane was expected to arrive in Kabul later in the day.

Fighter jets belonging to northern warlord Rashid Dostum have been making the bombing raids over Kabul. His jets also bombed the city on Sunday and late on Saturday.

His soldiers also are battling the Taliban Islamic army on a second front in western Afghanistan. Dostum's spokesman at his stronghold in northern Mazar-e-Sharif said the Taliban was pushed out of western Badghis provincial capital.

**Tutsi fighters advance on Zairian town of Bukavu**



A Zairean family, who fled Goma in eastern Zaire, enters Rwanda at Mutura border crossing, some 86 km north of Giseni, Sunday. An estimated four to ten thousands Rwandan and Zairian refugees fleeing violence in eastern Zaire were heading to Mutura Sunday.

CYANGUGU, Rwanda, Oct 28: Ethnic Tutsi fighters advanced Sunday on the eastern Zairian town of Bukavu, trading mortar and small arms fire with Zairian defenders in the most serious fighting in months in the heart of Africa, reports AP.

The governor of South Kivu province appealed by radio to residents of the provincial capital to remain in their homes at the south end of Lake Kivu.

But the fighting sent thousands of panicking residents fleeing west and north as Zairian troops clashed with Tutsi fighters, known as

Banyamulenge, positioned only five kilometers (three miles) south of town.

Rwandan soldiers in positions near Cyangugu just across the border exchanged fire with Zairian troops until a thunderstorm struck.

Two hundred kilometres (125 miles) from Bukavu at the northern end of Lake Kivu, another 200,000 refugees were fleeing Kibumba camp after an attack that reportedly left four people dead and another 100 wounded.

Kibumba, the second largest

refugee camp in the Goma region, was hit by a barrage of artillery fire and mortars on Friday and again on Saturday, the UN aid agency said in a statement.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Sadako Ogata called on combatants Sunday to stop attacking refugees and to open humanitarian corridors for those caught in fighting.

"What hurts me most are reports that women and children are again caught in this terrible tragedy," Ogata said in a state-

ment. "The first refugees to reach the hospital in Goma after the attacks this weekend were 36 women and children, all of them suffering from shrapnel wounds."

"There was one report of a woman giving birth along the road to Goma," she said.

The fighting along Zaire's eastern border with Burundi and Rwanda, spared until now by power struggles between Hutus and Tutsis in which other groups have gotten involved, threatens to destabilize the Great Lakes region.

**US steps up pressure on Israel, PA to wrap up deal on Hebron**

JERUSALEM, Oct 28: The United States stepped up pressure on Israel and the Palestinians to wrap up a deal on a partial Israeli troop pullout from the West Bank town of Hebron, reports Reuter.

US President Bill Clinton telephoned both Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat on Sunday to urge them to clinch an agreement.

US peace mediator Dennis Ross also met the two leaders to try to conclude three weeks of negotiations.

"Ross told Israel and the PLO that if they don't reach an agreement tonight (Sunday night), he's leaving for home tomorrow," a senior Palestinian official told Reuters.

The official, who asked not to be identified, said Israeli army chief Amnon Shahak

would meet top negotiators from the Palestine Liberation Organisation for a late-night session.

Netanyahu has insisted on modifying security arrangements set in a redeployment deal which Israel's previous Labour-led government signed with the PLO last year. About 400 Jewish settlers live in enclaves in Hebron among 100,000 Palestinians.

Arafat, speaking earlier after two hours of talks with Ross in Gaza, said it was unclear when he would meet Netanyahu to seal a deal on Hebron security arrangements to pave the way for a troop redeployment delayed since March.

"I don't know yet," Arafat replied when asked by reporters if he would meet Netanyahu before leaving on Monday on a tour of Norway, Finland, Ire-

land and Spain expected to last for several days.

"Just now I was with Dennis Ross who is continuing his role as a partner in this mediation between US and the Israelis and we hope we will get something tonight, or tomorrow or this week," he said.

Arafat said he had received telephone calls from Clinton and from Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Jordan's King Hussein who had all stressed their desire for a speedy agreement.

Netanyahu aide Dore Gold describing Arafat's planned departure on Monday as a "deadline," told Israeli army radio that Ross wanted to return to the United States. The mediator almost left for home last week but changed his mind on the way to Tel Aviv airport when informed that progress had

been made.

In Washington, White House spokesman Mike McCurry said Clinton and spoken to Netanyahu and Arafat for about 10 minutes.

Clinton, he said, had encouraged them "to do everything they can to address the remaining issues relating to Oslo peace accords implementation and specifically security-related issues and the withdrawal from Hebron."

Asked why Clinton had taken the trouble to call both Arafat and Netanyahu, McCurry said: "They're down to some difficult issues... the issues are difficult because the concerns on both sides are deeply held."

Netanyahu then called Arafat amid speculation that they might meet at the Erez Crossing.

**Miss World contest begins in India in Nov amid fear of violence**

NEW DELHI, Oct 28: Next month, Miss World and India meet for their first date, reports AFP.

Some see it as the chance to see the world's most beautiful women others — if they are to be believed — see the contest as the perfect opportunity for arson, street fighting and protest suicides.

Feminists and beauty contests have rarely mixed well. The Bangalore event, however, appears to have ignited unprecedented passions.

The usual charges of exploitation and sexism made way for another common Indian complaint, that of Western cultural imperialism.

Then came the Mahila Jagaran (women's awareness) group. Its leader Sashikala,

raised the stakes by announcing the forum had drawn up a list of women ready to burn themselves outside the event finale on November 23.

Soon after, Uma Bharati, a member of the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian People's Party) was promising protests and violence.

"We will give our lives, we will take lives, but we will prevent the Miss World contest," she said.

The fire-and-brimstone threats so unnerved the organisers that they promptly switched the sensitive beach-view section to the Indian Ocean nation of the Seychelles.

New Delhi-based sociologist Ashish Nandi, however, is not convinced by the threats.

"Don't be taken in by the rhetoric," he says. "It's a storm in a teacup. Most of India's 930

million people are not bothered about Miss World.

The reactions have been extreme but that's south India. It's mechanical, it's in their character. Nobody can take it too seriously."

Brinda Karat, a member of India's Communist Party of India Marxist and a high-profile feminist, is even more scathing.

"It's a cheap publicity gimmick," she says.

Both she and Nandi, however, think the issues behind the protests are of fundamental importance.

Karat says: "The appearance of a woman in India is crucial, since marriage is seen as her only choice. The electronic media reinforces the stereotype in such stark and strong way.

"We are trying to get away from the prison of appearance."

"We feel doubtful on the real intention of the government. They offered an interim ceasefire and they attack Basilan," Murad said in an interview with Dxmms Radio.

**Death toll 281**

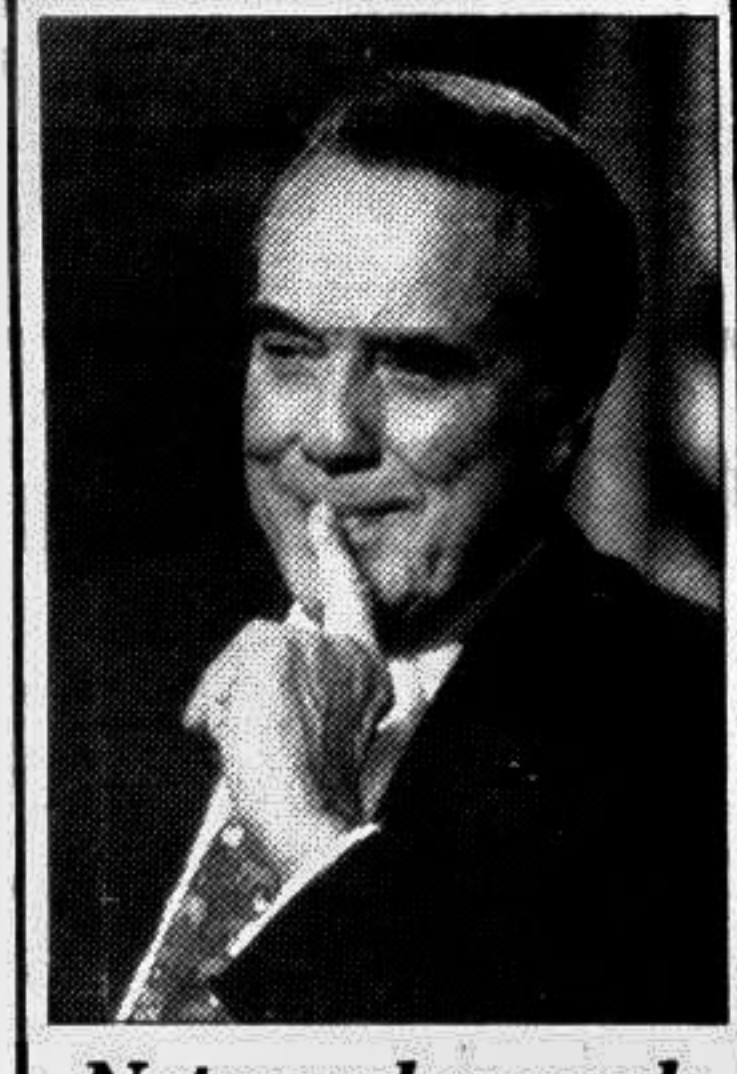
**8 more die of dengue fever in New Delhi**

NEW DELHI, Oct 28: An epidemic of dengue fever raging in the Indian capital has claimed eight more lives, pushing the death toll to 281, officials said today, reports AFP.

The latest casualties occurred Sunday when hospitals received 203 fresh cases of the mosquito-borne fever, health officials said here. The disease has affected at least 7,215 people in the past two months.

Sunday's deaths came two days after health officials claimed that the outbreak of dengue was on the wane in New Delhi, but warned it could spread to adjoining states.

**Off the Record**



**Not royal enough to win the White House**

LONDON: Republican candidate Bob Dole does not have enough royal genes in his ancestry to become the next president of the United States, a leading British genealogist said Sunday, reports Reuter.

"Senator Dole is not royal enough to win the White House," said Harold Brooks-Baker after Burke's peerage probed his background for any signs of blue-blooded ancestors.

The upper-class Bible for Britons checking on their family trees has researched the ancestry of every US president back to George Washington. It said the candidate with the most royal genes has always been the victor.

"President Clinton has the advantage in this election not only because he is related to the British royal family through (the 13th-century) Simon De Montfort but because he has a direct descendant from Robert I of France," Brooks-Baker said.

In a statement, he said Dole's sole link to the blood royal was to the 13th-century King Henry III of England through the Harrison family.

Through the family, Dole was also related to US president William Henry Harrison, noted for the longest inaugural speech in history delivered in Rain, sleet and snow. Harrison died four weeks after in 1841 from pneumonia.

**Yeltsin's former bodyguard relieved of military duties**

MOSCOW, Oct 28: President Boris Yeltsin signed an order on Sunday relieving his former chief bodyguard, Lt Gen Alexander Kozhakov, of military duties, Russian television reported, reports AP.

The report cited Kremlin officials and described the tone of Yeltsin's order as "harsh." The presidential press service did not return calls Sunday, and there was no confirmation from any other source.

Yeltsin fired Kozhakov in June following the first round of his race for re-election. At the time, Kozhakov was engaged in a bitter power struggle with a top Yeltsin campaign manager, Anatoly Chubais, who was later appointed the president's chief of staff.

**Indian troops kill 5 Bodos**

GUWAHATI, India, Oct 28: Indian soldiers shot dead at least five Bodo guerillas in a gunbattle in the northeastern state of Assam today a senior police official said, reports Reuter.

The shootout occurred in Baihata Chariati, some 20 km (12 miles) from the state capital of Guwahati, he told Reuters the gun-battle took place less than 12 hours after Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda rejected the Bodo tribesmen's demand for a separate province within Assam while on a six-day visit to the northeastern region.

**MILF threatens to withdraw from peace talks with Manila**

COTABATO, Philippines, Oct 28: A rebel Muslim faction today threatened to withdraw from peace talks with the Philippine government after a massive military assault on one of its bases, reports AFP.

Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) vice-chairman Al-Haj Murad criticised Manila's "twin approach" to bringing peace to the southern Philippines.

"We feel doubtful on the real intention of the government. They offered an interim ceasefire and they attack Basilan," Murad said in an interview with Dxmms Radio.