

International

BRIEFLY

Clinton to host EU leaders' summit

President Clinton will play host for the biannual US European Union summit on Dec. 16. White House spokesman Mike McCurry said Friday, AP reports from Washington.

Taking part in the White House summit will be Clinton, Irish Prime Minister John Bruton, the current president of the European Council, and Jacques Santer, president of the European Commission. The White House said the agenda will include situations and developments in Bosnia, Central Europe and the Middle East.

New US chief of staff named:

President Bill Clinton named Raskine Bowles, a former top White House aide, as his new chief of staff, replacing Leon Panetta, who has held the post since 1994, AP reports from Washington.

"He's combined brilliant business success and dedicated public service," Clinton said of Bowles, a North Carolina investment banker. He became my close friend and trusted adviser, Clinton said of Bowles, who was deputy chief of staff before returning to the private sector last year.

Suu Kyi accepts WCC invitation:

Myanmar's Opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi accepted an invitation Friday by the World Council of Churches to a meeting in Yangon next week, despite a recent clampdown on her activities by the ruling Junta, AP reports from Geneva.

WCC spokesman Park Kyung Seo said Aung San Suu Kyi had accepted the invitation to attend the November 15-16 roundtable discussion, which will be attended by Myanmar church delegates. He said the WCC had not asked the Myanmar leadership for authorisation before inviting the pro-democracy leader of their meeting, despite restrictions imposed on her activities in recent weeks.

Khmer commander gunned down:

A notorious Khmer Rouge commander believed to have ordered the murder of three Western hostages two years ago was gunned down by his own men in late October, recent defectors, including a top aide to the commander, said yesterday, AP reports from Sri Lanka.

Nuon Paet, who is wanted for the 1994 murders of Australian David Wilson, Briton Mark Slater and Frenchman Jean-Michel Braquet, was killed when seven of his bodyguards approached him to discuss defecting to the government side, the defectors said. "He refused and thought they had come to arrest him and turn him over to the government so he opened fire and killed three of the bodyguards and the other four shot back and killed him," said Lin Chhan, the deputy commander of Nuon Paet's Division 405.

14 hurt as Lankan troops open fire:

At least 12 bus passengers and two security personnel were wounded when troops mistook them for a Tamil guerrilla attack force and opened fire in eastern Sri Lanka, officials said, AP reports from Colombo.

Army troops had boarded a bus to take them back to their own camp in the district of Batticaloa after dusk Friday when their own colleagues thought they were Tiger rebels, officials said. "An army captain and another soldier in the bus were seriously wounded," a local official said. "Another 12 civilian passengers who suffered minor injuries were treated at a nearby hospital and sent home."

9 Peruvian volcanoes may reactivate:

Nine volcanoes in southern Peru could reactivate, posing a potential threat to residents in the region, Civil Defence National Institute authorities said yesterday, Xinhua reports from Lima.

Of the nine volcanoes, three are located in the Arequipa department, four in the departments of Moquegua and Tacna. And one each in the departments of Arequipa and Moquegua.

4 die as bridge collapses in China:

Four people died in the suburbs of Shanghai when a bridge collapsed on them as they travelled up the Liu river, according to reports reaching Beijing yesterday, AP reports from Shanghai.

The four were in a small boat moving under a 120-metre (400-foot) bridge near Tangxing town in Jiading district on November 6 when a sand-laden barge hit one of the bridge supports, causing it to collapse. The crew of the barge were not injured, and the case remains under investigation, according to the report from the November 8 edition of the Yangcheng Evening News.

Irish PM faces no-confidence move:

Opposition parties on Friday introduced a parliamentary motion of 'no confidence' in Prime Minister John Bruton and top officials after a bureaucratic blunder that resulted in the release and rearrest of Irish Republican Army suspects, AP reports from Dublin.

The Fianna Fail and Progressive Democrat parties said the actions of Bruton, Justice Minister Nora Owen and Attorney General Dermot Gleeson had undermined public confidence in the institutions of the Irish State. The motion is expected to be debated in the Dail, the Dublin parliament, next week. If the government loses the vote, it could lead to the government's resignation.

Taliban launch massive attack on alliance

KABUL, Nov 9: The Taliban Islamic militia said today it had dealt the forces of Afghanistan's anti-Taliban alliance a severe military blow on two fronts in the war-torn country, reports AP.

The militia's newly renamed Radio Shariat said Taliban forces launched a massive attack Thursday on alliance forces north of Kabul, killing 16 fighters and capturing a large stock of ammunition and two hill tops near Kabul's main military airport at Bagram.

In addition, the radio station said one of the members of the alliance, northern warlord General Abdul Rashid Dostam, had attacked Taliban Forces Thursday in the northwestern province of Badghis, triggering a counter-attack by the Taliban.

"Dostam's mercenary militia launched an attack against our Islamic forces which was pushed back," it said. "Later the Islamic army mounted their own attack on Dostam, dealing him a shattering blow."

No independent confirmation of the claims was possible. The anti-Taliban alliance, formed last month by a group of warring factions including Dostam and the government ousted from Kabul by the Taliban six weeks ago, is locked in battle with the Taliban on two main fronts.

The two sides are facing each other on frontlines north of the battered Afghan capital, as well as in Badghis, a mainly Dostam-held province which could be used as a springboard for an alliance attack on the neighbouring key Taliban province of Herat.

The report of heavy fighting north of Kabul — where the fronts are 20 and 40 kilometres (12 and 24 miles) from the city — came after a cald day on the fronts Friday.

The lines, which have hardly moved for two weeks, were stagnant Friday while only sporadic exchanges of heavy weapons fire took place between the opposing forces.

US officials have been optimistic about the outcome of the talks on Hebron but Clinton's remarks confirmed that the administration was committed to getting deal.

Concerning Iraq Clinton reaffirmed the US policy of containing Iraq but said Washing-

US outlines rules for foreign policy

WASHINGTON, Nov 9: President Bill Clinton called Friday for a rapid Israeli-Palestinian accord on Hebron and pursuing a tough line on Iraq as he outlined some of his immediate foreign policy goals, reports AP.

Clinton speaking at his first news conference since his re-election Tuesday said "the first and most important thing we can do is to nail the agreement on Hebron," Clinton said.

"If we can clear the Hebron hurdle it has such emotional significance to both sides as well as such practical significance I believe that will open the door to go on and fulfill all the other challenges that are before us."

Israel and the Palestinians are negotiating over Israel's long-delayed handover of Hebron and army redeployment

from most of the West Bank city where 400 Jewish settlers live among 120,000 Arab residents.

Under the terms of 1995 autonomy accords, Israel was to withdraw from four fifths of Hebron in March and hand the West Bank town over to Palestinian municipal control.

The sides were "very close to an agreement" before Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat travelled to Europe last month Clinton said suggesting that an agreement could come soon.

Clinton also suggested he may succumb to European pressure for US troops to stay in Bosnia as part of a new force that will replace the current 47,800 member peace Implementation Force (IFOR).

**Rwanda lines up behind plan for humanitarian intervention
UNSC adopts resolution to end crisis in Zaire**

UNITED NATIONS, Nov 9: The Security Council early today called on UN members to lay the groundwork for a multinational force to help end the crisis in eastern Zaire but postponed authorising its deployment until a later stage, reports Reuters.

The interim resolution asked the states involved to report back as soon as possible to enable the Council to give final approval.

The vote was unanimous. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali was asked to draw up a "concept of operations and framework for a humanitarian task force" to deliver aid to the more than one million refugees from ethnic violence in Rwanda and Burundi and plan for their voluntary repatriation. He is to report to the Council by a November 20 deadline.

Many Council members had adopted a resolution immediately authorising a multinational force. But this proved impossible after the United States said it was still studying whether it could participate and if so whether with logistics, financial assistance or other contributions.

Boutros Ghali, who had pressed for swift action, said the refugees, mostly from neighbouring Rwanda and Burundi and scattered by recent fighting in eastern Zaire, lacked food, water and shelter and faced "genocide by starva-

tion." AP adds: With the United States uncertain how to respond to the crisis, the UN Security Council appeared Friday to be backing off from a French proposal authorising a multinational force to intervene in Zaire.

Instead, the council met late Friday to consider changes to the French proposal which would simply call on member states to "prepare for early authorisation" of such a force.

With aid agencies and others warning of an imminent humanitarian disaster in eastern Zaire, France had tabled a resolution in the 15-member council to authorise a multinational force to safeguard the delivery of food and supplies to refugees displaced by the fighting.

UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali had endorsed the proposal, saying it was the quickest and most effective way to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe caused by ethnic fighting.

But the United States, among others was still uncertain how to respond to the crisis, which began when ethnic Tutsi rebels launched an offensive aimed at driving out refugees who had fled ethnic violence in neighbouring Burundi and Rwanda in 1994.

In Washington, President Clinton's top national security aides met for 90 minutes Friday on the humanitarian crisis in eastern Zaire but reached no decisions how the United States might help.

Meanwhile, as the international community moved closer to intervening to staunch a humanitarian crisis in eastern Zaire, Rwanda lined up Friday behind a plan to deploy a military force to safeguard the delivery of food and water to 1.1 million refugees and eventually their return home.

However, President Pasteur Bizimungu ruled out any proposal that would include troops from France, Belgium or Rwanda itself. France is the major advocate of the intervention force.

"A military presence to secure the corridor is accepted by everyone," Bizimungu said. "We can't stand back and wait."

Bizimungu met with the UN special envoy to the region Raymond Chretien, who said what he called "life-sustaining assistance" would be on its way to those who need it very soon.

Another AFP report says, UN special envoy Raymond Chretien arrived in Kinshasa late Friday for urgent talks with Zairean leaders on the refugee crisis in the embattled east of the country.

He is due to meet early Saturday with Zaire a interior, foreign and defence ministers before a planned midday encounter with Prime Minister Kengo Wa Dondo.

Chretien arrived from Kigali where he had earlier Friday spoken with Rwandan leaders on the humanitarian crisis.

"More than one million refugees are stranded in eastern Zaire without aid — they are dying like flies" according to aid officials — after mainly Tutsi rebels seized a long slice of Zairean territory in battles with government troops.

With 10,000 armed people in the region "it is totally legitimate for the UN to wish at least to get minimal protection before they head back there," Chretien told reporters on his arrival here.

80,000 children risk death

ROME, Nov 9: More than 80,000 children are at risk of dying in eastern Zaire by the end of the month without urgent supplies of food and clean water, the head of a UN aid agency predicted Friday, says AP.

"The small children are the most vulnerable and typically are the ones who are the first to go," said Catherine Bertini, executive director of the World Food Programme.

Bertini noted children between 18 months and 3 years old are at the highest risk because they have generally stopped breast-feeding but their bodies are highly susceptible to disease and malnutrition.



Sarajevo teenagers read Friday a newly published Superman comic book funded by the US government aimed at helping to warn children of the dangers of land mines. IFOR Major Nick Swayne presented the book and posters in which Superman teaches Bosnian children of the dangers of the millions of mines still strewn across the country. — AFP/UNB photo

**Fresh US troops may be deployed in '97
Bosnian Serb army chief sacked**

PALE, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Nov 9: Gen. Ratko Mladic, the Bosnian Serb military commander indicted for war crimes, has been sacked, according to a statement released early Saturday by the Bosnian Serb president, reports AP.

The statement read over state television said that Biljana Plavsic, elected president of Bosnia in September, had decided to replace Mladic with Maj. Gen. Pero Cokic.

Plavsic thanked Mladic for all he had done for Bosnian Serbs during the 3 1/2-year war but because of the international community's stance towards him, she said he must step down.

Mladic led the Bosnian Serb army throughout the war and was the most popular figure among the Bosnian Serbs. He was indicted in Netherlands for atrocities.

The Dayton peace accord bars war crimes suspects from holding public office. Mladic and Radovan Karadzic — who has also been indicted by tribunal — are out of sight, but have not been arrested.

DPRK rules out missile test

WASHINGTON, Nov 9: North Korea has apparently decided against conducting a ballistic missile test that the United States viewed as a serious threat to Asian security, the State Department said Friday, reports AP.

It has appeared that North Korea has decided not to conduct a missile test, State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns told reporters.

Pyeongyang communicated its decision not to test a new missile believed to be capable of striking most of Japan through some recent contacts, Burns said.

NATO has yet to complete its study on the future force for Bosnia but Clinton said it is conceivable we could participate in the new mission that would begin some time after March.

The US President also showed determination to achieve progress in bringing peace to northern Ireland where Irish nationalists are fighting to end British rule there.

"I intend to do what I can to continue to encourage, the peace process for northern Ireland, he said. He voiced hope that prospects could improve in the next four years."

While foreign policy did not get much attention during the presidential campaign Clinton signalled that he remained involved in the gamut of challenges confronting US diplomacy.

**3 AI officials held
Curfew imposed in Nigeria**

LONDON, Nov 9: Nigerian police arrested three Amnesty International officials in Lagos on Friday the human rights organisation said, reports AP.

And with the approach of the first anniversary of the execution of minority rights activist Ken Saro-Wiwa, Nigerian police announced a dawn to dusk curfew in Rivers state where minority Ogoni people live and where Saro-Wiwa was an activist.

Police arrested Patrice Vaehard, an Ivory Coast national, and Nigerians Eke Ubiji and David Omonuzafo on their way to a diplomatic reception at the Sheraton hotel in Nigeria's biggest city, an Amnesty International statement said.

They were taken to a local police station, and then transferred to an unknown detention centre and authorities would not say why they were arrested, it said.

The arrests came days after Minister of Special Duties, or police minister, Wada Nas, accused Amnesty of planning to "foment trouble" on the anniversary of the Execution of Saro-Wiwa, Amnesty noted.

At a news conference, Clinton said it likely would be a smaller NATO force with a more limited mission than the current one has had of separating warring ethnic factions.

"In here to give voice to the voiceless," said Graca Machel, head of a UN mission that studied the impact of war on children around the world.

"Don't turn your eyes away," she said. "Feel their longing to be just children."

Machel's report, released this week, says about 2 million children have died during armed conflicts over the past decade, with nearly three times that number seriously injured.

"Citizens nowadays are on the front lines," she said. "Citizens are waging wars." More than 90 per cent of the casual-

ties are civilian, with over half of those children.

The prescription of children: lighter and less complex weapons, the perils of land mines and medical problems flaring in refugee emergencies are among the troubles children face in wartime, according to the report undertaken with the support of the UN Centre for Human Rights and UNICEF, the UN children's charity.

As to answers, the report suggested such things as a global campaign to stop the military recruitment of children under 18, a worldwide ban on landmines and punishment of anyone using sexual violence as a weapon.

"In any circumstances, civilians or soldiers who rape as a weapon of war should be considered war criminals and properly prosecuted," Machel

said.

Machel called on UNICEF to take the lead in resettling displaced children, and said the definition of humanitarian aid must be broadened to meet the educational, psychological and emotional needs of children.

"We have to believe that we can protect our children," she said. "There's no way we can just switch off our TVs, we can just close the pages of our newspapers and think about something else."

Women and children are increasingly the targets as warring sides attempt to dominate communities, Machel said.

"When a head of a family fails to protect his wife, his daughters from being raped in front of the community, that is something that will never allow that man to be the same again. And that family will never be

the same again. That is deliberate. It's not incidental," Machel said.

Children are also being drawn directly into the fighting, taking up arms or being forced into other service for governments and rebel groups.

In Ethiopia in the 1980s, for instance, armed militias roamed the streets grabbing anyone they could find — including children — to press them into military service. In Afghanistan, children are thought to make up at least 45 per cent of the soldiers, the report said.

"Children can be good soldiers because they can obey. They never challenge orders," Machel said.

For a child without a family, a band of soldiers can provide a few basics, like food and some sense of security.

Off the Record

Manila's 'no' to Pop King

MANILA, Philippines: Bad news for the king of pop. Michael Jackson is not welcome in Manila.

Its tough-talking mayor, Alfredo Lim, has said he will refuse a permit for Jackson's concert next month because the city does not want to "be taking a contradictory position" in its campaign against child abuse. Secretary to the Mayor Rafaelito Garayblas said Saturday.

In 1993, Jackson was accused of sexually abusing a boy in the United States. No charges were ever filed. Jackson settled with the boy for a reported 15 million dollars.

Lim is scheduled to hold concerts in his History tour December 8 and 10 on seven hectares (17 acres) of reclaimed land along Manila Bay in Pasay City, adjacent to Manila.

But concert organisers are in a dispute with Pasay officials over a demand for a discount in the amusement tax, which by law is 30 per cent of the gross income.

The officials are reportedly considering moving the concert to Manila with hopes of paying a smaller amount.

Garayblas said he prepared a recommendation for Manila's government in case the concert organisers apply for a permit to hold the concert.

"We have a campaign and it should be sustained — against child molestation, child prostitution," Garayblas said.

16m US teenage smokers

NEW YORK: Out of some 70 million Americans under the age of 18, about 16 million have become cigarette smokers, and more than 5 million teenage-smokers will die prematurely from smoking, reports Xinhua.

The projections were given by the office of Smoking and Health at the National Centre for Disease Control and prevention which published the research in its morbidity and mortality weekly report.

Health officials said the centre's estimate of 5 million premature death was a conservative one based on current smoking rate. It included an allowance for people who will stop smoking after the age of 35 and thus have a reduced risk of early death from tobacco-related illnesses.

These studies show the potential for prevention. The 5 million deaths is a projection that doesn't have to become reality. This is a wake-up call," said Michael D. Eriksen, Director of the office of Smoking and Health.

The report estimated the cost of treating such illness in today's young smokers at 200 billion US dollars.

The report underscored the need for the food and drug administration's recently adopted regulations to curtail tobacco marketing that appeals to young smokers and to reduce their access to cigarettes.

Benazir to file writ against dismissal

ISLAMABAD, Nov 9: Former Pakistani prime minister Benazir Bhutto is to file a writ with the Supreme Court next week against her dismissal four days ago, sources close to the deposed leader said today, reports AP.

Benazir, who has vowed to fight a legal battle against her abrupt sacking by President Farooq Ahmed Leghari on Tuesday, has been holding consultations with legal aides at her former official residence in Islamabad.

A draft is in the process of being finalised and the petition is "most likely" to be submitted to the Supreme Court by Tuesday, a source said.

Leghari sacked Benazir and dissolved the National Assembly, citing corruption, misuse and lawlessness resulting in thousands of deaths during her three-year government among the reasons for his drastic action.

New elections have been set by the president for February 3 under an interim government headed by Malik Meraj Khalid, a former Speaker of the National Assembly.

**WTC bombing in '93
Lebanese extradited from Paraguay**

ASUNCIÓN, Nov 9: The United States Friday extradited from Paraguay a Lebanese suspect in the 1993 World Trade Centre bombing, the newspaper ABC reported, citing police and diplomatic sources, reports AP.

US Federal Bureau of Investigation agents escorted the suspect, identified as either Marwan al Safadi or Marwanudib Adam Kadi, aboard a US Air Force plane to New York, the newspaper said.

**Dozens of HR activists detained
Govt supporters attack, disrupt confce on E Timor**

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia, Nov 9: About 200 pro-government activists attacked a conference hall Saturday, tearing down banners and kicking around chairs, where delegates from 16 countries were holding a meeting on the troubled Indonesian region of East Timor, reports AP.

Shouting "We love Indonesia. We love Malaysia", the activists forced their way into the meeting, breaking the locks of a closed door of the conference hall in a downtown hotel.

Nobody was injured. About 20 police stationed outside the hotel did not intervene.

The government had warned organisers it will do everything to prevent the meeting, which Malaysia says will embarrass its Southeast Asian ally Indonesia. East Timor's forcible ruler for the last three decades.

Standing amid torn bunting and banners, chief organiser Sanusi Osman said the conference "is virtually called off."

UN for protection of children in war

UNITED NATIONS, Nov 9: With more and more children killing and being killed in conflicts from Colombia to Zaire, the United Nations issued a plea Friday for the world to give children the chance to enjoy their childhood, reports AP.

"In here to give voice to the voiceless," said Graca Machel, head of a UN mission that studied the impact of war on children around the world.

"Don't turn your eyes away," she said. "Feel their longing to be just children."

Machel's report, released this week, says about 2 million children have died during armed conflicts over the past decade, with nearly three times that number seriously injured.

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During the melee, government officials walked in and seized the passports of about 35 foreign delegates who were later bundled off in two police trucks to the immigration department for questioning.

Osman said they will likely be deported.

If that happens, "there is no point in holding the conference. Their participation is important for the discussion. The local people can always meet at any time," said Osman, who also is leader of an opposition party.

Reuter adds: Malaysian police detained about a dozen members of a Malaysian youth group and 30 local human rights activists today after the youths forcibly broke up a controversial meeting on East Timor.

A police official told reporters that Malaysian participants at the Asia Pacific Conference on East Timor would be detained, but declined to say what the charges were.

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