Zhirinovsky. The Movie? reports AP.

make his film debut

to look like them.

to be with them.

and Margaret Thatcher.

Off the Record

Russian bad boy to

make his film debut?

antics, wept at his poor-boy pathos, trembled at his saber-

Zhirinovsky, the ultranationalist bad boy of Russian politics

rattling tirades. But that was just real life. Are they ready for .

MOSCOW: Audiences have roared at his campaign-trail

Ready or not. Russian viewers are about to see Vladimir

The flamboyant member of parliament and three-time

"I hate all these people here". Zhirinovsky screeched

presidential contender in starring in a made-for-TV movie

along with Hitler, Stalin and Lenin - or at least actors made up

gleefully to reporters. They rouse my hatred! It's an inspiration

Zhirinovsky plays a police inspector in "Shipof Doubles."

But what could this strange collection of characters, this

The director. Valery Komissarov, isn't giving the plot away.

potpourri of the famous and infamous, possibly have in common? And how does Zhirinovsky's Inspector Zharov fit in?

But he promises plenty of 'fights, murders and other

which also features look-alikes for Madonna. Michael Jackson

BEFFY

3 heroin labs raided in Pakistan: Pakistan troops backed by armoured personnel carries raided three heroin laboratories in a remote tribal area bordering Afghanistan on Saturday, an official said, Reuter reports from Peshawar

"It was a big, successful operation with the element of sur prise." Sherzada Khan, the political agent for the Khyber agency in northwestern Pakistan, told Reuters. He said about 1,000 paramilitary troops of the Khyber rifles militia had taken part in the raid, launched at 2 a.m (2100 GMT Friday), in the Toda Mela area, 37 km (23 miles) southwest of the city of Peshawar.

Road mishap kills 4 in ROK: At least four people were killed and 33 others injured yesterday when a truck jumped over a concrete curb dividing a provincial highway and ran into a tourist bus, police said, AFP reports

from Seoul. There were no foreign casualties in the accident, which took place early yesterday near Kyongju, some 400 kilometers (240 miles) southeast of Seoul. Police reported four deaths at the scene - the truck's driver and three people from the tourist bus. which was carrying mainly elderly holiday makers. Several others were in critical condition, police said.

Blast kills Israeli soldier in Lebanon: A roadside bomb killed an Israeli soldier Saturday and Israeli shelling following the attack wounded six civilians, including a 14-year-old boy, security officials said, AP reports from

The Israeli shelling appeared to be in retaliation for the attack on an Israeli patrol in which one soldier was killed and another wounded. An Israeli flechette shell slammed into the village of Kfar Tibnit after the attack, spraying shrapnel and wounding six civilians.

Yeltsin-Chirac to meet in 97: French President Jacques Chirac and Russian President Boris Yeltsin will meet in Moscow in early 1997, the Interfax news agency said Saturday. AP reports from Moscow.

It said the two leaders spoke on the telephone Saturday and Chirac accepted Yeltsin's invitation to visit Moscow. The report said the French leader would make a brief working visit to the Russian capital early in 1997.

Yeltsin, who is recuperating from heart trouble, is expected to return to work full-time in the Kremlin later this month.

Govt-rebel sign accord in Guatemala: An Agreement signed Saturday in Stockholm by the Guatemalan government and majority Maya rebels will sharply reduce the power of the military that have long repressed non-whites in Guatemala, AFP reports from

Tellingly, the 19 points in the agreed-upon constitutional reform between the government and rebels defines this Central American nation as a "multi ethnic plural cultural and multi lingual" society. It is the first time since Spaniards arrived in 1524 and enslaved the ethnic Maya that Guatemala will recognise indigenous culture, languages, religious practices and lands as equal to those of the ruling class, mostly descended from Spanish immigrants.

Egyptian FM says

ME peace process must be saved, protected

CAIRO. Dec 8: Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Moussa has said the Middle East peace process, described by Pales tinian leader Yasser Arafat as in real danger, must be "saved and protected." reports Reuter.

Guatamala

Moussa spoke to reporters late on Saturday after separatemeetings in Cairo with Arafat and the European Union's Middle East envoy Miguel Angel Moratinos.

The Foreign Minister said he briefed Arafat and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak about his talks last week in Lisbon with Israeli premier Benjamin

We had a long discussion about the situation in order to save the peace process and push it forward." Moussa said.

Netanyahu.

"There are a lot of points that have to be tackled - the important thing is that the peace process has to be saved

and protected. Peace talks between Israelis

and Palestinians have run into problems, mainly over the issue of Israeli troop redeployment in Hebron, the last town in the occupied West Bank to be handed over to Palestinian rule.

Israel wants to renegotiate some of the terms of the handover out of security concerns. while the Palestinians want to implement the accord as they

signed it. Palestinian negotiators said the last two weeks of talks with Israel on the handover of most of Hebron had been meaningless.

Both Arafat and Netanyahu have expressed willingness to 'meet, but Moussa said: That is up to them. But we haven't discussed this point."

singing battle songs and raising Netanyahu and Arafat last met in Washington after clenched fists in the air. The clashes in September that young warriors are called mavikilled 60 Palestinians and 15 mayi or "powerful water" in Israelis, spurred by Israel open-Swaahili, from the potion they ing a tunnel near Muslim holy believe will protect them from sites in Jerusalem

PLO demands timetable for Israeli pullout from rural areas in WB JERUSALEM, Dec 8: The

agreement on an Israeli troop withdrawal in Hebron is complete, but the signing is being delayed by a dispute with the Palestinians over a further Israeli withdrawal in the West Bank, Israel radio reported Sunday, says AFP However, Israel army radio

said the two sides still disagree over the security arrangements for the Israeli withdrawal in Hebron. The Palestinians are demanding a timetable for an

Israeli withdrawal from rural areas in the West Bank. This was promised by the previous Israeli government in the interim agreements on Palestinian autonomy, signed in Oslo. Norway.

Indo-Nepal

journalists'

confee begins

first ever conference of journal-

ists from Nepal and India has

expressed concern over deterio-

rating standard of journalism

in both the countries and rec-

ommended a code of conduct for

media institutions in South

The two-day conference at

tended by more than 55 jour-

nalists from the two countries

noted that media professionals

have an important role to play

in solving the problems

through objective reporting on

holding the universal values of

freedom of expression and free

It was suggested in the con-

ference organised by the Editors

Society of Nepal with coopera-

tion of Nepal-India B P Koirala

Foundation that a media ex-

change programme be initiated

between the two countries, with

the Indian journalists insti

tutes assisting in the profes-

sional training of the Nepal

Rebels surround

last govt-held

town in E Zaire

rebels surrounded the last town

held by government troops in

eastern Zaire, local residents

and hospital workers said, re-

Beni, who refused to give his name, said his forces were on

the outskirts of Bunia, 100 miles (160 kms) north.

under the banner of the

Alliance of Democratic Forces

for Liberation (Congo-Zaire)

headed from Beni, near the

Ugandan border, to Bunia

Minister Boguo Makeli said

turmoil in Bunia had left 10

fighters allied with the rebels

also set out toward Bunia

In Kinshasa, Information

Truckloads of young local

Saturday morning.

people dead.

harm.

Hundreds of troops fighting

A Zairian rebel officer in

BENI, Zaire, Dec 8: Zairian

The journalists affirmed their firm commitment to up-

issues of public concern.

flow of information.

media persons.

Asia, reports PTI.

KATHMANDU. Dec 8: The

Israel army radio reported

that the Palestinian demand. which came directly from PLO leader Yasser Arafat, was delivered to Israel's Prime Minister nent settlement. Benjamin Netanyahu by the American Ambassador Martin

International ——

Israel has already withdrawn from all the Palestinian cities in the West Bank except Herbon. According to the interim agreement it is also to withdraw from rural areas around the cities in three stages. The first stage was to have taken place on September 7, with the second and third stages after six months and a

The Palestinians say they do not trust Netanyahu to carry out the further withdrawal. and their suspicions have been

heightened by his proposal that the two sides proceed directly to the negotiations on a perma-

The Palestinians are demanding a commitment from the Israelis to carry out the further withdrawal, with specific dates. Israel refuses on the grounds that the timetable would influence the negotiations on the permanent peace settlement which are to follow the further redeployment.

About 500 Jewish settlers live in Hebron, surrounded by 130,000 Palestinians. The Palestinians have rejected an Israeli demand that their police in the areas adjacent to the Jewish enclave be armed only with pistols instead of assault rifles. Arafat, in his message to Netanyahu demanded that the

Palestinian police be allowed to carry assault rifles, army radio

Last week, Netanyahu said it was time for a meeting between himself and Arafat to settle the disagreements and sign the agreement on Hebron. The Palestinian reaction was cool and Netanyahu's office is still waiting for a reply. the newspaper Maariv reported Sunday.

Israel's Channel 2 television reported Friday that the United States has suggested a compromise in which Israel, in addiction to its withdrawal in Hebron, would pull its troops out of the nearby village of Halhoul. In return, the Palestinians would be more flexible over security arrangements in Hebron.

cataclysms." And he says Zhirinovsky fans won't be disappointed. According to Komissarov, he's a natural. To make a hotpot soup

HONG KONG: A Hong Kong chef admitted before a magistrate that he slaughtered his friend's cat to make a hotpot soup, a newspaper reported Sunday, reports Reuter. Lam Yui-Tin, 39, told the judge that cat soup would keep him strong during winter. The South China Morning Post reported. The chef, who was fined (259 US dollar) for unlawfully

slaughtering a domestic cat for food, was stopped only after a neighbbur spotted him burning far off the butchered animal. But the royal society for the prevention of cruelty to animals in Hong Kong slammed the sentence as too lenient and not

Surrogate granny gives birth to baby girl

LONDON: Britain's first "surrogate grandmother" has given birth to a baby girl for her own daughter who was unable to bear children, the family announced Saturday, reports AP. Caitlin Langston was born Thursday at Darlington Memorial Hospital in northern England and weighed five pounds, 3 ounces (2.6 kg), the family said.

Edith Jones, 51, was implanted with embryos created from eggs from her daughter Suzanne and sperm from Suzanne's husband, Chris Langston.

The first such case in which a woman served as a surrogate for her daughter was reported in South Africa in 1987. In that case, the surrogate gave birth to triplets.

Tajik opposition leader was on board

Taliban forces down plane

Trade unions threaten to go on strike against Milosevic

United States Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky (L) greets Singapore's

Communications Minister Mah Bow Tan (R) beside Yeo Cheow Tong Singapore's Minister

for Trade and Industry Sunday one day before the opening of the first World Trade

Organisation ministerial meeting. Despite steadfast Asian opposition, negotiators from the

United States are expected to continue their efforts to pry open the 550-billion dollar

global telecoms market during the inaugural WTO meeting from Today to December 13.

BELGRADE Dec 8 Trade unions threatened to go on strike, escalating daily demonstrations against Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic that drew a crowd of 150,000. And Milosevic reportedly won contested elections that prompted the protests, reports

A union strike could dramatically strengthen the threeweek protests against the

Serbian president. Leaders of two independent unions said their members were ready to strike next week if Milosevic did not reinstate the opposition's November 17 local election victories. They also demanded that the government ensure decent standards of liv-

Individual workers have taken part in the street marches, but organised labour - divided more or less equally between independent unions and government organised

umons backing Milosevic - has

not so far The Supreme Court late Saturday night handed Milosevic victories in at least some of those challenged elections, an official of the opposi tion coalition said.

The coalition had asked the court to overturn government action annulling vote results in 46 municipal districts where coalition candidates posted victories

The court late Saturday issued rulings on five of those cases, rejecting demands to dismiss the annulments, said Milica Nedeljkovic, a coalition observer at Belgrade's Electoral Commission.

She said in an interview over independent Radio B 92 that results of the first five decisions were delivered to the electoral commission.

The commission tentatively set a news conference for Sunday, apparently to formally announce the court decisions.

There were unconfirmed reports that the court had decided in layour of Milosevic in all 46 municipal races.

- AFP/UNB photo

It seemed likely that Milosevic will try to use the court to take the steam out of the protests before the workers joined in, But the opposition said it wanted to make sure their victories in other cities are returned.

The pro-government unions which claim about half of Serbia's estimated 1.75 million workers as members - have not threatened to join the protest.

The unions' grievances over unemployment, poor living conditions and low wages may be as damaging to Milosevic as complaints about civic free-

Many of Serbia's factories are idle, and hundreds of thousands of workers are on paid leave because of lack of raw materials and other failures of Milosevic's economy.

KABUL, Dec 8: Taliban jet fighters intercepted a UN aircraft carrying a rebel leader from Tajikistan on Saturday and forced it to land at a military air base in Western Afgha-

nistan, said a Taliban spokesman, reports AP. "They didn't get the proper permission and we were within our rights to force them to land," said Abdul Niazi, a Taliban spokesman in the Afghan capital, several hundred kilo-

meters (miles) east of Shindand Air Base, where the aircraft was forced to land. Niazi said Tajikistan's opposition leader Syed Abdullo Nuri was on board the aircraft, along with eight other people

some of whom were Iranians. All the passengers and crew were unharmed. There were some unconfirmed reports that the Taliban

would release the aircraft and passengers on Sunday. Nuri was on his way to Kun-

duz in northern Afghanistan to

Emomali Rakhmanov to try to end that country's bitter civil war, said Akbar Torahjanzada, a spokesman for Nuri in Kabul. The peace talks were to be held on Monday, he said.

istan's beleaguered president

Niazi said the UN aircraft which had left Mashhad in meighbouring Iran was forced to land after it entered Afghanistan's air space over western Herat without first getting per-Herat is controlled by the

Taliban, while northern Kunduz is ruled by an anti-Taliban alliance, that includes northern warlord Rashid Dostum and ousted Afghan president Burhanuddin Rabbani, who is an

ethnic Tajik. In Kabul analysts said the Taliban suspected that Rabbani, who is currently in Iran, may have been on the aircraft. which is why it was intercepted.

While Iran has denied helping the anti-Taliban forces, Tehran also has condemned the Taliban's harsh version of Is-



Villagers from Cuarto Pueblo, Guatemala, Saturday carry caskets with the exhumed remains of over 300 people who were massacred by soldiers in 1982 as part of an anti guerilla campaign. The victims relatives have asked that the peace agreement that will be signed December 29 not include amnesty for the soldiers involved in the killings.

- AFP/UNB photo

Polish nobel laureate condemns world's indifference to suffering eral times and smiled shyly be-

STOCKHOLM. Dec 8: Whatever we might think of the world's terrifying vastness, its indifference to suffering and our own precarious position within it - the world nonetheless is "astonishing," Nobel Prize-winning Polish poet Wislawa Szymborska said Saturday, reports AP.

Speaking before 500 people in the Great Hall of the Swedish Academy: Ms. Szymborska swung from subtle humor to weighty themes to give her view of "our clamorous times."

"Bureaucrats and bus passengers respond with a touch of incredulity and alarm when they find out that they're dealing with a poet," she said, delivering her Nobel Prize lecture in Polish.

Though the 73-year-old poet drew laughs with that lighthearted remark, she turned serious later during her 20minute talk in Stockholm.

"The world - whatever we might think when terrified by its vastness and our own impotence, or embittered by its indifference to individual suffering of people, animals and perhaps even plants... whatever we might think of this world - it is astonishing." Ms. Szymborska said.

Ms. Szymborska, a fraillooking figure in a black dress. was dwarfed by rows of applauding listeners on her way down the aisle to the gleaming white lectern. She bowed sev-

South Africa to host next int'l energy contce

GOA. India. Dec 8: South Africa was chosen Sunday to host next year's International Energy Conference, meaning the problems of developing countries will continue to be a major focus of talks between oil producers and consumers, reports AP.

South Africa was unanimously elected the next host as this year's three-day conference concluded at the Indian seaside resort of Goa.

fore and after her lecture. The audience ranged from literary celebrities to jeansclad university students.

Lit by 12 chandeliers and surrounded by gilt woodwork. the Nobel laureate read from some of her work after the lecture. The poems included one entitled "Psalm" from 1995:

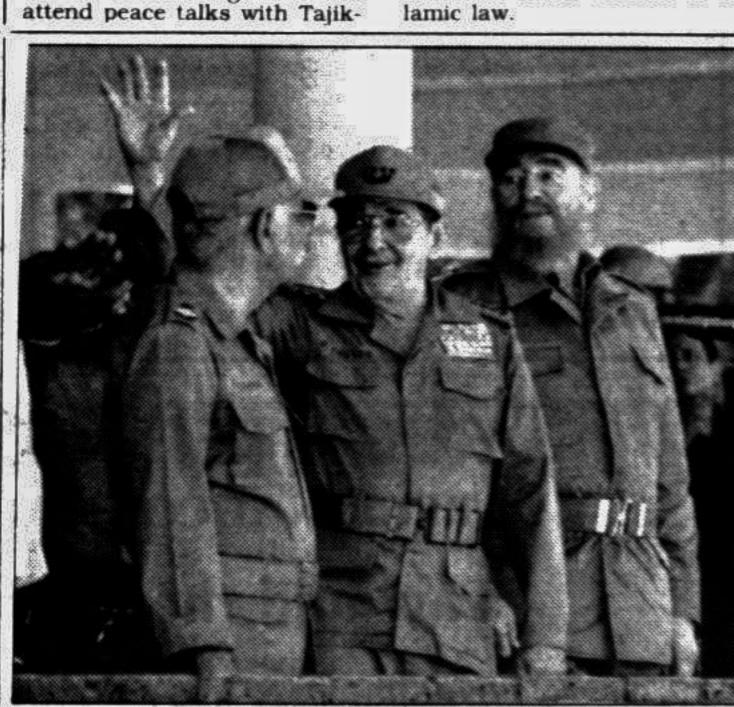
"Among innumerable insects, I'll single out only the

Between the border guard's left and right boots blithely ignoring the questions "Where from?" and "Where to." Oh, to register in detail, at a

glance, the chaos prevailing on every continent!" Ms. Szymborska is to receive

her award on Tuesday, along with other Nobel Prize winners. from Sweden's King Carl XVI Gustaf, at a ceremony in Stockholm.

Her Nobel award, the world's most prestigious literary honor, carries a prize of 7.4 million kronor (dlrs 1.1 million) this year. The award was announced in October.



Cuban Minister of the Armed Forces Raul Castro (C), his brother and Cuban President Fidel Castro (R) and Cuban Commander Juan Almeida (L) appear after Raul delivered a speech to honour Cuban independence fighter Antonio Maceo Saturday at Maceo's mausoleum in Havana. The occasion of the speech was the 100th anniversary of Maceo's death, who died fighting the Spanish.

- AFP/UNB photo

Summit of American states calls for war against poverty

SANTA CRUZ DE LA SIERRA, Bolivia, Dec 8: Heads of state from around the Americas concluded a summit on sustainable development by call ing for an all-out war against poverty to assure protection of the world's habitats and eco-

nomic growth, reports AP. "Any attempt to protect our ecological system while ignoring human needs constitutes a political, moral and practical impossibility," said a statement signed at the end of the two-day Hemispheric Summit on Sustainable Development, which focused on protecting the environment during the modernisation process. It was attended by 12 heads of state and US Vice President Al Gore.

Speaking in this tropical

city of 700,000. Gore called for economic progress that respects both nature and the needs of the

"We cannot be custodians of our freedom if we are not custodians of our environment," Gore said. "We cannot combat poverty without dealing with the degradation of the envi-

He described the summit's action plan as ambitious and said it built on the foundations of the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit and the 1994 Miami Summit.

Among the plans that require urgent attention is the need for improved water quality throughout the hemisphere. Gore said that an increase in

commerce and investment in the region — as well as regional trade pacts such a NAFTA and Mercosur — do not have to mean more pollution.

Bolivian President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada opened the summit with a call for development without pollution and unfair burdens on the poor. Some 130 million Latin Americans live in poverty

"Our continent's environment is still relatively intact and here it is still possible for the miracle of sustainable development to exist. We will not tolerate the high cost of economic development in social and environmental terms that other regions have paid," he said.

Economic growth must be translated into human devel-

opment, in improved health and education services and in defeating poverty that exists even in wealthy countries. This is within our reach." Sanchez de Lozada said.

The summit marks this city's debut as a international meeting centre. Thirty years ago, Santa Cruz had a population of 35,000. Today, it has 700,000 residents, one of the continent's most modern airports and thriving agro-industrial and hydrocarbon industries.

The summit grew out of the 1994 Summit of the Americas. in which leaders from throughout the Western Hemisphere met in Miami.

Among the leaders present at the summit were Brazil's Fer-

nando Henrique Cardoso. Chile's Eduardo Frei, Peru's Alberto Fujimori. Paraguay's Juan Carlos Wasmosy, Argentina's Carlos Saul Menem. Surinam's Jules Wijdenbosh. Nicaragua's Violeta Chamorro. Haiti's Rene Preval and Ernesto Perez Balladares of Panama.

The heads of international lending and environmental groups, as well as high-ranking United Nations officials, are also attending the summit. which is organised by the Organisation of American States. Sanchez de Lozada ended his opening remarks by thanking

Santa Cruz are still not acid rains. The rains forced Gore's plane to fly to a nearby city Saturday morning, delaying his arrival

God that torrential rains in

by four hours.

Gore and Sanchez de Lozada also announced the approval Saturday of an international effort to protect 2.2 million acres of endangered tropical rain forest and mitigate global emissions of greenhouse gasses.

The nine-million-dollar project will protect a large tract of rain forest near the Noel Kempff National Park, which borders Brazil. It calls for the long-term

tourism projects.

protection of the national park by expanding the park's boundaries, eliminating logging and providing technical assistance to area logging firms on lowimpact logging practices. It also establishes ecologically sound production ventures and

Bosnian army begins to destroy surplus arms

SARAJEVO. Dec 8: The mainly Muslim Bosnian army has begun destroying its surplus weapons, in accordance with accords setting ceilings on the various clashes of weapons in Bosnia, Croatia and the rump Yugoslavia, a Bosnian army commander said Saturday, reports AFP.

"Fifty-one mortars of various calibres, seven cannons and two tanks will be destroyed over the next few days in the barracks of the Bosnian army 5th corps," General Atif Dudakovic said on Bosnian

The 5th army corps is stationed in the Bihac region of northwestern Bosnian and played a key role in the victorious offensive of Autumn 1995 against the Bosnian Serbs. "We began on Friday with the destruction of six mortars

and I think that we will have

finished destroying all the weapons within about 20 days. he said, adding: "All these weapons were captured from the Bosnian Serb forces. Signatories to the arms limitation accords, namely Croatia. Yugoslavia and the two

entities making up post war The Republika Bosnia SRPSKA and the Muslim Croat Federation, undertook to destroy 40 per cent of their sur plus weaponry by January 1