

# Jordan suspends security cooperation with Israel

AMMAN, Oct 12: Jordan has suspended security cooperation with Israel and will not restore it until Israeli officials responsible for a botched assassination attempt against a Palestinian militant leader are dismissed, two senior Jordanian officials said Saturday, reports AP.

The development — not confirmed by Jordan's government — would mark a new low in relations between Israel and Jordan after two Israeli secret agents were caught trying to kill Khalid Mashaal, the political strategist of the Palestinian militant movement Hamas, in Amman on Sept 25.

A third source, a Jordanian Cabinet official who spoke on condition of anonymity, said only that Jordan is "reviewing the late of security cooperation." And an Israeli official, also speaking on condition of anonymity, insisted that security cooperation between the two countries continues.

Meanwhile, a Jordanian man was shot and killed by Israeli troops while trying to enter Israel illegally, the Israeli army announced Saturday.

The shooting occurred Friday night along the border in the Jordan valley.

Security cooperation, as defined by the Israeli-Jordan peace treaty of 1994, entails the exchange of intelligence information on extremist groups and their persons.

"Jordan will not reinstate such cooperation so long as

those responsible for plotting to kill Mashaal and destabilise our security are still in office," said one of the two officials who reported the freezing of security cooperation, speaking to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

Asked if that ultimatum included Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu — who bears the ultimate responsibility for ordering the operation — the official said: "No, comment."

He again said "no comment" when asked if Jordan wants Mossad secret service agency chief Danny Yatom to resign.

The official said Jordan froze security cooperation a few days after the bungled attempt on Mashaal's life, which infuriated Jordan's King Hussein, who saw it as a betrayal of his efforts to build peace with Israel.

The Jordanian Cabinet official said Jordan remains committed to the provisions of the 1994 peace treaty under which Jordan and Israel have exchanged intelligence information and cooperated closely against militant groups.

Also Saturday, Jordan's state minister for information, Samir Mutaweh, dismissed an Israeli Army radio report that the Mossad mission chief in Jordan and his agents had returned home "on the express orders of King Hussein."

"There is no specific office named Mossad in Jordan" and

"what happens in the Israeli Embassy in Jordan is the embassy's business," Mutaweh said.

Other officials, however, confirmed that Jordan dismissed a "handful" of Israeli intelligence officers at the embassy shortly after the assassination attempt.

On Friday, Israel's Army Radio said Jordan broke off contacts with Mossad and won't resume them while Yatom remains in power.

Without Jordan's cooperation, Israel's campaign against Islamic militants would be increasingly difficult. Many of the key figures of the Islamic militant group Hamas live in Jordan. Hamas claimed responsibility for two suicide bombings in Jerusalem in July and August. The group has carried out more than a dozen suicide bombings in Israel since 1994.

Israeli news media reported Friday that there were new warnings that Islamic militants would try to carry out suicide bombings.

Israel and Jordan had worked together on security matters even before the two countries signed a peace treaty in 1994. Jordan has helped prevent Palestinian militants from infiltrating Israel to carry out attacks.

And Hussein has been Israel's staunchest Arab ally despite intense criticism at home from Islamic groups opposed to peace with the Jewish state.

# Jt US-Euro space mission to be launched to Saturn today

WASHINGTON, Oct 12: Some 20 years after the US space probes Voyager and Pioneer were first dispatched to Saturn, a joint US-European space mission is poised to retrace the 3.5 billion kilometres (2.2 billion mile) voyage, reports AFP.

The launch set for Monday was to include the American-built Probe Cassini, which will survey Saturn, and the smaller European-built craft Huygens, which will land on the largest of the planet's 20 satellites, Titan.

Scientists hope the mission will help them learn more about how planets are formed, and how life first appeared on Earth.

The launch from the Kennedy Space Centre in Florida, set for 4:55 am (0855 GMT), was to take place under tight security and close scrutiny by environmentalists concerned about safety risks posed by the mission's nuclear-powered battery.

Several groups have vowed to demonstrate one last time to contest the launch of a plutonium-powered device over populated areas.

Opponents, like the Florida Coalition for Peace and Justice, contend that a Cassini-Huygens explosion could kill thousands of people by causing cancer and other radiation-related ailments.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration officials have played down such risk,

saying that the plutonium is safely contained in case of a launch accident.

The two probes will make a complicated journey, drawing power from the gravitational pull of various other planets to reach the solar system's second-largest planet.

Honduras' ruling party candidate escapes death

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras, Oct 12: The presidential candidate for Honduras ruling party barely escaped death on Saturday when his helicopter crashed during a campaign stop, officials said, reports Reuter.

Carlos Flores, 46, presidential candidate for the Liberal Party, and six others on board survived after the helicopter crashed during a landing in northern Honduras.

"Carlos Flores is in stable condition and being checked for a possible fracture in an area near his spinal column, the attending physician, Manuel Aguilar told Radio, America. He also has a broken rib."

The crash took place at Taubale, about 60 miles (100 km) north of the capital, Tegucigalpa. Flores was taken to a nearby hospital and later transported to the capital for more tests.



Hundreds of Palestinian youths march in the streets of the West Bank town of Ramallah during a demonstration Saturday. The protesters demonstrated in a show of support for Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat. — AP/UNB photo

# Anti-Taliban troops capture key junction

KABUL, Oct 12: Hardline Islamic Taliban fighters have been beaten back from the northern Afghan opposition alliance stronghold of Maz-i-Sharif, a spokesman claimed Saturday, reports AFP.

According to the official, anti-Taliban alliance troops broke through their rival's lines and captured a key junction and the town of Tashkurgan situated 50 kilometres (31 miles) east of their base.

"We have taken the Hairyatan junction and the centre of Tashkurgan after an attack this morning", Mohammad Arif told AFP in a satellite telephone interview.

He said following a mid-morning push, anti-Taliban forces made a 15 kilometre (nine mile) advance east of the city, opening a key anti-Taliban alliance supply route to frontlines north of the capital Kabul.

"The Taliban have been beaten back to a point east of Tashkurgan, and the road to the south is now open, he said."

No independent confirmation of the claim was immediately available, and no Taliban officials were available for comment on the latest military developments.

# Serbs won't bow to demands of int'l community

PALE, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Oct 12: The Bosnian Serb government served notice Saturday that it would not bow to demands by the international community to replace officials running the ultra-nationalist Bosnian Serb Broadcasting Service in Pale, the SRNA news agency reported, reports AFP.

The Republica Srpska (Serb Republic) will not comply with the unreasonable demands of the international community concerning Serb Radio and Television (SRT) in Pale, SRNA quoted Bosnian Serb Prime Minister Gojko Kljickovic as saying Saturday.

Kljickovic said there would be "no replacement of managers" even if this meant that the Bosnian Serb administration would not recover control of transmitters currently supervised by NATO forces in Bosnia.

# Blair to visit N-Ireland next week

LONDON, Oct 12: British Prime Minister Tony Blair is set to visit northern Ireland next week and could find himself shaking hands with Gerry Adams, head of the IRA's political wing Sinn Fein, newspapers said, reports Reuter.

They said Blair would pay a visit to peace talks aimed at ending decades of conflict between Protestants and Catholics in the divided region.

Blair — who could fly out as early as Monday — would urge leaders of both sides to make the compromises necessary to push the protracted peace process ahead.

A government spokesman speaking by telephone, declined to comment on the report.

The Observer said Blair would have to decide whether to shake Adams' hand and thereby infuriate Protestant loyalists — who want the region to stay British or offend the Sinn Fein leader by avoiding him.

# Opposition leader delays his return to Cambodia indefinitely

PHNOM PENH, Oct 12: Opposition leader Sam Rainsy said Sunday he will delay his return to Cambodia indefinitely so coup leader Hun Sen cannot use his presence to suggest that democratic conditions exist, reports AP.

Sam Rainsy had stated he would return to Cambodia on October 6, then October 15. In a statement Sunday, he said that he would delay the trip because he did not wish to exercise political rights if no other opposition figure can.

"I would only be the exception which confirms the rule," Sam Rainsy said. "Therefore, I must postpone my return to Phnom Penh indefinitely."

Sam Rainsy heads one of the four political parties in a coalition opposed to the seizure of power by Hun Sen in pitched fighting July 5-6 that toppled his co-prime minister, Prince Norodom Ranariddh.

# Indo-Russian defence pact reaches new height

Arun Mohanty writes from Moscow

Indian Defence Minister Mulayam Singh Yadav's visit to Moscow last week is likely to help consolidate the evolving Indo-Russian strategic relations in the post-Cold War world.

Yadav, who during his Moscow visit had meetings with President Boris Yeltsin, Defence Minister General Sergeyev, Secretary of the Defence Council Andrei Kokoshin and Vice Premier Yakov Urinson, repeatedly emphasised that though his visit was postponed twice because of domestic compulsions, he never had any doubts that the destination of his first foreign visit would be Russia.

Yadav has the distinction of being the first Defence Minister to be received by President Yeltsin since his re-election in July 1996, a fact described by defence observers here as "unusual and unprecedented". Yadav's meeting with the President, which continued for nearly 45 minutes, was reported to be held in an "extremely warm and friendly atmosphere".

Yeltsin repeatedly emphasised the "priority his country

# Crackdown against unsafe buildings India closes down 8 cinema halls

NEW DELHI, Oct 12: Eight cinemas in the Indian capital have been closed down as part of a crackdown against unsafe buildings in the wake of an horrific fire which killed 59 people four months ago, reports AFP.

Police and city officials say more of the city's 70 cinemas may be shut along with several small hotels in the coming months if they were found not to have taken precautions against fires.

"These movie halls will remain shut until all illegal alterations are removed and fire safety measures are introduced, said Krishen Kumar, deputy commissioner of police who issues licences for public buildings.

The sweeping action following the death of 59 viewers and injuries to more than 100 when a fire broke out on June 13 in a cinema packed with around 1,000 people.

The blaze started outside the hall, but rapidly spread inside, triggering a stampede, it was the worst cinema tragedy in film-crazy India.

New Delhi's Hindu nationalist administration immediately launched a crackdown on cinemas after authorities were accused of turning a blind eye to

# Sihanouk announces to commit suicide in despair over continual war

PHNOM PENH, Oct 12: Cambodian King Norodom Sihanouk says he would commit suicide in despair over the continual war and poverty facing his country if he were not a Buddhist, reports AP.

In a signed interview with his monthly palace bulletin sent Sunday to news agencies, Sihanouk indicated that his depression over his country's woes since a coup in July has fallen to new depths.

"If I wasn't a Buddhist, I would kill myself, because the end of my life is filled with shame, humiliation and despair over the national order," Sihanouk said in the interview, dated October 5.

Sihanouk said that his 75th birthday October 31 should be celebrated with a minimum of spending and celebration due to lack of money in the treasury and the mood of national mourning he feels.

"We are offering the world a spectacle of tanks, cannons, Stalin's organs and helicopters costing a colossal fortune that we use to pitilessly kill Cambodians, not to defend our national territory," Sihanouk said.

"In a blooming Asia... we are alone as an island of war, inse-

curity, self-destruction, poverty, social injustice, arch corruption, lawlessness, national division, drug trafficking and AIDS," he added.

Sihanouk returned to Cambodia last month after several months of medical treatment in Beijing and is residing in the town of Siem Reap, near the ancient Angkor temples.

He has prayed with little effect to end a new round of civil war and turmoil.

The king has said in recent months that he wishes to die and has floated the idea of abdication, but indicated he would remain on the throne at least through elections planned for next year.

In July, Hun Sen deposed Prince Norodom Ranariddh as his co-prime minister in a pitched battle in Phnom Penh. The prince, Sihanouk's son, is in exile and is threatened with arrest if he returns. His followers are accused of providing assistance in northern Cambodia.

Hun Sen has established control over most of the country but his regime appears to be making Cambodia an international pariah. The United Nations — which organized elections in 1993 that produced the tense Hun Sen-Ranariddh government — refused to grant either side the Cambodia's seat in the current General Assembly session.

# He turns up at his own funeral!

CAIRO, Oct 12: Ahmed Ibrahim Awadh's family was in tears at his funeral — until he walked into the tent where the ceremony was being held, reports AP.

An imam was reciting prayers for the dead from the Koran, the Muslim holy book, while relatives were wiping away tears and scores of mourners sat in respectful silence in the tent in the north Egyptian port of Alexandria, the newspaper Al-Gomhuriya reported Sunday.

Hours earlier they had all attended the burial of a man in his 30s who they thought was Awadh, whose rotting body had been washed up on the Mediterranean coast off the port's suburb of Kafr el-Dawar.

Awadh explained to his stunned family and friends that a thief had recently stolen his wallet and identity card. They had been found in the pocket of the corpse on the beach.

# BRIEFLY

**Police detain 2 Palestinians:** Police arrested two Palestinians from the West Bank for possession of 80 kilograms (176 lbs) of explosives stolen from construction sites and mines, a spokeswoman said Sunday, AP reports from Jerusalem.

**Arrests Thursday** came amid warnings of possible suicide attacks by Islamic militants. Police did not rule out the possibility that the explosives were intended for a terrorist group. However, the police statement said the primary intention of the two Palestinians from Hebron was to resell the explosives to Jewish building contractors.

**Fire damages 6 hotels in Bali:** Fire badly damaged six hotels on the tourist island of Bali, but there were no reports of serious injury, news reports said Sunday, AP says from Jakarta.

The newspaper Kompas reported that the fire broke out Saturday in living quarters for construction workers adjacent to one of the hotels at Legian Kaja at Kuta.

It said the flames quickly spread to other buildings, many of which had traditional roofs made of thatch and wood. Lack of hydrants and equipment hampered attempts to put out the blaze.

**British tourist killed in France:** A British tourist attacked near his hotel as he tried to aid a mugging victim died of his injuries in hospital Saturday, hospital sources said, AFP reports from Paris.

David Lambert, aged about 60, died in a hospital in the east Paris suburb of Aulnay-Sous-Bois.

He was attacked last Sunday night as he came to the aid of a passerby who was being robbed in the street. He managed to make it back to his hotel, but did not seek hospital care until his condition worsened the next day.

**Road mishap kills 4 in Georgia:** At least four people died and 12 others were injured Saturday when their bus plunged into a ravine in Georgia, ITAR-Tass news agency reported, AFP reports from Moscow.

The bus was 70 kilometres (45 miles) from Batumi on the Black Sea and heading to the mountain town of Akhaltsikhe when the accident happened. Its cause was not immediately clear.

# Rescue workers detect fasselage of crashed Argentine jet

NUEVO BERLIN, Uruguay, Oct 12: Searchers at the site of an Argentine DC-9 crash on Saturday found some tiny pieces of fuselage and a human ear and arm, the only remains of the 74 people on board, reports AFP.

The debris of the twin-engine airliner, which crashed late Friday in a swampy hilly area outside this riverside town 300 kilometres (186 miles) northwest of Montevideo, was spread over a one-kilometre (half mile) area of jungle and swamp.

The epicentre is a crater 15 to 20 metres (50 to 66 feet) wide and five to seven metres (16 to 23 feet deep) made muddy by recent heavy rainfalls.

An unusually violent storm in the area may have caused the aircraft operated by Austral Airlines to plummet to earth, Argentine airport officials said in Buenos Aires.

Sixty-nine passengers, including three children, and five crew were on board airline officials said. Everyone on board

# Menem for greater opening of church in Cuba

ROME, Oct 12: Argentine President Carlos Menem told Pope John Paul on Saturday he would urge Cuban leader Fidel Castro to give more freedom to the Roman Catholic church on the communist island, reports Reuter.

"I assured the holyfather that Argentina will do whatever possible to convince Cuba to adapt a greater opening of the church in Cuba," Menem told a news conference after meeting the pope at the Vatican.



Mexico's President Ernesto Zedillo is embraced by victims of hurricane Pauline during his visit to a shelter in the Zapata neighbourhood of Acapulco. Zedillo flew by helicopter into Acapulco's hardest-hit communities, after cutting short a visit to Germany to inspect the destruction caused by Thursday's hurricane. — AP/UNB photo

# Iran expects US action against Mujahideen Khalq

TEHRAN, Oct 12: Iran said on Saturday it expected the United States to take legal action against Mujahideen Khalq, Tehran's main opposition group, which Washington has listed as a terrorist organisation, reports Reuter.

The US is expected to take legal action against the terrorist group and not to pay lip service, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Mahmoud Mohammadi was quoted by the official IRNA news agency as saying.

"We should wait and see whether the US will take legal action to deal with the group...", Mohammadi said.

The US State Department on Wednesday named the Mujahideen Khalq among 30 foreign terrorist organisations denying its members US visas and making it illegal to give it funds.

The group denied the charges and said it would take legal action in the United States against the listing it has military bases in Iraq and an international public relations network. Including a Washington office less than 400 metres from the White House.

The Los Angeles Times in a report on the State Department listing quoted an unidentified Clinton administration official as saying the inclusion of the Mujahideen on the State Department list was a goodwill gesture towards the new Iranian government.

# Thousands of Cubans pay their last respects to Che Guevara

HAVANA, Oct 12: Thousands of Cubans paid their last respects to Ernesto "Che" Guevara in Havana on Saturday, filling past a small wooden box containing the remains of the legendary leftist guerrilla slain 30 years ago in Bolivia, reports Reuter.

The casket of remains, recovered from a secret mass grave in Bolivia three months ago, went on display to the public at 8 am (1300 GMT), inside the Jose Marti Memorial in Revolution Square.

An orderly crowd, including many schoolchildren in uniform, snaked around the vast square all morning lining up to enter the memorial and file in silence through the room where the remains were displayed.

Among the first were two Palestinian youths studying in

Cuba, brothers Khaled and Hassan Qazzar, who stayed up all night in the square to be among the first in line.

"Che is a symbol of struggle," said Khaled.

The three-day display of the remains in Havana was the start of a six-day tribute in Cuba to the Argentine-born doctor who became an icon for leftists around the world.

Guevara's remains will be laid to rest in a specially built mausoleum after a funeral service in the central city of Santa Clara on October 17.

Guevara, President Fidel Castro's right-hand man in the rebel struggle that led to Cuba's 1959 revolution, was captured by Bolivian troops and executed on October 9, 1967, while leading an abortive guerrilla uprising in Bolivia.

The small box containing his remains was draped with a Cuban flag and displayed along with caskets containing the bones of six former comrades-in-arms of Guevara — four Cubans, a Bolivian and a Peruvian. Their remains were also unearthed in Bolivia and brought to Cuba.

Guevara's casket, identified with two labels saying "Ernesto Guevara de la Serna," and "Che," was in the centre of the room under another, large Cuban flag hanging from the wall.

On one wall, a sign read "Eternal glory to the heroes," over the photographs of 38 people, some Cuban, others from other parts of Latin America, who fought in Guevara's Bolivia mission.

Flags on buildings around the square flew at half-mast. A

huge Cuban flag was draped from the former Industries Ministry (now Interior Ministry) that Guevara headed in the early 1960s, leading his staff out on weekends on voluntary work missions.

One wall of the building is permanently decorated with a large relief based on the famous Korda photograph of his face and the words "to victory always."

This was how Guevara signed off his farewell letter to Castro when he left Cuba in 1965 to try to export revolution abroad, at first in Africa and then in Latin America.

Castro began Cuba's long homage to his former comrade in arms late on Friday, mounting a solemn guard of honour.

The Cuban leader, his brother Raul and a newly

elected party Politburo and Central Committee went from the close of their fifth party congress in the late evening to pay their respects, standing for a minute's silence by the casket.

The Cuban government has seized on the 30th anniversary, and the fact it recovered his remains, to revive Guevara's legacy and present him as more relevant than ever to Cuba.

Some Cubans are likely to pay their respects out of a sense of duty — although even among Cubans critical of the government, Guevara seems to command a particular respect.

Cubans standing in line on Saturday recalled him as above all a man of integrity who fought for his ideals.

"Che has always been with us," said Julia Azanava a student, she said Havana Univer-

sity asked her to attend the tribute, but she felt personally moved to go, not obliged.

Along the line, some 85 Argentine Cubans Solidarity Groups in Buenos Aires and Rosario, where Guevara was born, waved a large Argentine flag. "The ideals of Che are alive here," said Yolanda Perrone, one of the group.

Guevara's remains, flown back to Cuba on July 12 and received then by Castro and his widow and four children, have been kept until now at the defence Ministry.

They will be displayed in Havana until Monday, on Tuesday they will be taken around the city and then on to Santa Clara, scene of a decisive Guevara victory in rebel's struggle against former dictator Fulgencio Batista