

# Pak PM vows to defend parliament's supremacy

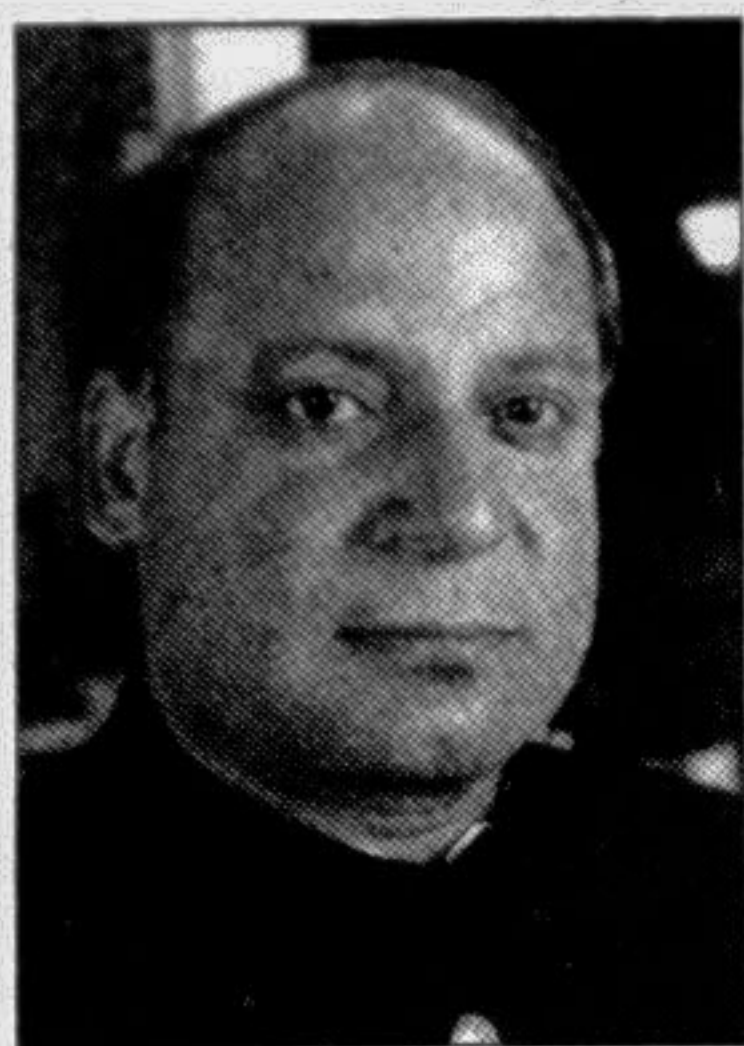
ISLAMABAD, Nov 26: Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has vowed to defend parliament's supremacy as an army-brokered truce held in his battle with the president and judiciary, officials and press said Tuesday, reports AFP.

"We have every right to bring in any law or constitutional amendment and nobody can stop the parliament from performing its function," Sharif told reporters after a lengthy overnight session.

Officials said the meeting was attended by MPs from the ruling Pakistan Muslim League (PML) and its allies in parliament where Sharif commands a more than two-thirds majority.

Sources said several MPs urged the prime minister not to let parliament be marginalised by the current situation.

His statement late Monday came six days after Army Chief General Jahangir Karamat stepped in to stop a parliamentary move to impeach President



Farooq Ahmed Leghari in a new twist to a crippling political and judicial crisis.

observer remarked.

Karamat met for two hours Monday with Leghari and press reports said the discussions focused on ways to thwart a head-on collision between the judiciary and parliament.

The general's mediation had earlier foiled a showdown that looked last week as Leghari refused to sign a law hurriedly passed by parliament to give the prime minister right of appeal if he is convicted in a contempt of court case.

The amendment if signed into law would stop any conviction by the Supreme Court from being implemented until a full court had ruled on his appeal.

Sharif, several of his deputies and cabinet colleagues were formally charged with contempt for allegedly ridiculing the judiciary in an earlier row with Chief Justice Sajjad Ali Shah over his demand to promote five high court judges to the Supreme Court.

# Lord Shiva to help end crisis, believes Reddy

NEW DELHI, Nov 26: A senior member of India's parliament today said the Hindu god Shiva would end the country's week-long political crisis with a "miraculous solution", reports AFP.

T. Subbarami Reddy, a member of the Congress (I) Party which has threatened to topple the minority coalition government, said the deadlock would be solved without elections.

Reddy, an industrialist, film maker and former chairman of a trust running India's richest temple, said he was sure Shiva, the god of destruction, would provide a solution.

"God Shiva will guide us and spare the country another election," he said. "I am 90 per cent sure that elections will not take place."

"I believe in god. I do a lot of Sadhana meditation I think there will be a miraculous solution."

India's government is facing

collapse after the Congress, its key backer, threatened to withdraw support after a coalition party was implicated in the assassination of former Congress premier Rajiv Gandhi in 1991.

Reddy, a senior Congress leader from the southern state of Andhra Pradesh said his statement was not a political stunt.

He told the Times of India newspaper he had a holy Hindu necklace 'given to me by a 95-year-old Sadhu (Hindu holy man) who spent a lifetime praying to Lord Shiva in the Himalayas.'

Reddy is a former chairman of a trust running the Thrumala Temple in Andhra Pradesh.

The shrine, dedicated to a Hindu god whose gaze is believed to be able to scorch the entire world, has an annual income of more than five billion rupees (138 million dollars) and attracts an average 30,000 devotees a day.

# Y'slavia won't hand over citizens to UN tribunal

BELGRADE, Nov 26: Ignoring strong international pressure, a top official in Serbia-Yugoslavia said in comments published Tuesday that his country would not hand over its citizens wanted by the UN war crimes tribunal, reports AP.

According to the Vecernje Novosti daily, Justice Minister Zoran Knezevic reiterated that extradition would violate the constitution. However, he said that Yugoslavia should make greater efforts to put suspected war criminals from the conflicts in Croatia and Bosnia on trial.

Yugoslavia's refusal to cooperate with the UN tribunal in The Hague, Netherlands has already cost the federation its membership in international financial and political organisations.

The most wanted suspect is Radovan Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb wartime leader, who is still pulling strings in the Serb half of Bosnia.

Most of the suspects sought by the Hague tribunal are Serbs, but only a few have been arrested.

# Thapa calls for review of Indo-Nepal friendship treaty

KATHMANDU, Nov 26: Nepalese Foreign Minister Kamal Thapa has called for a review of a friendship treaty with India saying the original is out of date, the state-run RSS news agency said Tuesday, reports AFP.

Addressing a group of Nepalese ambassadors and ambassadors-designate Monday, Thapa said the 1950 Indo-Nepal peace and friendship treaty should be replaced.

The treaty gives political and economic leverage to India over Nepal. New Delhi has been reluctant the review it saying there is no provision for this in the original.

Thapa also reiterated Nepal's call for the removal of Indian troops stationed in the Kalapani area since a Sino-India war in 1962.

Both Nepal and India claim Kalapani, an arid mountainous area, 415 kilometres (259 miles) northwest of here.

Thapa, however, said talks were underway with India on the issue adding if "the demand is vindicated, India will leave Kalapani."

Turning to the problem of Bhutanese refugees in Nepal, Thapa said Nepal was looking to resolve the issue by "fostering relations with Bhutan on the basis of goodwill, confidence and mutual understanding."

## US, DPRK to hold talks at State Dept

WASHINGTON, Nov 26: In an apparent signal of a warming trend, high-level talks between North Korea and the United States are being held for the first time at the State Department, reports AP.

Announcement of Wednesday's meeting followed an agreement last Friday among the United States, China and the two Koreas to begin negotiation on a peace treaty for the Korean Peninsula.

Leading the respective delegations for Wednesday's meeting were US Deputy Assistant Secretary Charles Kartman and North Korean Vice Foreign Minister Kim Gye Gwan.

# Iraq continues to evade and deceive UN arms inspectors

WASHINGTON, Nov 26: Defence secretary William Cohen said Tuesday that Iraq continues to "evade and deceive" the United Nations inspectors who are working to destroy Iraq's weapons of mass destruction programme, reports AFP.

Baghdad has barred inspections at 63 sites it labelled as "sensitive" since weapons experts resumed their work after a three-week suspension.

"I don't accept the proposition that they will not be allowed to conduct those inspections at suspected sites," Cohen said.

"If that is the case then the president, obviously, would consult with the Security Council, and other allies to determine what further action might be appropriate."

Cohen added that the United States continued to consider using force to make Iraq comply with UN resolutions.

"Military force is always an option but... it's not a first option," Cohen said.

But, he added: "If it is neces-

sary to resort to force, I think you can be reasonably assured it will not be a pinprick."

The United States on Tuesday deployed some 30 F-15 and F-16 fighters as well as B-1 bombers in Bahrain. It has also sent a second aircraft carrier to the Gulf, the USS George Washington, and deployed radar-evading Stealth fighters in Kuwait.

"The force is there to give the president of the United States whatever flexibility he feels that he needs," the defence secretary said.

"This is not a short-term problem... as long as Saddam Hussein adopts the attitude that he's going to try to inhibit or restrict or in any way stultify the inspectors, then he cannot expect any light at the end of the tunnel that he is seeking," Cohen added.

Moreover, Cohen said, Iraq has also been able to "intercept communications" between UN headquarters in New York and Iraq.

Meanwhile Iraq accused the

United States on Tuesday of pushing UN arms inspectors into a fresh crisis by insisting on access to presidential sites, as the weapons experts carried out new searches without incident.

The US meanwhile, deployed some 30 fighters and bombers in Bahrain to keep up the military pressure, while the UN Security Council was divided over the process for disarming Iraq.

Iraq also called Tuesday for rapid implementation of an agreement with Russia under which it lifted a ban on US arms inspectors working for the UN Special Commission (UNSCOM) on disarmament.

"The Iraqi Russian accord and the legitimate demands of Iraq must be settled quickly," an official spokesman said after a meeting of the decision-making Revolutionary Command Council chaired by President Saddam Hussein.

He called on Washington "to spare the region from a catastrophe and revise its hostile stand-toward Iraq and Arab countries."



Iraqi women commando volunteers, part of the first women's brigade, receiving their black military uniform while shouting patriotic songs at a camp in Baghdad, Tuesday. On Tuesday UN weapons inspectors started a fourth day of searches at sites in and around Baghdad, looking for biological chemical and nuclear weaponry that violate UN conditions imposed after the 1991 Gulf War. — AP/UNB photo

# Pentagon issues chilling report on NBC proliferation

WASHINGTON, Nov 26: The Pentagon issued Tuesday a chilling report on nuclear, biological and chemical weapons (NBC) proliferation, which it said pose a "clear and present danger today," reports AP.

"For the past three weeks, the world attention has focused on Iraq's programme to produce deadly chemical and biological weapons. But the question goes well beyond Iraq," defence secretary William Cohen said on presenting the document.

The report, titled "proliferation: threat and response" details the capabilities and intentions of 25 countries that have or are developing weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them.

In addition to Iraq, the report notably cites Belarus, China, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Libya, Pakistan, North Korea, Russia and Ukraine.

"Because of US conventional military dominance, adversaries who might challenge the United States are likely to do so using unconventional means, including NBC (nuclear, biological and chemical) weapons,"

the report said.

"The threat is neither far-fetched nor far off," Cohen said. "We face a clear and present danger today."

The Pentagon document said Iraq continues to build up its chemical and biological weapons programme despite UN weapons inspections that resumed Saturday after a three-week suspension amid rising tensions between Iraq and the United States.

"Originally they (the Iraqis) indicated they had just a small quantity of VS," he said referring to the lethal nerve gas.

"One drop on your finger will produce death in a matter of just a few moments," Cohen said.

"Now the UN believes that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein may have produced as much as 200 tons of VS, and this would of course be theoretically enough to kill every man, woman, and child on the face of the earth," he warned.

"There is some hope that if we continue to highlight the nature of the threat that is posed to the future of humankind,

## BRIEFLY

### Yeltsin plans to visit Chechnya:

President Boris Yeltsin is planning a visit to Chechnya to get a first-hand look at what is being done to rebuild the economy of the breakaway republic after its war with Russia, a spokesman said Tuesday, AP reports from Moscow.

Yeltsin told a meeting of his Security Council that he planned to meet with Chechen leader Aslan Maskhadov to discuss "the most essential everyday issues" facing the Chechen people, council secretary Ivan Rytkin said. The president's spokesman, Sergei Yastrzhembsky, confirmed that Yeltsin planned to visit Chechnya, but said no date for the visit had been set.

### 3 executed in Cambodia:

A hit-squad dispatched by a senior Phnom Penh official loyal to strongman Hun Sen executed a rival army general along with one of his aides and a Thai businessman human rights investigators and witnesses charged Tuesday, AFP reports from Sray Prang.

### Moussa meets Sudanese rebel leader:

Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Moussa met Tuesday with John Garang, leader of Sudan's largest rebel group, the Middle East news agency reported Tuesday, Xinhua says from Cairo.

This meeting came as part of Egypt's consultations with Garang, who arrived here Monday, and listen to his views. Moussa told reporters Tuesday that different views of Sudanese parties should be considered when the situation is related to south Sudan.

### Yeltsin, Kohl to hold talks:

Russian President Boris Yeltsin and German Chancellor Helmut Kohl are to meet to discuss the UN Iraq crisis on Sunday, Interfax News Agency reported Tuesday, AFP says from Moscow.

The report quoted presidential spokesman Sergei Yastrzhembsky as saying the two leaders would also review bilateral cooperation during the informal talks in Zavidovo, some 100 kilometres (65 miles) north of Moscow. The meeting is scheduled to last up to four hours. Other foreign policy topics are to include United Nations reforms, European Security and the EU-Russian partnership which is to be officially launched on December 1, the spokesman said.

### Albright's 6-nation tour begins in Dec:

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright will visit Ethiopia, Uganda, Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Africa and Zimbabwe beginning December 8, the State Department announced Tuesday, AFP says from Washington.

Albright, who will be making her first visit to Africa since taking office in January, will seek to develop "a partnership with the new generation of African leaders," spokesman James Foley said. She will address the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in Addis Ababa on December 9 before heading to Kampala the following day and travel on to Kigali on December 11.

### 8 killed in Pak road accident:

Eight people were killed when a trailer truck hit a van in southwest Pakistan on Tuesday, the state-run television reported, AFP says from Islamabad.

The accident occurred in Baluchistan province, it said, adding three people were injured.

### Arafat orders to free professor:

Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat on Tuesday ordered the release of an English professor jailed in July for asking students in an exam about corruption in the Palestinian Authority, AP reports from Gaza City.

The detainee, Fathi Subuh, 44, was taken from prison to Gaza City's Shifa Hospital two weeks ago after complaining about stomach pains. Subuh had refused food for two days to protest his detention. His family has said he was tortured in jail.

### Blast leaves 1 dead in Philippines:

One man was killed and six injured in this southern city Wednesday when a suspect in a stabbing incident threw a grenade to try to escape arrest, AFP says from Iligan.

Police were summoned by a pre-dawn jogger who had been stabbed by three men in the Town Plaza, Chief Inspector Edito Seares said. When three officers and the stabbing victim arrived at the scene the three attackers were still there.

### Strong quake rocks Indonesia:

An earthquake with a 6.8 magnitude hit the Indonesian province of North Sulawesi, authorities said Wednesday. There were no reports of damage or casualties, AP says from Jakarta.

The quake shook the provincial capital of Manado and the city of Gorontalo at 7:15 pm (1215 GMT) Tuesday, according to the government-run Meteorology and Geophysics Agency.

## UK-SA bilateral forum launched

LONDON, Nov 26: British Prime Minister Tony Blair and visiting South African Deputy President Thabo Mbeki launched here Tuesday they UK-South Africa bilateral forum and promised to promote their cooperation in all fields, reports Xinhua.

Blair and Mbeki held talks in London early Tuesday for the first meeting of the forum and joint communique issued after the meeting said that both sides "have agreed to establish a regular high-level bilateral forum to discuss matters of mutual interest."

The two countries are committed to strengthening their relationship by "promoting the further expansion of bilateral trade and investment to the mutual benefit of both peoples."

Britain's labour government also promised to use its European Union (EU) presidency early next year to contribute towards the growth of the southern African economies.

## US to enjoy extra day off for Christmas

VANCOUVER, Nov 26: US President Bill Clinton ordered the federal government to close down for a holiday on Dec 26, the day after Christmas, reports AP.

With Christmas falling on Thursday this year, the president's action would give federal employees a four-day weekend.

Clinton mandated the closing in an executive order issued while he was attending the annual 18-nation Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum.

Clinton said department and agency heads may determine that certain offices or installations must remain open for reasons of national security, defense or other reasons of public need.

## Suspected Tamil Tiger commits suicide

COLOMBO, Nov 26: A suspected Tamil Tiger guerrilla killed himself by biting into a cyanide vial early Wednesday after soldiers entered his house in the capital on a routine search, police said, reports AP.

Police and soldiers then sealed off the neighbourhood and launched a search for weapons, bringing in bulldozers to dig up the garden.

The dead man's father, who was living in the same house, was being questioned by police.

The Tiger rebels carry cyanide vials on a string around their necks, ready to commit suicide rather than be captured. Few rebels have been taken alive in the 14-year war.

Although much of the war is confined to the northeast of the Indian Ocean island, the guerrillas often send fighters to infiltrate the capital and attack economic and civilian targets.

## Bid to revive ME peace process

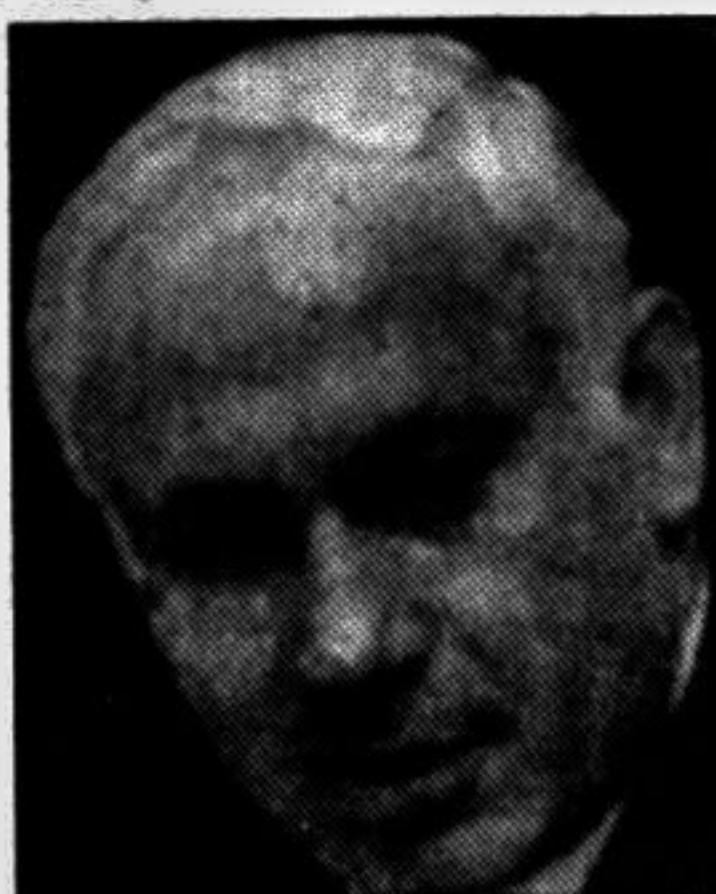
# Netanyahu plans to expand PA's control in West Bank

JERUSALEM, Nov 26: Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has drawn up a plan to expand Palestinian control in the West Bank to more than a third of the occupied territory as part of a new initiative to revive the peace process, a senior official said Tuesday, reports AP.

News of the offer sparked renewed threats of a mutiny from right-wing nationalists in parliament who theoretically have the votes to topple Netanyahu's fragile coalition government.

David Bar-Ilan, a senior Netanyahu advisor, said the proposal being considered by the government "would place 35 to 37 per cent of the West Bank under Palestinian administration."

In return, the Palestinians would have to forego any further transfers of land and enter



accelerated negotiations to reach a final status agreement for the West Bank, Gaza Strip and Jerusalem in six to nine months.

They would also have to forego one further Israeli troop withdrawal called for under interim peace accords pending the outcome of those talks.

This is also linked to action by the Palestinian Authority against terrorism in areas under their control, Bar-Ilan told AFP.

Israeli press reports said the Netanyahu initiative would also involve an undefined slowdown in the expansion of Jewish settlements in disputed areas.

Currently the Palestinian Authority of Yasser Arafat has exclusive control over eight West Bank towns and cities, or three per cent of the territory, known as zone "B" plus civilian authority over another 24 per cent where the Israeli army retains security control.

# UN faces serious cash crisis in its history, says Annan

UNITED NATIONS, Nov 26: UN chief Kofi Annan warned Tuesday that the UN financial crisis was deeper than ever as a result of Washington's failure to pay more than a billion dollars in UN arrears, reports AP.

Annan said in a speech that the United Nations had been accused of "crying wolf" in the past to claim bankruptcy, but that the organisation currently faces "perhaps the most serious cash crisis" in its history.

He told an emergency meeting of the UN General Assembly working group on finances that

the world body would end the year with a deficit of 200 million dollars in the regular budget.

He explained that to plug the hole the United Nations would again have to borrow from a separate peacekeeping fund, set aside to reimburse governments that provide troops and equipment for UN peacekeeping missions.

At the end of December, the United Nations would thus owe 800 million dollars to the troop contributing countries, he said.

"It will be impossible for me

to assure member states who are peacekeeping that they will receive payment any time soon," he said.

Further more, with a decline in peacekeeping operations, "as our peacekeeping funds decrease, so does our ability to borrow," he said.

States such as Britain, Canada and France are among those owed funds, by refusing to demand payment from the United Nations, they have prevented the world body from total bankruptcy.

## Off the Record



Britain's Queen Elizabeth II, smiles with Eeva Antisaari wife of Finnish President Martti Antisaari as they view exhibits, Tuesday during a visit to the Finnish Talvi art exhibition at the Barbican centre in London part of the festival of Finnish culture. — AP/UNB photo

## 'Michael loves kids' — that's for sure

LOS ANGELES: Michael Jackson's wife is pregnant with the couple's second child, a girl who is due in February, reports AP.

The child will be named Paris Michael Katherine Jackson, the singer's wife, Debbie Rowe Jackson, told KNBC-TV in an interview aired Tuesday night.

"I wanted to name her Michael after Michael, but Michael said no," she said. "So we decided Paris because that's where she was conceived Michael because I really want Michael's name in her name and Katherine after his mom."

Rowe lives in Los Angeles. She often visits Jackson and their 9-month-old son, Prince Michael Jackson Jr., at the Neverland Ranch in Los Olivos, about 100 miles (160 kilometres) northwest of Los Angeles.

Jackson and Rowe, a nurse for one of his doctors, were married last November in Australia. Their first child was born Feb. 13.



Anti-abortion protestors stage a protest inside of the Brazilian Congress in Brasilia, Brazil on Tuesday. The protest was held during a debate being held in Congress on Brazilian abortion laws. Posters read "Life or Death." — AP/UNB photo

## Russia to offer N-plant to India during Yeltsin's visit

NEW DELHI, Nov 26: Russia will offer a nuclear power plant to India during a visit here by President Boris Yeltsin in January, officials said yesterday, reports AP.

Gennady Seleznev, Chairman of the Russian Duma, or parliament, said the power plant deal would be signed during the president's visit beginning January 19.

Seleznev, leading a eight-member Russian parliamentary delegation to India, told a news conference that other accords would be also signed during Yeltsin's January 19-20 trip.

The nuclear pact will offer an atomic power plant to be built in India with Russian technical assistance, he said and added that another agreement would be signed to "resolve the outstanding issue of debts."

Russia, after the Soviet collapse, demanded the repayment of 8.33 billion dollars India owed the former union.

India, after bitter negotiations, agreed in 1993 to repay a 10th of the debt over 12 years and the remainder in 33 installments with exports.

Seleznev said leaders of the two countries will also negotiate India's requirement for unpolished diamonds from Russia for processing here besides gold procurements from the federation.

Experts have said India and Russia would also reopen negotiations on the purchase of military hardware worth several billion dollars during Yeltsin's trip.

Sixty per cent of India's military needs were met by the Soviet Union but after it collapsed, Delhi turned to Moscow for the resumption of defence supplies under a long-term co-operation treaty.

The Russian parliamentary chief said: "Russia attaches great importance to further consolidating cooperation with India in defence, trade, infrastructure, science,