Milosevic compliance with accord insufficient: US

WASHINGTON, Oct 17: The Clinton administration said that Yugoslav compliance with the US-brokered agreement on Kosovo was substantial but not sufficient to rule out the possibility of airstrikes in the coming days, reports AP.

We believe NATO's guns should remain cocked and NA-TO's military commander should remain in a position to act," State Department spokesman James P Rubin said Friday, explaining US support for an extension in authorisation of the use of force by NATO against Serb forces.

Rubin spoke to reporters in the rural Maryland setting where Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat are holding peace talks. He said about half the mili-

tary units that were in Kosovo but didn't belong there are no longer in the field — meaning they are confined to barracks or have left the province. In addition, he said monitors are seeing fewer and fewer police in the countryside.

Meanwhile, the CIA estimated 35,000 refugees have come down from the mountains

reports from New Delhi.

AFP reports from Bogota.

American capital.

Moscow.

investigation into the collapse.

in the past 36 hours out of about 300,000 ethnic Albanians who had fled Serb forces since February, a senior administration official said. UN and US disaster and refugee assistance teams are on the ground, the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

U-2 spy planes will begin flying over Kosovo on Saturday as part of a NATO force to ensure that Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic is complying with UN demands to pull back his army and police troops, the official said.

An unarmed 2,000-member international verification force, which Milosevic officially agreed to on Friday, is just arriving in Kosovo with an initial 54 members under the auspices of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

US officials have not revealed how many Americans will participate in verification, but the State Department is considering hiring observers from a private Virginia company, Military Professional Resources Inc, said an administration official and the com-

BEEFE

9 die in temple collapse in India: Nine women were killed and two were seriously injured when a

200-year-old temple collapsed in the main Hindu pilgrimage

centre of Benaras, the Press Trust of India said yesterday, AFP

every year, said the roof of the Balaji temple caved in late Fri-

day during a religious ceremony. Authorities had ordered an

2 newsmen killed in Colombia: Two

journalists were killed by unknown assailants in Colombia

within a 24-hour period, the country's police announced Friday,

ing shot in the head Thursday in Cartago, 500 kilometres west

of Bogota, a day after reporter Saul Alcaraz Westin was gunned

down by five men in Medellin, a city northeast of the South

2 killed as plane crashes in Philippines:

A light plane crashed in a mountain village in the southern

Philippines yesterday killing two foreign passengers, police

the pilot, was on its way to Cagayan De Oro, 800 km from

Manila, when it crashed near Iligan. "A village official said two

of the passengers were killed and that these are foreigners."

Iligan police superintendent Isnaji Bantala told reporters. Two

of those on board, believed to be Filipinos, were seriously

Violence claims 10 more in Manipur:

Ten people were killed in a renewed outbreak of tribal violence

in the far-eastern Indian state of Manipur, the Press Trust of

Rebels from the Kuki tribe Friday ambushed two buses carry-

ing rival Naga tribals in Manipur's remote Tamenglong district.

The news agency said they killed eight Nagas, an Indian paramilitary guard and the driver.

Kyrgyzstan holds referendum:

Voters in the Central Asian nation of Kyrgyzstan chose

Saturday whether to amend their constitution to allow private

will be allowed for five years, the Interfax news agency reported.

The amendment would also grant Kyrzyzstan's rural residents

ownership of the small land plots they live on non-Kyrgyz citi-

zens and companies with foreign participation would be barred

Yeltsin spends weekend in country:

President Boris Yeltsin, fighting off bronchitis and a cold, is

spending the weekend resting at his country home outside

Moscow, his press service said Saturday, AP reports from

dismissed doctors orders and worked in the Kremlin two days

last week. The President has a respiratory infection that forced

1,500 Bulgarians commit suicide each yr:

Around 1,500 Bulgarians commit suicide each year, Professor

Kiril Milenkov said Friday which presenting a national

cently suicides by bankrupt businessmen have been on the rise,

Milenkov said. As a rule, the problems leading to suicide in-

clude unemployment, harsh living conditions, personal and

Suicide is most often motivated by unrequited love, but re-

programme for suicide prevention, Xinhua reports from Sofia.

Aides have said Yeltsin's health is "satisfactory, and he

Even if the amendment passes, no sales of agricultural land

India reported yesterday, AP reports from New Delhi.

land ownership, AP reports from Moscow.

from owning land in this former Soviet republic.

him to cut short a visit to Central Asia on Monday.

family problems, and pressure from employers.

The twin-engine Beechcraft, carrying five people including

said, Reuters reports from Iligan, Philippines.

Colombian journalists Jose Arturo Guapacha died after be-

Police in the northern town, visited by millions of Hindus



Divesh Vihria, aged 8, wearing sunglasses, holding a candle, when he and other children visited the US embassy bomb site, Friday. Divesh was seriously injured in both eyes when the August 7, 1998 bomb blast struck in Nairobi. 224 people died including 12 Americans - AP/UNB photo and 5,500 injured during the August 7, 1998 bombing in Nairobi.

Release of Indian fishermen held in Pakistan ordered

Indo-Pak diplomats meet for second day

ISLAMABAD, Oct 17: Senior Indian and Pakistani diplomats met for a second day today to discuss a 50-year old dispute over the Himalayan region of Kashmir, officials said, reports

Reuters. "Today we are going to start with the agenda item pertaining to Jammu and Kashmir," Pakistan's Foreign Secretary Shamshad Ahmad told reporters before a meeting with his Indian counterpart, K Ragunath.

Talks on Friday between the government officials focused on peace and security in the region in which both sides exchanged proposals on the issue of nuclear and conventional arms. officials said.

"I can say some substantive proposals were exchanged from both sides, and now we have to give very careful consideration to these proposals," Ahmad said. He did not elaborate.

Raghunath declined to answer reporters' questions. Pakistan says Kashmir is crucial and 'core' to peace and security in South Asia.

Tensions between the two neighbours, who have fought three wars since their independence from Britain in 1947. have risen since they conducted tit-for-tat nuclear tests last

Two of those wars were over Kashmir.

Talks have been deadlocked since September last year because of acrimony over Kash-

New Delhi blames Islamabad for sponsoring a nine-year old rebellion in Indian-ruled Kashmir. Pakistan denies the charge and says it only offers moral and diplomatic support to the Kashmiri people in their struggle for self-determination.

An AFP report adds, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif Friday ordered the release of all Indian fishermen held by Pakistan as the two countries opened talks

on peace and security, officials

"As a gesture of goodwill and in view of humanitarian considerations." Sharif also ordered the release of all Indian boats in Pakistan's custody, the officials said.

Pakistan's decision to "unilaterally" release the fishermen and boats, was conveyed to the leader of Indian delegation K. Raghunath, who met Sharif late Friday, they said.

Raghunath conveyed the 'good wishes" of Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee to Sharif which were "reciprocated," they said.

Sources said Pakistan was holding 145 Indian fishermen and 26 boats on charges on illegally fishing in its territorial waters.

Some 182 Pakistani fishermen and 21 boats were in Indian custody on similar charges, they said.

ME peace talks fail to make any headway

WYE MILLS, Maryland, Oct ter. 17: Two days of talks between Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat have failed to make any progress on key issues standing in the way of a new Mideast peace accord, officials from both sides said on Friday, re-

ports AFP. During the latest two rounds of meeting Friday at the Wye River Conference Center near here. Netanyahu notably reiterated his demand that Palestinians extradite some 30 militants accused of involvement in deadly anti-Israeli attacks, - a demand Arafat has ruled out, the officials said.

Netanyahu also insisted that the Palestinian parliament-inexile, the Palestinian National Council (PNC), convene to reaffirm the cancellation of anti-Israel clauses in the PLO charrefused, saving that the PNC already annulled the offensive clauses at a May 1996 meeting and that the decision can be ratified by the smaller PLO executive committee.

"Netanyahu has simply repeated the same old position. said a Palestinian official following the meetings.

"Nothing has moved," confirmed one Israeli official.

AP adds: Halfway through the latest round of Mideast peace talks, President Bill Clinton is again joining Israeli and Palestinian leaders to try to mediate differences over coun tering terrorism. In the balance is a long-

sought accord that would give the Palestinians control over more land in the West Bank. Clinton planned to meet Saturday with Israeli Prime

Minister Benjamin Netanyahu Arafat, with US backing, has and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, with hopes an agreement can be reached by Sunday. Saturday's talks were being described as "informal" since it is the Jewish Sabbath and work is proscribed.

> According to diplomatic sources, the Palestinians have accepted neither an Israeli demand that terrorism suspects be extradited to Israel for trial nor an American compromise that they be tried by Palestinian

> And while the Palestinians were willing to take steps to enhance security in Ramallah, a major Arab city on the outskirts of Jerusalem, there was "absolutely no real movement on anything" else Friday, the second day of the US-sponsored summit, said one of the sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Afghan opposition forces retake strategic town from Taliban

ISLAMABAD, Oct 17 Afghanistan's opposition forces recaptured a strategic northern town from the Taliban Islamic militia in overnight fighting, a Pakistan-based Afghan news service reported today, says Reuters.

Afghan Islamic Press (AIP), quoting opposition sources, said the Taliban were pushed out of Talogan, capital of Takhar Province, by the forces of Ahmed Shah Masood, military chief of the ousted Afghan government. There was no immediate

comment available from the Taliban, who captured the strategic stronghold in August. The fighting took place as

control the entire country and the United Nations stepped up back their calls for recognition efforts to ease tension between the Taliban and Iran and the as the legitimate government of Taliban renewed a campaign to Afghanistan. oust Masood, the last potent AIP said hundreds of Talchallenger to their rule.

iban fighters were arrested on Friday night and Masood forces UN envoy Lakhdar Brahimi, seized three helicopters and an Algerian diplomat, is in more than 20 tans in the fight-Pakistan for talks with the Taliban on defusing tension caused ing, which has been going to goby the Islamic militia's admising on for more than a week. Masood, who remains the sion that Maverick fighters only obstacle in the Taliban's killed 11 Iranian officials when they overran the opposition

way of gaining complete control of Afghanistan, needed to recapture Talogan because of the province's proximity to neighbouring Tajikistan. Masood's forces are resisting

the Taliban offences in Ghorband valley in Parwan province

Typhoon Zeb kills 85 across Philippines, Taiwan

TAIPEI, Oct 17: Typhoon Zeb killed at least 85 people on a violent march across the Philippines and Taiwan and was now headed for Japan, officials said today, reports Reuters.

The storm, which killed 67 in the Philippines, had weakened significantly, meteorologists said. It was lumbering northeast into the open pacific towards the southern Japanese island of Okinawa.

Taiwan's central weather bureau lifted islandwied land and sea typhoon warnings early today, enabling people to get out and assess the damage, clear wreckage, hunt for missing survivors and bury the dead. Packed with strong winds

and heavy rains, Zeb swept across the densely populated island on Thursday and Friday, killing at least 18 people on Taiwan and leaving 13 missing. Rescuers found two bodies buried alive by landslides under

collapsed homes in Taipei late on Friday. Government offices, finan-

cial markets, schools and businesses resumed normal operations today after Friday's shut-

Ugandan govt preparing amnesty bill for rebels

KAMPALA, Uganda, Oct 17: Seeking new ways to end 12 years of insurgency in northern and western Uganda, the government plans to introduce a bill in parliament that would offer amnesty to all rebel groups, Radio Uganda said Saturday, reports AP.

The state-run radio said the government had appointed five ministers to consult with district and regional officials to win support for the proposed Amnesty Bill 1998.

The report could not be immediately confirmed. The radio did not say when the bill would be presented in parliament.

If true, it would mark a departure from President Yoweri Museveni's refusal to negotiate with rebels who he has labeled traitors and terrorists.

"In accordance with a policy of reconciliation as one of the avenues of establishing peace in all parts of the country, an amnesty will be extended to all persons engaged in activities of war," said a statement broadcast over Radio Uganda and issued by Ruhakana Rugunda, the minister in charge of the president's office.

Two major rebel groups and several smaller ones are operating in Uganda: the Lord's Resistance Army which has terrorised the north of the county from bases in war-torn southern Sudan, and the Allied Democratic Forces which is based along Uganda's western border with Congo.

Serb forces to pull back before NATO deadline

LONDON, Oct 17: Yugoslavia's ambassador to London said Saturday that Serb forces will pull out of Kosovo province ahead of a new NATO deadline and in time to avoid threatened air strikes, reports AP. "I am convinced that our

leader (Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic) has been pulling his troops out of Kosovo," Milos Radulovic said in an interview with British Broadcasting Corp. radio. Milosevic agreed Monday to

withdraw remaining Serb forces from Kosovo, begin negotiations with ethnic Albanians toward self-rule in the southern Serbian province, and allow up to 300,000 refugees to go home. The North Atlantic Treaty

Organisation on Friday gave Milosevic another 10 days, until October 27, to comply with international demands and pull his troops out of Kosovo or face air attacks.

Milosevic has met another demand by allowing 2,000 foreign monitors into the province.

Radulovic dismissed reports that Serbian forces were remaining in large numbers. "If you ask separatists, then you can be sure that they will say no forces were pulled out," the en-Radulovic said the Yugoslav

authorities have also allowed more than 400 journalists into Kosovo, as well as humanitarian organisations. "There are so many people. So the situation is quite transparent there," he

Noisy demonstration in Tehran

Iranian hardliners vow to kill Rushdie

TEHRAN, Oct 17: More than 1,000 Iranians staged a noisy demonstration Friday against British author Salman Rushdie, vowing to kill him and the publishers of his book "The Satanic Verses, reports AP.

The protesters cheered as the organisers unveiled a threestory portrait of an alleged would-be assassin of Rushdie that was painted on an apartment building in a northern suburb of Tehran.

The crowd carried banners reading "There is no turningback from Imam Khomeini's fatwa " in clear opposition to the government's decision last month to distance itself from the death sentence imposed on Rushdie by the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

The ayatollah, the leader of the Islamic Revolution of 1979, condemned the Booker Prizewinning author to death on the grounds that his book blasphemed Islam.

The Iranian government said last month that it did not support the bounty offered for the death of Rushdie and, after a meeting between their foreign

ministers on September 24. Britain and Iran decided to upgrade their relations to ambas-

sadorial level. The move has been fiercely attacked by hardliners in Iran who oppose the policies of the moderate President Mohammad Khatami. A semi-government organisation raised the bounty to more than dlrs 2.8 million and Friday's demonstration as the second this week

by supporters of the fativa. "Our government must know that if they don't want to participate in carrying out the orders of Imam Khomeini, that's fine. But if they want to interfere with his edict, then we are facing serious problems," the protest leader, Allah Karam, told the crowd through loudspeakers.

Demonstrators shouted "Rushdie must die."

A man in a wheel-chair took the podium to deliver a message in English to Rushdie: "Listen to me. Remember my face. I'm your killer. I want to have a dialogue with you - with a machine gun. We will kill you."

Gunmen kill ex-governor of Sindh, 2 others in Karachi

KARACHI, Oct 17: Gunmen in the strife-torn Pakistani port city of Karachi early today assassinated Hakeem Mohammad Saeed, a respected former governor of the southern province of Sindh, and his two colleagues, police said, reports

The said two men armed with automatic weapons fired at Hakeem Saeed, a top practitioner of herbal medicine, soon after he entered his crowded Saeed, his deputy Abdul

Qadir Qureshi, and a clinic employee died in the attack while seven others were seriously injured, police said.

The gunmen fled in a waiting car occupied by two others, police and witnesses said. The motive for the murder

was not yet known, police said. Saeed, 78, was popular in the subcontinent. His internationally known Hamdard Foundation runs a chain of pharmaceutical laboratories in Pakistan and India.

He was governor of Sindh province, of which Karachi is the capital, in 1993 and 1994 and had been a personal physi-

cian to several Pakistani presi-

Saeed was also chief editor of the 'Hamdard' (empathy) Magazine, and had conducted research in the Chinese system of medicine.

He had set up the Madinatul Hekmat University of Medicine in Karachi.

Anwar being treated well, says Mahathir

TOKYO, Oct 17: Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad said Saturday that his former deputy was being treated well in jail and even had a mattress to sleep on, according to a press report, reports AP.

"He's given special food, his accommodation is different from ordinary prisoners," Mahathir reportedly told reporters on the second day of his fiveday visit to Japan. A Malaysian embassy offi-

cial accompanying Mahathir in Tokyo refused to comment on the report from Malaysia's official Bernama news agency.

New move to settle Jones' lawsuit against Clinton

DALLAS, Oct 17: Paula former legal team staking settling her sexual harassment lawsuit against President Bill Clinton and a federal judge decided against releasing Jones' testimony in the case, reports Reuters.

Jones' attorneys, who have been haggling with Clinton's team for weeks over a cash set tlement of the case, said they were putting together a fresh offer but declined to give de-'We are going to make a new

offer and they ought to get it this evening," said David Pyke, a member of the Dallas-based law firm which is now representing Jones. Clinton has offered 700,000

US dollars to settle the lawsuit but Jones' attorneys have demanded at least 1 million dollar. The negotiations have been further complicated by Jones'

Jones' lawyers said on Friday claim to up to 800,000 dollars they would make a new offer for from any deal, to cover expenses incurred when they had the

The Washington Post reported on Friday that, under the new proposal, Jones would again demand that Clinton pay her the full 1 million dollars she demanded from his when the latest round of negotiations began several weeks ago. In addition, she would accept

the 1 (one) million dollar of offered of his own accord by New York real estate developer Abe Hirschfeld who has said he wants to see the case concluded. Jones alleges that Clinton

exposed himself to her and asked her for oral sex inside a little rock hotel room in 1991. He flatly denies the allegations and has consistently refused previous demands for a public apology as part of any settle-

Lockerbie bombing trial

No breakthrough yet with Libya: Britain sion, Greenstock said: "I'm not UNITED NATIONS, Oct 17:

Britain's Ambassador to the United Nations on Friday reported "no breakthrough" with Libya in securing a trial in the Netherlands of two suspects wanted for the 1988 Lockerbie bombing, reports AFP. British ambassador Str Jeremy Greenstock informed

the UN Security Council that he had passed on to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan on Wednesday "clarifications" to Libyan questions regarding the But speaking to reporters af-

ter the closed-door council ses-

saying to you that there has been any breakthrough. "All I'm saying is that I reported to the council that there

are serious exchanges going on. Asked whether Britain had now agreed to a Libyan demand that if convicted, the two Libyan suspects serve their sentences in the Netherlands or Libya, Greenstocks restated the British position that they would be jailed in Scotland.

"We are not in discussion with the Libyans on this, and we're not negotiating on it," he

Chinese military

Bihar govt

NEW DELHI, Oct 17: An Indian court has criticised a provincial government which premier Atal Behari Vajpayee unsuccessfully tried to sack for a state of total anarchy which led people to live "like animals." media reports said today. reports AFP.

The High Court of the eastern

state of Bihar, ruling on a

public interest petition filed by a lawyer, said: "people in Bihar are living like animals even as criminals are moving about and operating with liberty. "Legislators and the elite are being killed with the killers going scot-free," Judges BP Singh

the Times of India daily as saving. Vajpayee's government suffered a humiliating snub last month when President KR Narayanan rejected its recom-

and SK Sinha were quoted in

mendation to sack the Bihar administration of Chief Minister Rabri Devi, an illiterate mother of nine. Narayanan told the federal

government it had given no constitutionally valid grounds for sacking an elected state government.

100 million people, is ruled by Devi's centrist party, which bitterly opposes India's ruling Hindu nationalists. Under Indian law the Presi-

Devi's Maverick husband Laloo Prasad Yadav was Bihar's tion scandal.

Bihar, a sprawling state of

dent must dismiss a provincial government if such a recommendation is forwarded a second time.

Chief Minister until July 1997 when he handed over the state government to her before his imprisonment in a huge corrup-

MOSCOW, Oct 17: Since winning re-election in 1996, Boris Yeltsin has been on a twoyear losing streak, reports AP. His shaky health has be-

come a national obsession and keeps him away from the Kremlin for days, and sometimes weeks, at a time. The economy is suffering through its worst breakdown in the post-Soviet era, but he rarely raises the subject and

hasn't even hinted at a recovery

Even if he did, a growing band of critics argues, he's too weak physically and politically to launch any ambitious reforms before his term ends in 2000. Always eager to show he's still in charge, Yeltsin has fired

the entire government twice

this year. But to what end? The

new government, led by Prime

Minister Yevgeny Primakov, is

a mishmash of politicians from

various groups who are struggling to put together a coherent economic program. Yeltsin, 67, brushes aside worries about his health and

stronghold of Mazar-I-Sharif

their attention to crushing Ma-

sood, whose forces are dug in

some 25 km north of the capi-

tal, to reinforce their claim to

The Taliban have turned

says there is no chance he will guit before his term ends. The Russian constitution makes impeachment an unlikely option, yet the clamor for Yeltsin's resignation is louder than it's ever been.

"Every one of his public events is painful to watch," said Andrei Piontkowsky, a political analyst and harsh critic of the president. "He's out of touch. The state of his health and the state of mind are deplorable." Several leading Russian

newspapers have urged Yeltsin

to step down. They freely specu-

late about whether he has

Alzheimer's disease, or a return

of heart problems that necessi-

tated quintuple bypass surgery

two years ago.

Yeltsin's public approval rating is in the single digits, but the president's hard-line foes have had difficulty turning this disenchantment into mass sup-

Protests around the country on October 7 drew about 1 million marchers, but he crowds were much smaller than predicted and have not resulted in any sustained labor unrest. Still, the president is losing

support from traditionally friendly camps. "Temporary incapacity is one thing, but if a person cannot work and permanently perform his functions, he should muster the will and courage to say that," Moscow Mayor Luzhkov said Friday. "Everything now

depends on the president

himself." Luzhkov, a likely presidential contender in 2000, has been an ally of Yeltsin and has never before openly questioned the

president's health or his ability to govern.

Yeltsin normally relishes a good fight and is at his best at times of confrontation.

Yet he has responded to the economic crisis by keeping a profile so low it borders on reclusive. He spends most days at a country residence to the west of Moscow, venturing into the Kremlin perhaps two or three times a week, and then only for a few hours.

Most public appearances are carefully controlled meetings in his Kremlin office, where he chitchats with government officials briefly for the benefit of

the camera. Last week's trip to Central Asia was his first foreign journey in five months, and it proved a public relations disaster. Yeltsin almost fell at a red carpet ceremony in Uzbekistan. He canceled meetings, cut short a news conference and headed home a day early with a respiratory infection. He has called off a trip to a

summit in Malaysia next month, and government sources said one reason was concern about the effects of the long flight on his health. If Yeltsin were to resign - an

unlikely scenario at this point then Primakov would take over as president temporarily and a presidential election would be held within three months. The leading contenders would be Luzhkov, former secu-

rity chief Alexander Lebed and Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov. To some, the signs of a campaign are already "It seems to me we are already in the middle of a new

ntkowsky, the analyst.

presidential race," said Pio-

Two elder statesmen from Taiwan and China held talks in

A weakened Yeltsin lacks energy for new reforms exercises not threatening to Taiwan

TAIPEI, Oct 17: Taiwan does not see present military exercises in China as intimidation and they are not linked to the high-level talks that are underway between the two rivals. a military officials said Saturday, reports AP. The exercises are part of

routine maneuvers China holds every autumn and are not specially targeted at Taiwan, said the Defense Ministry official, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Shanghai this week to see ways of resuming contacts that were suspended three years ago after Beijing accused Taiwan of campaigning to raise its international recognition.

was destroyed by Serb forces during recent offensives against Kosovo Liberation Army fighters, according to - AP/UNB photo local residents. Indian court criticises

An ethnic Albanian holds a torn copy of the Muslim holy

book, the Quran, inside a ransacked mosque in the town

of Banja, some 40 kms from Pristina, Friday. The mosque