

# Pakistan's partial troop pullback from India border in final phase

ISLAMABAD, Oct 23: Pakistan's partial troop withdrawal from its international borders with India, started last weekend as a goodwill gesture, has entered its final phase, military officials said today, reports AP.

feared a new all-out war, were returning, the officials said. They did not give an exact number.

A former diplomat, Sardar Ahmed, said it was now India's turn to show to the world it really wanted a turnaround in bilateral ties.

Kashmir, which Islamabad terms a legitimate self-determination struggle.

# 3 Indian soldiers killed in Kashmir

SRINAGAR, India, Oct 23: Suspected Muslim separatists triggered a landmine blast in Kashmir, killing three Indian soldiers and injuring five, police said today, reports AP.

"Automatic rifles, grenades, wireless sets and ammunition were recovered from the militants' hideout," a defence spokesman said.

# Illicit wealth worth billions of dollars

## Pak military ruler sets up new body to pursue corrupt leaders

ISLAMABAD, Oct 23: Pakistan's new military rulers have created a body to pursue corrupt politicians and recover illicit wealth that could total billions of dollars, said the independent newspaper The News on Saturday, reports AP.

A two-thirds majority that swept him to power in 1997, has been in "protective custody" since the coup while being investigated for corrupt practices, said army officials.

brother, Shabbaz, former chief minister of Pakistan's largest Punjab province also is in protective custody.



Texas Governor and Republican US presidential hopeful George W. Bush listens to a patron as he serves coffee while on a campaign stop in the Country Kitchen Restaurant Friday in Newport, New Hampshire.

# Russian jets bomb Grozny airport

GROZNY, Oct 23: Two Russian warplanes struck the airport in Grozny today just after 10:00 a.m. (12:00noon BST), an AFP correspondent at the scene reported.

## US urges Moscow-Grozny to hold talks

Chechen presidency. The raid, which took place shortly after 0900 GMT, also caused considerable material damage in the eastern town, the presidency press office said.

casus has clearly worsened, especially with yesterday's shocking violence in Grozny," the Chechen capital, acting US Secretary of State Strobe Talbot said Friday.

# Indian police plan special squad to nab corrupt cops

NEW DELHI, Oct 23: Police in the Indian capital are launching a special squad to track down corrupt policemen following a steep rise in the number of bribery complaints against officers, a report said today, reports AP.

# 10 killed in Russian raids in E Chechnya

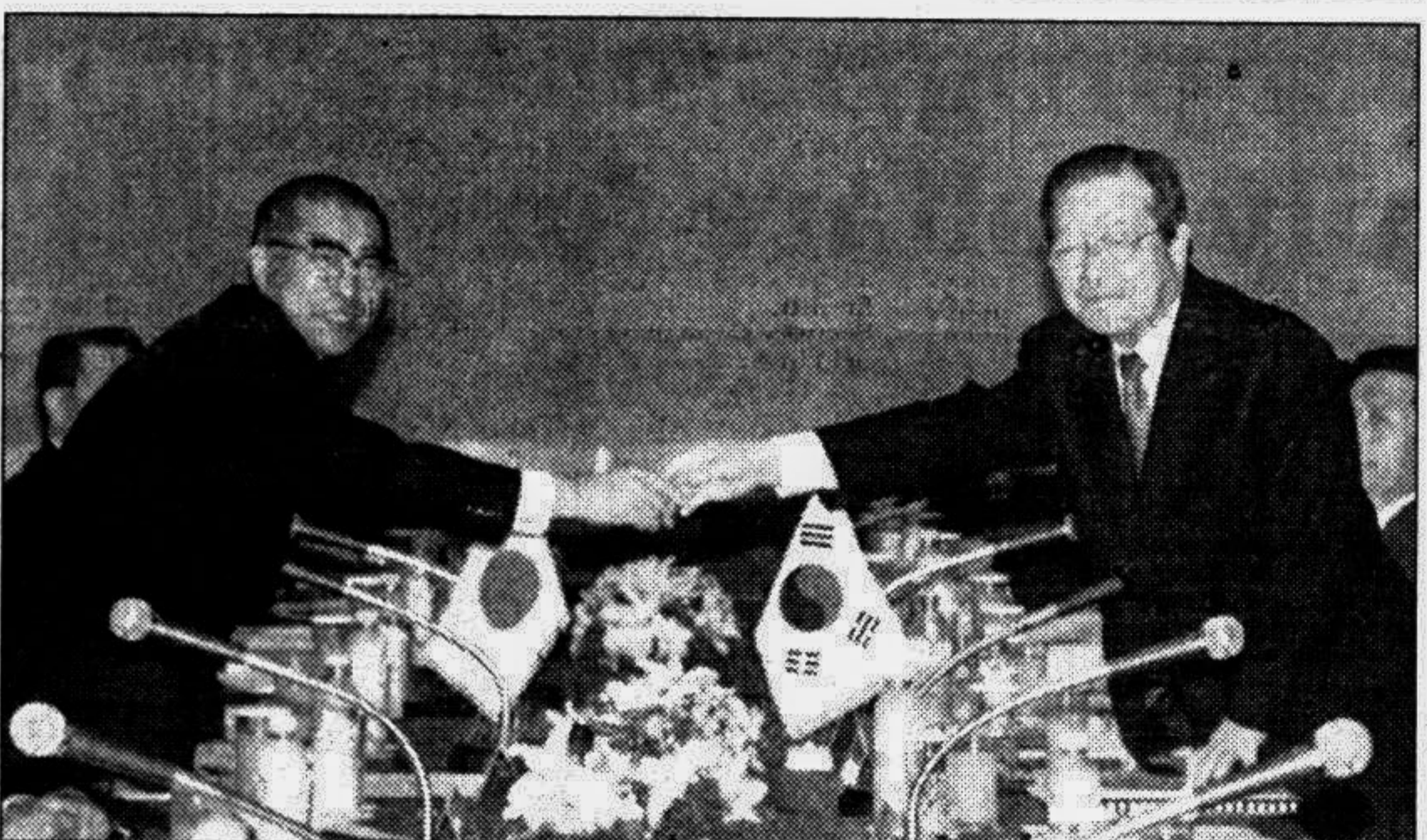
About 10 people were killed and another 15 wounded Saturday when Russian planes attacked the Chechen town of Serjien-Yurt, according to provisional estimates released by the Russian officials have backed off any link to the carnage.

# US concerned about peace prospects in Chechnya

The United States called on leaders in Russia and Chechnya to "urgently" begin a political dialogue amid rising concerns about peace prospects for the breakaway republic.

# Colombia peace talks on track as Bogota makes concessions

BOGOTA, Oct 23: After months of delays and setbacks, Colombian officials and rebel leaders appear poised to finally resume peace talks, renewing hopes for an end to more than three decades of civil war, reports AP.



Japanese Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi (L) shakes hands with South Korean Prime Minister Kim Jong-pil during a meeting in Cheju Island yesterday.

# India to launch 5,000 km missile in 2001

WASHINGTON, Oct 23: India is likely to launch a 5,000-KM range missile, Surya, in mid-2001, the Defence News Weekly said, reports PTI.



Indian Army anti-mine Casper armoured vehicles drive through downtown Guwahati, on their way to anti-insurgency operations in this troubled north-eastern state Friday.

# Cabinet formation

## New govt warned to exclude Suharto-era politicians

JAKARTA, Oct 23: New President Abdurrahman Wahid and Vice President Megawati Sukarnoputri were warned today against naming cabinet members tainted by the old regime as Indonesians awaited the release of the line-up, reports AP.

It said the new government "possesses fundamental assets which the previous one did not have -- legitimacy, credibility and no relationship to a legacy of corruption and abuse of power."

But Golkar was believed to have played a crucial role in bringing about a political compromise that led to the election of Wahid and Megawati.

# BRIEFLY

**Myanmar arrests 30 Thai gamblers:** Myanmar has arrested 40 Thai gamblers, Thai officials said Saturday, in a move likely to further strain ties between the Southeast Asian neighbours after a hostage crisis here this month.

# Japan, ROK agree to step up cooperation on DPRK

CHEJU ISLAND, South Korea, Oct 23: Japan and South Korea agreed today to step up coordination with the United States in their policy toward North Korea in wide ranging talks, reports AP.

missile over Japan last year. North Korea officially declared a moratorium on further missile tests in return for the United States' lifting of economic sanctions under a landmark accord in Berlin in September.

# Andreotti acquitted

PALERMO, Sicily, Oct 23: A court in the Sicilian capital today acquitted former Italian prime minister Giulio Andreotti of charges of colluding with the Mafia, reports AP.

Palermo, the verdict said Andreotti was acquitted for lack of evidence.

Andreotti, who attended the opening of the trial in the Sicilian capital on September 26, 1995, was in Rome early Saturday and did not attend the reading of the verdict.

# Richardson due in India next week

## Delhi urged to take lead in test-ban battle

WASHINGTON, Oct 23: Failure of the United States to ratify a global nuclear test ban treaty gives India an opportunity to take the lead on the pact, Energy Secretary Bill Richardson suggested Friday, reports AP.

# Charges against Rajiv in Bofors scam politically motivated: Sonia

NEW DELHI, Oct 23: India's opposition leader and widow of slain premier Rajiv Gandhi has said charges against her husband in a Swedish arms deal scandal were "politically motivated," reports said today, reports AP.

visit of officials with Swedish arms dealer Bofors in 1987 to enquire into the case. It was the first time after 13 years of investigations that Rajiv Gandhi had been named in the scandal, Rajiv Gandhi had denied any wrongdoing.

# Gusmao offers amnesty to pro-Jakarta militias

DILI, East Timor, Oct 23: East Timor independence leader Xanana Gusmao today offered amnesty to pro-Jakarta militias and urged his people to put the "dark page" of their history behind them, reports AP.

"East Timor was devastated when the militiamen went on a murderous rampage following the August 30 vote for independence, but Gusmao defended against reflecting on the past.

Asked if he would set up a South Africa-style truth commission, he replied: "Maybe yes, maybe no."