

No precondition set for Clinton's India visit

NEW DELHI, Nov 13: US Congressman Gary Ackerman yesterday asserted his country had not set any pre-condition like signing of CTBT for President Bill Clinton's visit to India...

Clinton intended to visit India and Pakistan, at the earliest possible time, he said but expressed doubts whether visit to Islamabad would take place in view of the military coup there...

US deports record number of immigrants

WASHINGTON, Nov 13: Immigration officials said Friday they expelled 177,000 illegal immigrants from the United States in the last fiscal year...

There might have been more, but for the temporary suspension of deportations for Central American detainees whose homelands were devastated by Hurricane Mitch, officials said...

Nearly half of last year's criminals expelled were immigrants with drug convictions.

Mexican nationals accounted for 83 per cent of removals and 77 per cent of criminal deportations.

ArchNet to provide resource on architecture

WASHINGTON, Nov 13: The Aga Khan yesterday addressed industry leaders, government officials and development executives from around the world at the World Bank on applying information technology to the problems of human capital and development...

Introducing ArchNet, an Internet-based network being developed by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard University...

The programme, according to the Aga Khan, would "serve as a model of effective educational cooperation between two parts of the developing world" and "enhance the status of women by making them indispensable partners in societal advancement."

US links Pak blasts to sanctions on Taliban

WASHINGTON, Nov 13: The United States on Friday said it was unclear who fired rockets at US and UN facilities in Pakistan, but officials linked the attack to sanctions set to take effect in two days against Afghanistan's Taliban movement...

State Department, White House and intelligence officials all said it was not yet clear who was responsible for the attacks. "We can't rule out anybody until the investigation continues," Rubin said.

But a US intelligence official, noting the attacks targeted UN offices, said, "It's looking like it's probably related somehow to the UN sanctions issue."

official, who spoke on condition of anonymity. The weapons appear to be homemade," the official added.



Police remove tinted panels from the windows of a jeep as security is stepped up a day after a series of bomb blasts in the capital city of Islamabad yesterday.

Russian troops kill 200 Chechen fighters

MOSCOW, Nov 13: Russian planes carried out a record number of bombing excursions over rebel Chechnya and its capital Grozny overnight Friday, Russian military sources said, claiming they had killed more than 200 Chechen fighters, reports AFP.

ing the city with rocket and artillery fire for more than a week. The army high command for the northern Caucasus said favourable weather overnight Friday led to the success of the bombing missions over Chechnya.

Russian military sources also reported Saturday they had fought off an attack by 400 rebel fighters to the south of the capital.

Myanmar frees 21 NLD members

Myanmar's junta has freed 21 members of the opposition National League for Democracy (NLD) after more than a year in jail, party sources said Saturday, AFP reports from Yangon.

A Russian court Friday banned the neo-Nazi party Spas (Salvation) from taking part in parliamentary elections in December, granting an application by the justice ministry, the Interfax news agency reported, AFP says from Moscow.

The cancellation of the party's registration for the elections was made on the basis that some of the documentation presented contained false information on its regional branches.

Mafia boss arrested in S Africa: Alleged Sicilian Mafia kingpin Vito Palazzolo, who has lived in South Africa for 13 years, was arrested Friday by the South African crack police Scorpions unit on a fraud charge, the Saturday Star newspaper reported, Xinhua reports from Johannesburg.

Palazzolo was arrested in Western Cape where he has a home. But he was later granted bail of 500,000 rand (\$3,000 US dollars) in the Cape Town Regional Court at a short bail hearing.



British Prime Minister Tony Blair (L) listens during an executive session meeting at the Commonwealth heads of state summit in Durban yesterday.

300 Falungong members face trials

BEIJING, Nov 13: At least 300 members of the banned Falungong group are awaiting trial in China, while up to 1,000 are expected to be sent without trial for "education through labour" in camps, a Hong Kong-based rights group said today, reports AFP.

A detailed report on the fate of the outlawed group was issued by the Information Center for Human Rights and Democratic Movement in China early Saturday, a day after four Falungong leaders were jailed for between two to 12 years.

China's State Council announced earlier this week that 111 followers of the group had been formally arrested as of November 4. On Saturday, the centre said scores of others had been arrested since.

On November 11, seven people in Shijiazhuang, in the northern province of Hebei, were formally charged with "using evil religion to violate the law," a charge similar to that on which Friday's four were convicted in the southern city of Haikou.

New computer virus threatens servers, PCs

SANTA CLARA, California, Nov 13: A warning was issued Friday on the new computer virus FunLove, after the anti-virus emergency response team (AVERT) of the company Network Associates upgraded it to "medium risk," on watch, reports AFP.

The symptoms of the virus are "subtle" and may take days to detect, according to Network Associates. Computers know they have the virus when the message "Fun Loving Criminal" appears on the screen, and network servers are especially at risk of it.

Clinton, Yeltsin to meet at OSCE summit

WASHINGTON, Nov 13: US President Bill Clinton and Russian President Boris Yeltsin will meet next week in Istanbul, where the two leaders will be attending a summit of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), US national security adviser Samuel Berger said Friday, reports AFP.

Bandit Queen mugged

NEW DELHI, Nov 13: India's "Bandit Queen" Phoolan Devi, still facing charges for murdering 20 men to avenge her gang rape, was robbed in New Delhi by two armed teenagers, her husband said here today.

Spice Girls again on top

LONDON, Nov 13: The Spice Girls, Britain's biggest pop export since the Beatles, have topped the charts again - with the biggest selling album of the decade, reports Reuters.

Hindu practice of 'Sati' still persists

NEW DELHI, Nov 13: A woman jumped into the burning funeral pyre of her husband in a northern Indian village as hundreds of people watched the ancient practice of 'Sati', a newspaper reported Saturday, says AP.

Spice Girls again on top

LONDON, Nov 13: The Spice Girls, Britain's biggest pop export since the Beatles, have topped the charts again - with the biggest selling album of the decade, reports Reuters.

Evidence found against Sharif: Karachi police

KARACHI, Nov 13: Police investigating allegations that ousted Pakistani premier Nawaz Sharif plotted to kill the country's military ruler said today they had found evidence against him and would arrest him soon.

General Pervez Musharraf in a First Information Report, the first step in lodging a criminal case in Pakistan.

UN plane crashes in Kosovo: 24 killed

PLANA, Yugoslavia, Nov 13: All 24 people on board the UN plane which crashed in northern Kosovo on Friday are dead, a spokesman for the NATO-led KFOR said today, reports AFP.

Storms leave 10 dead in France

TOULOUSE, France, Nov 13: Ten people were killed overnight and 10 were missing after storms and flooding in southwest France where emergency measures had been put in place, authorities said today.

US warns travellers ahead of sanctions on Afghanistan

WASHINGTON, Nov 13: The State Department is urging US citizens traveling abroad to be alert to any action that the Taliban-led government in Afghanistan may take as UN Security Council sanctions against the regime take effect this weekend, reports AP.

Mahathir 'cool' but battle for seats heats up

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 13: Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad is shoring up his political power-base despite challenges to his leadership in the build-up to this month's election, officials said today, reports AFP.

The UN resolution will go into effect on the 14th, Berger noted, adding: "We're glad that the international community is now about to embrace the sanctions that we imposed upon the Taliban unilaterally some weeks ago."

The UN resolution, drafted by the United States last month, permits exemptions to the flight ban for humanitarian reasons or to allow Afghan citizens to go on a religious pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia.



A mother sits beside her child in the children's ward of a Kabul hospital on Wednesday. Afghanistan's war-ravaged people fear United Nations sanctions will push them further into poverty with winter fast approaching and the prices of food and medicine soaring in street markets.

Sharif was accused of trying to prevent a commercial jet carrying the returning general and 198 passengers from landing at Karachi airport on the night of the coup.

UN plane crashes in Kosovo: 24 killed

PLANA, Yugoslavia, Nov 13: All 24 people on board the UN plane which crashed in northern Kosovo on Friday are dead, a spokesman for the NATO-led KFOR said today, reports AFP.

US warns travellers ahead of sanctions on Afghanistan

WASHINGTON, Nov 13: The State Department is urging US citizens traveling abroad to be alert to any action that the Taliban-led government in Afghanistan may take as UN Security Council sanctions against the regime take effect this weekend, reports AP.

Hindu practice of 'Sati' still persists

NEW DELHI, Nov 13: A woman jumped into the burning funeral pyre of her husband in a northern Indian village as hundreds of people watched the ancient practice of 'Sati', a newspaper reported Saturday, says AP.