

Special N Korean envoy arrives in Seoul today

SEOUL, Sept 10: A special North Korean envoy will visit Seoul for four days from Monday to discuss a planned visit to South Korea by the North's supreme leader Kim Jong-il, officials said today, reports AFP.

Kim Jong-Sun, a close aide to the supreme leader, will also discuss the dramatic rapprochement between the rivals since the historic summit between their leaders in June.

The envoy will meet President Kim Dae-Jung and other South Korean officials during his key visit which will include a tour of historic sites in Seoul and the southern resort island of Cheju, the president's office said.

"As Kim Jong-il's special envoy, Kim Jong-Sun will visit Seoul from September 11 to 14," the president's office said in a statement.

"During his visit, Kim Jong-Sun's 10-member entourage will meet President Kim and other government officials to hold broad discussion on relations between South and North Korea," it said.

Blast in Saudi desert kills British couple

JEDDAH, Saudi Arabia, Sept 10: An explosion killed a British couple on a weekend drive through the Saudi desert outside the city of Jeddah, a British diplomat said today, reports AFP.

Tom Tomlinson, vice consul in Jeddah, said that Ian McGhee, 48, was killed on the spot in Friday's accident and his 36-year-old wife Susan died of her injuries before a rescue party reached the scene.

The couple in their four-wheel-drive apparently strayed off the road into a restricted area of the Bahra desert used for army training and detonated a device which they found and handled, he said.

The injured woman telephoned for help and tried to walk back to the main road under a blazing Arabian sun after the blast which damaged their car, but she was found dead by the rescue team.

McGhee, employed with the sales division of a local company, was a 20-year resident of Saudi Arabia, while his wife worked in a Jeddah hospital. Saudi authorities are still investigating the exact cause of the explosion.

Palestinians set to delay statehood declaration

Peace talks with Israel resume today

GAZA CITY, Sept 10: The Palestinians heralded today a delay of their much-trumpeted plans to declare an independent state, on the eve of a new round of last-ditch negotiations to forge a final peace with Israel, reports AFP.

"Most of those who spoke said the postponement must not go beyond the end of the year and this is what I am sure will happen," said Salim al-Zaanun, chairman of the PLO's Central Council, which was holding its final day of meetings on statehood.

The council, the PLO's mini-parliament and its second most important decision-making body, began its deliberations here Saturday on the statehood proclamation, planned to coincide with a September 13 deadline for a peace accord.

Al-Zaanun told reporters that an open-ended delay would only maintain the status quo and would not advance the Palestinians' 52-year struggle for independence.

"An open postponement means giving (Israeli Prime Minister Ehud) Barak the ability to carry out his plan to keep the Palestinian people under an administrative self-rule authority forever," he said.

Al-Zaanun said he believed the council would either vote to announce statehood on November 15, the anniversary of Yasser Arafat's 1988 symbolic declaration of independence in Algiers, or on January 1, the date marking the beginning of armed struggle against Israel by Arafat's group, Fatah.

In a closed-session of the 129-member council on Saturday, Arafat announced the resumption of talks with Israel but said "major differences" remained.

A Palestinian official said the talks would resume on Monday, with a Palestinian team led by senior negotiator Saeb Erakat and preventive security chief in the Gaza Strip Mohammed Dahlan and the Israeli side led by acting Foreign Minister Shlomo Ben Ami and negotiator Gilad Sher.

Israel, which has warned that a unilateral declaration would sink the peace process, welcomed the likely delay.

"If the Palestinians decide to delay the proclamation of a state we can only applaud it because it shows their desire to continue the peace process in a positive way, even if I consider that the chances of an accord are slim," Ben Ami told army radio.

Again this year, Israel and the United States pushed Arafat not to make the statehood proclamation in the absence of a peace agreement, and US President Bill Clinton warned that Washington would sever relations.

Many PLO members said Saturday that they favoured building a Palestinian state de facto, rather than by proclamation, by setting deadlines for the creation of much needed state institutions.

Barak's spokesman Gadi Baltansky said Sunday that the prime minister is ready to strike a deal with the Palestinians that defers the most sensitive issue dividing them, the future of Jerusalem.

The prime minister is ready to consider a delay on Jerusalem as proposed by the Americans during the Camp David summit, Baltansky told army radio.

Clinton and Barak held an impromptu meeting in New York Saturday where they agreed to try to advance peacemaking.



Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat, flanked by a representative of the Palestinian Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) Taysir Qoba (1st R), the chairman of the PLO's Central Council (PCC) Salim al-Zaanun (3rd from R) and Mohammad Sbeih, Secretary General of the PCC, attends the PLO's Central Council in Gaza City yesterday. Zaanun said he was sure that the 129-member body would vote to postpone its planned declaration of statehood, but not beyond the end of this year. —AFP photo

British troops attack S Leone militia base, free six soldiers

FREETOWN, Sept 10: British troops today attacked a militia base in Sierra Leone and freed six British soldiers and a Sierra Leonean officer held hostage since August 25, a British military spokesman said here, reports AFP.

"Before first light a joint British military operation launched an attack on the West Side Boys camp with the aim of releasing the hostages, the operation is still ongoing but all six British hostages and the Sierra Leonean are safely back in our hands," Lieutenant Commander Tony Cramp told journalists.

The situation on the ground requires further activity, Cramp said, responding to questions about the ongoing battle between British troops and the West Side Boys, a breakaway faction of a junta that ruled Sierra Leone between May 1997 and February 1998.

The hostages had been held at

the militia's jungle base in Okra Hills, some 70 km east of the capital.

Cramp said he was unable to give details of casualties.

The military spokesman said the raid was carried out because officials believed the hostages were in imminent danger, and that talks for their release were bogging down.

"Although we have had contact with the group holding them over the last couple of days it was felt that those talks and negotiations were not going anywhere and on the advice of the team conducting the negotiations it was felt there was an imminent danger to the lives being held and therefore the military option was taken," Cramp said.

Cramp said the operation was carried out with the full knowledge of Sierra Leone's President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah and the cooperation of the UN peacekeeping mission, UNAMSIL.

The freed hostages have been taken to the British logistics support ship the Sir Percival.

In London meanwhile, British chief of defence staff Charles Guthrie told the BBC that the six men were safe.

"I can confirm they are safe and secure," Guthrie said.

"But the situation is still confused and it will take some time before we know what happened," he added.

British troops had launched the attack at around 0530 GMT, he said.

Asked about casualties on either side, Guthrie said: "I wouldn't rule it out."

Sierra Leone's renegade West Side Boys militia captured 11 soldiers of the Royal Irish regiment and a Sierra Leonean liaison officer on August 25. Five of their captives were released on August 30.

'The Circle' wins best film award at Venice festival

VENICE, Italy, Sept 10: A dark Iranian movie about the oppression of women called 'The Circle' directed by Jafar Panahi, won the prestigious Golden Lion award for best film at the Venice Film Festival on Saturday, reports Reuters.

US painter and director Julian Schnabel took home the Jury Grand Prix for best director for 'Before Night Falls' about the life of gay Cuban novelist and poet Reinaldo Arenas whose controversial work made him a victim of Cuban censors.

The Special Director's Award went to Indian director Buddhadeb Dasgupta for his film 'The Wrestlers', a lyrical portrayal of the devastating impact of violence on a small town in rural India.

Spanish actor Javier Bardem won the Volpi Cup for best actor for his moving and forceful portrayal of Arenas in 'Before Night Falls' and Rose Byrne won the award for best actress for 'The Goddess of 1967' by Clara Law.

'La Faute A Voltaire' (It's Voltaire's Fault), by Abdel Keiche, won the \$100,000 prize for best directorial debut.

Parliamentary elections Ruling party candidate gunned down in Lanka

COLOMBO, Sept 10: Unidentified gunmen today shot dead a ruling party candidate for Sri Lanka's elections together with one of his key supporters amid fears of more bloodshed, officials and diplomats said, reports AFP.

Chelivan Permpiranyakam, a member of the People's Alliance (PA) party, was gunned down at a home in the predominantly Muslim town of Kalmunai.

Police said the victim was the first candidate at the October 10 parliamentary elections to be killed in a violent campaign that has claimed the lives of six party supporters since parliament was dissolved on August 18.

No one has yet claimed responsibility, but a local PA leader, Soma Sundaram Ganeshamurthy, said he believed the attack was carried out by a rival Muslim group which is also allied to the ruling party.

"I strongly believe this is the

work of the Muslim Jihad (holy war)," Ganeshamurthy said when contacted by telephone. He said there was growing tensions between his party and the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC).

The SLMC is also an ally of the ruling PA, but they failed to submit a common list of candidates to contest the elections from the district of Batticaloa although in some other areas they are fielding candidates jointly.

The latest killing came five days after President Chandrika Kumaratunga's estranged brother, Anura Bandaranaike, asked the government to disarm pro-government Muslim militiamen in the area.

Bandaranaike, a leading figure in the opposition United National Party (UNP), said his sister, Chandrika Kumaratunga, was arming minority Muslim allies in the eastern province to unleash violence against opponents.

Strong quake shakes Taiwan

TAIPEI, Sept 10: An earthquake measuring 6.2 on the Richter scale hit Taiwan today, sending panic-stricken residents running for shelters in the streets, officials said, reports AFP.

But there were no initial reports of casualties or damage, seismologists said.

The quake struck at 04:54 p.m. (1454 BST), with its epicentre 4.0 km southeast of the eastern Hsincheng township in Hualien county.

It originated 20 km below the earth's surface.

The quake could be felt island-wide including in the capital, on the northern part of the island.

In the Hualien city 'movie-gers' ran out of the theatres to seek shelters after the quake hit, the cable television TVBS reported.

In Taipei the mass transit rail system was shut down for five minutes.

Seismologists expected more aftershocks from the quake.

BRIEFLY

Li arrives in Latvia: Li Peng, chairman of the Standing Committee of the Chinese National People's Congress (NPC), arrived here Saturday for a three-day official visit to Latvia, Xinhua reports from Riga.

In a written speech delivered at Riga International Airport upon his arrival, Li said although China and Latvia are located far apart geographically, the people of the two countries have always harbored friendly feeling towards each other. Since the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries in 1991, the cooperation in fields of politics, economy, culture, education and other areas have been developing smoothly, and mutual understanding and trust have been expanding, he said.

SAARC IT confce begins in Nepal:

The three-day SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) conference on Information Technology (IT) kicked off here Saturday, Xinhua reports from Kathmandu.

Over 150 governmental officials, tech minds and business executives from SAARC countries (except Maldives) and Singapore, Britain, Malaysia and Japan gathered here to interact with each other in order to enhance cooperation in the field of IT in the South Asian region. The participants will discuss long-term policy on building infrastructure for human resource development and software development in the field of information technology in the South Asian countries.

Quake shakes Aceh province: A magnitude 5.7 earthquake shook Indonesia's westernmost Aceh province but caused only slight damage, a meteorologist said Sunday, AP reports from Jakarta.

There were no reports of casualties or damage in the region's capital Banda Aceh, about 1,700 kilometers (1,100 miles) northwest of Jakarta, said Musli from the Meteorology and Geophysics Agency. Musli, who like many Indonesians uses one name, said the quake hit Saturday at 1:00 pm local time (0600 GMT) and its epicenter was 33 kilometers under the Andaman Sea.

Suharto summoned to appear in court

JAKARTA, Sept 10: Indonesian Attorney General Marzuki Darusman has sent a second summons to former president Suharto demanding he appear at the second session of his corruption trial, a report said today, reports AFP.

Darusman was quoted by the Suara Pembaruan evening daily as saying his office had sent the summons for him to appear in court this Thursday.

Suharto, 79, failed to appear at the opening of his trial at a heavily-guarded auditorium in South Jakarta on August 31.

His lawyers said the former dictator was unfit to stand trial citing the result of a medical check by Suharto's private team of doctors.

The trial is to resume Thursday with judges demanding that the doctors be present to explain

their decision.

Darusman said Suharto should appear, if only to prove he really is unfit to stand trial.

"The presence of Pak Harto (Suharto's popular appellation) will show the people that he is really in a sick condition, even though when answering questions he can simply move his head in the affirmative or in the negative," Darusman said according to Suara Pembaruan.

Darusman, however, said that he would not oppose a trial in absentia for the former president if Suharto persisted in not showing.

Suharto faces charges of stealing 571 million dollars from the state by funneling money from the tax-free charity foundations he ran into the businesses of family and friends.

30 killed in bus plunge in India

NEW DELHI, Sept 10: More than 30 people were killed when a bus plunged into a river Sunday in the Indian state of West Bengal, the Press Trust of India said, reports AFP.

West Bengal Urban Development Minister Ashok Bhattacharjee told reporters at the crash site in the eastern state's Siliguri district that 15 bodies had been recovered from the swirling Teesta river.

"Few of the bodies have been washed away," he said, adding that the toll was likely to double.

The accident happened when the passenger bus skidded off a bridge at high speed and plunged into the river.



Hostages Marc Wallert (2nd left) of Germany, Stephane Loisy (3rd left) of France, Risto Vahanen (right) of Finland and Seppo Fraenti (3rd right) are released by Abu Sayyaf kidnappers in Tiptipon, Jolo island, on Saturday. All but one of the 21 foreign and Filipino hostages abducted by the Abu Sayyaf from Sipadan island resort in Malaysia have been freed so far. —AFP photo

Nursing mistakes cause thousands of deaths in US

CHICAGO, Sept 10: Poorly trained or overwhelmed nurses are responsible for thousands of deaths and injuries each year in American hospitals, a Chicago Tribune investigation found, reports AP.

Since 1995, at least 1,720 hospital patients have died and 9,548 others have been injured because of mistakes made by registered nurses across the country, the Tribune found in an analysis of 3 million state and federal records. The analysis is published in Sunday editions.

The records include cases of patients getting overdoses of medication, vital care being delayed for hours and nurses performing medical procedures without proper training.

The Tribune report, which focused on nursing mistakes, follows claims made in a wider-reaching 1999 report by the Institute of Medicine that estimated medical mistakes kill anywhere from 44,000 to 98,000 hospitalised Americans each year.

The Tribune's analysis found that many hospitals have increasingly turned to part-time nurses from temporary agencies. It also found that at least 119 patients had died under the care of unlicensed, unregulated nurses aides, who earn an average 9 dollar an hour.

Mandatory overtime and 16-hour shifts have led to a shortage of nurses willing to work at the University of Illinois at Chicago

Medical Centre, said registered nurse Kathy Cloninger, who has worked there for seven years.

"I wake up every day and hope I don't kill someone today," Cloninger told the Tribune. "Every day I pray: God protect me. Let me make it out of there with my patients alive."

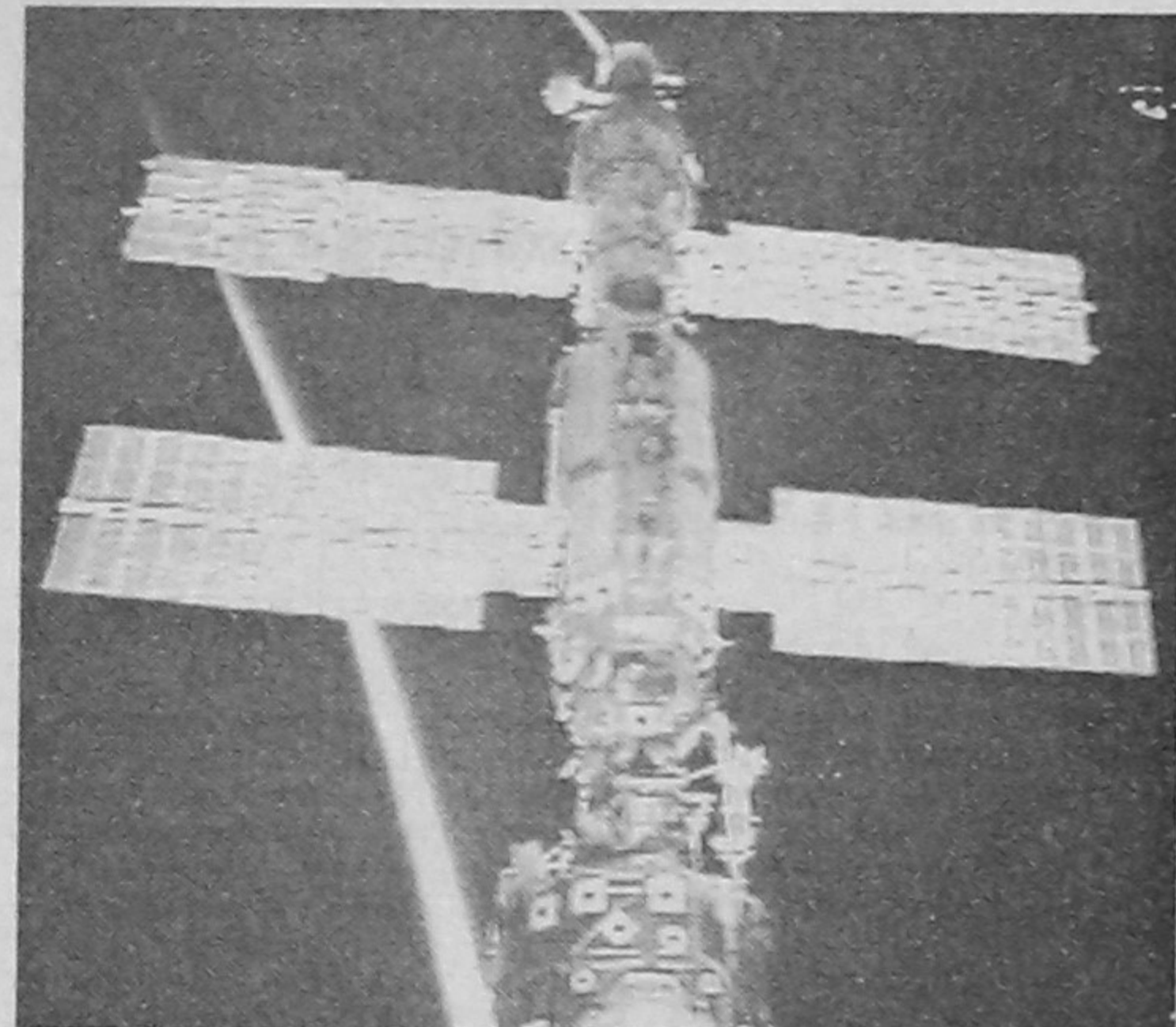
Nursing staffs have been the first target for cutbacks at hospitals where profits have been squeezed by managed care programmes and falling federal Medicaid reimbursements, said Rick Wade of the American Hospital Association.

Under a cost-saving program in at least two Chicago hospitals, housekeeping staff assigned to clean rooms were pressed into duty as aides to dispense medi-

cine, the Tribune found.

In testimony prepared for a national meeting scheduled Monday in Washington to discuss medical errors, the American Nurses Association said there is a critical need for research to explore the relationship of staffing levels and the number of medical errors.

The Institute of Medicine report, issued in November, attributed many hospital deaths to basic flaws in the way hospitals, clinics and pharmacies operate. It was criticised by Indiana University scientists who said that the numbers were exaggerated and that the report failed to eliminate other risks or possible causes for the deaths.



A view from the US space shuttle Atlantis shows the International Space Station after the shuttle successfully docked with the station yesterday. —AFP photo

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Directorate of Technical Education
Development Project Titled
Repair, Reconstruction & Modernisation
of Bangladesh Survey Institute
Directorate of Technical Education
Shiksha Bhaban, Dhaka-1000.

Memo No. DTE/Survey/Equ/16/2000/112 Dated: 31-8-2000

Tender Notice

Sealed tenders in two-envelope system are invited from bonafide suppliers/dealers/agents for supply of computer & other equipment at Bangladesh Survey Institute under the Development Project titled Repair, Reconstruction & Modernisation of Bangladesh Survey Institute under the Directorate of Technical Education of the Ministry of Education. In one envelope, technical proposal & in the other, financial proposal should be submitted, schedule of tender will be prepared groupwise. As earnest money, 2.5% of the quoted amount should be deposited with the tender through Bank Draft/Pay Order (refundable) from any approved commercial bank in favour of the undersigned. Prescribed price for tender schedule is Tk 750/- (seven hundred fifty) only (non-refundable) which should be paid in cash. Tender schedule (groupwise) will be available at the office of the undersigned: Ministry of Education, Sec-12, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka/ Director (Vocational), Directorate of Technical Education, 19, Isapahani Park, Maghbazar, Dhaka from 20-9-2000 to 28-9-2000 during office hours. Tenders should be deposited in tender box kept at the said offices by 10-00 AM to 1-00 PM of 2-10-2000 and the tenders will be opened on the same day at 2-00 PM in presence (if any) of the attending tenderers or their representatives.

The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any tender without assigning any reason and is not bound to accept the lowest tender.

Md Rezaul Karim

Director (P&D)

&
Project Director

Development Project Titled

"Repair, Reconstruction & Modernisation of Bangladesh Survey Institute"

Directorate of Technical Education

DFP-21460-5/9
G-1584



Office of the Police Commissioner

Dhaka Metropolitan Police, Dhaka

Re-Auction Notice

- Item No : Sale in auction of 57 (fifty-seven) various types of vehicles declared condemn on (as and where it is basis) of Police Department.
- Cost of schedule : 750/- (seven hundred fifty) taka only (non-refundable).
- Place of availability of tender schedule : Central Police Vehicles Repairing Workshop, Rajarbagh Police Line, DMP, Dhaka.
- Last date of selling schedule : 21/9/2000.
- Place, date and time of receiving tender : Central Police Vehicle Repairing Workshop, Rajarbagh Police Line, DMP, Dhaka.
Date 24/9/2000 till 12-00 Noon.
24/9/2000 at 13.00 hours.
- Date and time of opening tender : 24/9/2000 at 13.00 hours.
- Earnest money : 5% (five per cent) of the total quoted cost.
- The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any tender fully or partially without assigning any reason.

Md Habibur Rahman PPM

Deputy Police Commissioner

(Headquarters)

Dhaka Metropolitan Police, Dhaka.

DFP-21499-5/9
G-1581