



French President Jacques Chirac accompanies Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak, Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat, US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, and United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan at the Elysee Palace on Wednesday after talks on ending the violence in the West Bank and Gaza. --AFP photo

Israelis, Palestinians agree to halt violence

Paris talks end without agreement

JERUSALEM, Oct 5: The Israeli army announced today it had agreed with the Palestinian security forces on a halt to violence after a week of bloodshed that has left more than 70 dead, reports AFP.

The army said it followed a meeting between central region commander General Yitzhak Eitan with his Palestinian counterparts overnight.

"During the meeting it was agreed that there would be a halt to the violence, the disturbances to public order and the shooting in the zones of friction between the two sides," it said in a statement.

"It was agreed that in the West Bank, the army would keep its fixed positions established before the outbreak of the violence and will not occupy new positions," it added.

"For their part, the Palestinians have committed to respect a ceasefire and avoid violence," it said.

A total of 73 people, mainly Palestinians have been killed in bloody clashes throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip that spilled also into Israeli proper and continued despite ceasefire agreements.

But army spokesman Yarden Vatikay warned: "If they don't fulfill their promise we have to respond."

The army announcement came after the failure of marathon talks between Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat to reach a comprehensive ceasefire accord, apparently breaking down over Palestinian demands for an international inquiry into the clashes.

AP adds: US-sponsored talks between Israel and the Palestinians aimed at ending a week of bloodshed closed Thursday with no agreement finalized and much uncertainty about how the violence will be stopped.

The two sides had been expected to fly to the Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh in Egypt to sign a deal Thursday formally ending the fighting and returning the two sides to peace talks.

But with the preliminary signing ceremony in Paris having disintegrated, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak left Paris for Israel early Thursday and was not planning to go to Egypt, his office said in Jerusalem. However, Egyptian officials said they had not been formally told the meeting was off and were laying out preparations for it.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat arrived in Sharm el-Sheikh MENA, the Egyptian news agency, reported that Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, who brokered the Paris talks, was on her way there as well.

According to an Israeli official who spoke on condition of anonymity, Arafat left the Paris talks before the agreement was inked apparently angered over the refusal of Israel and the United States to agree to an international investigation into the violence that has killed almost exclusively Arabs.

But officials from all sides involved said negotiators were still trying to work out some deal with or without a signed agreement that would halt recent violence which has at many times looked a lot like war.

They focused on Barak's offer Wednesday to pull back tanks and armored personnel carriers from forward positions on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Arafat also gave his people in the field the order to stop the violence, said Israeli Transportation Minister Amnon Lipkin-Shahak, a negotiator who spoke Thursday from Paris on Army radio in Israel.



Harsh Vardhan Nawathe, 24, flashes a victory sign at a press conference on Wednesday in Bombay. --AFP photo

Koun Banega Crorepati

Jackpot winner to take dad's advice on spending money

BOMBAY, Oct 5: India's first TV quiz millionaire will be letting daddy decide how he spends the cash, reports AFP.

"I will take dad's advice before doing anything with the money," said 24-year old Harshvardhan Nawathe, who is the first winner of the 10-million rupee (220,000-dollar) Jackpot in India's most popular television show, 'Koun Banega Crorepati'.

Nawathe, who is still studying for India's Civil Service exams, displayed none of the "spend, spend, spend" mentality normally associated with big cash prize winners.

"Most probably, I will make a safe investment with the amount," Nawathe said.

Nawathe became KBC's first "crorepati" during a shoe taped last week when he answered all 15 questions posed by the show's host, Indian film legend Amitabh Bachchan.

Although the episode is not due for broadcast until October 19, news of Nawathe's win soon leaked out, and the press conference was called to prevent further press harassment of the young winner and his family in Bombay.

The euphoria of winning set in only when a pandemonium broke out among the jubilant crowd on the set," Nawathe said.

"I had the entire audience descend on me, hugging me and asking me for autographs, in fact, on the set after the episode I signed 300 autographs. This was something I never imagined."

The first people Nawathe called after his jackpot performance were his parents.

"My mom immediately started crying."

State of emergency in Ivory Coast

ABIDJAN, Oct 5: The military rulers of Ivory Coast have imposed a state of emergency following a bomb explosion in the main city of Abidjan that killed four people and caused numerous casualties, state radio reported today, reports DPA.

The state of emergency was designed to "maintain public order" ahead of the announcement Saturday of the candidates approved by the Supreme Court to stand in presidential elections later this month.

A curfew was also imposed. Last month, rebellious soldiers had attacked the home of the Ivorian military leader, General Robert Guei.

Observers say Guei, who came to power in a military coup last December stands no chance of winning the election. He is standing in the October 22 presidential poll as an independent.

The general wants the courts to bar his main challenger, popular former prime minister Alassane Ouattara, from running in the election, claiming that his parents are not from Ivory Coast.

Constitutional court annuls Y'slav election results

Opposition warns of 'trap'

BELGRADE, Oct 5: Yugoslav opposition leader Vojislav Kostunica warned of a "trap" laid by President Slobodan Milosevic after the constitutional court annulled part of the presidential election results, reports AFP.

The unexpected court ruling, made in a confusing court statement reported by the state news agency Tanjug, came as reports said 300,000 people had protested on Wednesday in a bid to force Milosevic to accept defeat in the elections and stand down.

Despite the ruling, the opposition has maintained calls for a giant rally in Belgrade today.

The full text of the court ruling was to be released later today, but the opposition fears it could be an attempt by Milosevic to buy time for his under pressure regime.

Of the ruling, Kostunica told the independent Beta news agency: "At first sight, it could appear to be a concession by Slobodan Milosevic, but I fear that it could be a big trap and so

we must guard against any euphoria."

"I think Slobodan Milosevic is today weaker than ever which is proved by the fact that he has to resort to various tactics to buy time," he added.

The ruling followed a complaint by the opposition that the results of the election on September 24 had been rigged in favour of Milosevic, but the ruling was not the recognition of the outright victory that the opposition believes Kostunica won.

Zoran Djindjic, a senior official of the 18-party coalition Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS), denounced the ruling as a cynical abuse of the court's power and called on the DOS to reject it.

Opposition supporters have repeatedly said they believe the court is packed with Milosevic loyalists. Djindjic had no doubt late Wednesday what was behind the court's decision.

Meanwhile, in a potentially significant development Wednesday, riot police were sent in to the giant Kolubara coal mine, 70 kilometers southwest of Belgrade, where miners have been on strike since Friday, but did not move to break up the protest.

More than 10,000 protesters converged on the mine to back the miners.

When opposition leader Kostunica addressed the crowd, some of the officers took off their protective helmets and chatted with demonstrators.

The protests around Serbia came on the third day of a mass campaign of civil disobedience called by the opposition.

Around 50,000 people gathered in Nis, Serbia's third-largest city, for the biggest demonstration of the day, Beta reported.

The city's mayor, Zoran Zivkovic, called on the crowd to attend the rally in Belgrade.

In Belgrade, two separate demonstrations estimated to contain 10,000 people each snaked through the streets to demand Milosevic stand down.



Serbian presidential candidate Vojislav Kostunica (R) addresses a crowd of miners from the "Kolubara" coal mine near Belgrade after he managed to get to the mining village of Tamnava on Wednesday. More than 10,000 protesters gathered in the giant coal mine to back striking miners. About 7,500 workers are playing a leading role in the opposition campaign to topple Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, as the strike has cut fuel for power stations, causing blackouts. --AFP photo

BRIEFLY

Kashmiri militant held in Delhi: Indian police on Thursday said they had arrested an alleged senior Kashmiri militant commander in New Delhi, AFP reports from New Delhi.

A police spokesman said the arrested man, identified as Mohammad Latif, belonged to the powerful Hizbul Mujahideen militant group and was their area commander in Pulwama district, 40 kilometres south of the Kashmir summer capital Srinagar. The spokesman said Latif had been picked up with 5.4 kilograms of RDX plastic explosive, which he was allegedly planning to use to disrupt festivities during a Hindu religious festival on Saturday. The police also alleged that Latif had been trained by the Pakistani ISI intelligence agency.

Lohardagga police chief shot dead: Police Superintendent of Bihar's extremist-hit Lohardagga A K Singh was shot dead yesterday afternoon by suspected Naxalites at Chandwa in an encounter, Chief Minister Rabri Devi said, PTI reports from Patna.

The police chief was gunned down when he was leading a police team to a Naxalite hideout, where the Ultras were planning an operation, Rabri Devi said. When the SP challenged them he was shot in the head and died on the spot.

Taiwanese cabinet reshuffled: Taiwan's premier announced a Cabinet reshuffle on Thursday that brings in a new finance minister, vice premier and government spokesman, AP reports from Taipei.

The changes came a day after Premier Chang Chun-hsiung took over as the island's third most powerful leader. He replaced Tang Fei, who stepped down amid a bitter debate about a nuclear plant and growing concerns about the slumping stock market. On Thursday, Chang said that the new finance minister would be Yen Ching-chang, who has served as vice finance minister. Yen replaces Shea Jia-dong, whom many investors blamed for the market's recent slide.

No productive Indo-Pak talks possible if violence reigns

US official's observation

WASHINGTON, Oct 5: Pointing out that terrorist violence in Jammu and Kashmir has increased, the United States has asserted that talks between India and Pakistan can never be productive when a gun is being held to the head of the other party, reports PTI.

There is no question that there is incompatibility between continued violence in Kashmir and dialogue, US Assistant Secretary of State Karl Inderfurth said in an interview to Voice of America which has been put on USIS website.

Stating that while Indo-Pakistan dialogue is absolutely essential to find a solution to the Kashmir issue acceptable to both the countries, Inderfurth said rejection of violence means that there is no military solution to the problem.

Maintaining that violence has increased in the valley, he said first place to begin is to lower the level of violence so that there can be an environment in which talks could be productive. Talks are never productive when a gun is being held to the head of the other party.

He said the US believed that on both sides there are those who

want to see the peace process to begin but there are also those who do not want to see it start.

He identified those who do not want the peace process to begin as various militant groups and those who cannot see the future and are only tied to the past.

Calling for flexibility on the part of India and Pakistan for a resolution of the problem, Inderfurth said both sides will have to recognise that whatever agreement is reached, it must be acceptable to both New Delhi and Islamabad and vice versa.

In the interview, Inderfurth answered questions relating to growing Indo-US relations, talks on the nuclear issue between the two countries and India's economic reforms programme.

On the growing relationship with India after the visits of President Bill Clinton and Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to each other's countries, he said there was no American tilt towards India.

"Our national interests suggest that we should strengthen our relations with India but, as (Clinton) said, Pakistan has not lost its significance either," Inderfurth commented.

Referring to the several rounds

of talks between US Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott and External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh, he said US recognised that it is necessary to reconcile America's proliferation concerns with India's security concerns.

We have entered into discussion with India with a firm understanding that it has its own perception of its security needs. At the end of the day, it will make its own sovereign decisions, he said.

Noting the recent improvement in Sino-India relations, he said China is a very large and important player in Asia and, indeed, globally and so is India.

We (US) intend to deal with both of these giants of the Asia mainland. We are going to pursue our relations with China and India on their own merits, Inderfurth said.

Countering a suggestion by the interviewer that India economically is a country of the future and of Present as China, Inderfurth said India is increasing the country of the present.

China is getting more investment because it began its reforms in 1978 and India in the early 1990s. India is moving in the right direction and beginning to realise its potential, he said.

Singapore to test students for creative thinking

SINGAPORE, Oct 5: Singapore will overhaul its pre-university exams to emphasise creative thinking and computer skills in order to produce students who can compete in an information-driven world economy, reports AFP.

The Straits Times reported Wednesday that in two years' time, A-level tests that determine which students can go to university will be changed to reflect the new educational requirements.

The wealthy city-state's students excel in science and mathematics but officials admit that current learning methods stifle the creativity and critical thinking needed in the so-called new economy.

Education Minister Teo Chee Hean was quoted as saying that the curriculum had been revised at junior colleges in order to promote thinking skills, independent learning and creativity.

"It does not make sense if the students are then not tested on these skills, which we consider important," he said.

Teo cited as an example the history test, in which students will no longer be asked merely to recall facts.

They may be given several accounts of the same event and asked questions that require them to distinguish between fact and value judgement.

Some students and parents expressed concern about the latest changes in an already competitive educational environment where grade-schoolers have to spend their weekends studying or taking tutorials.

"It's going to be difficult. We're not used to the thinking questions," said a 16-year-old who feared her future would be jeopardised if she cannot adapt to the new system.

University degrees for pets

PARIS, Oct 5: A newly-launched Internet site has gone one better than the money-spinning "pet rock" craze of the 1970s -- it awards university degrees to household animals, reports AFP.

Petsylvania University sells seven bachelor's degrees, ranging from arts to commerce and social work, as well as a master's degree in divinity to pets admitted to its ranks.

The owner has to write a brief essay outlining the pet's merits and intelligence to support the "application".

There is also the small matter of payment -- between 40 to 60 dollars, depending on whether the owner wants the diploma to be in Latin, French or English and whether the animal's picture should be posted on the web site, www.petsylvaniauniversity.com.

600 Filipino rebels surrender

CAGAYAN De Oro, Philippines, Oct 5: More than 600 Muslim rebels, including a commander, surrendered Thursday in a ceremony led by Philippine President Joseph Estrada, who urged the remaining guerrillas to resume peace talks with the government, reports AP.

"We must resolve our differences through peaceful means because fighting among ourselves will never bring any good to either one of us," Estrada said.

He said the common enemy of both sides was poverty.

"I cannot fight poverty alone," he said. "I need the help of Christians, I need the help of Muslims, I need the help of everyone."


Estrada stood on a grandstand as he led the 609 former members

of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, most still wearing camouflage uniforms with rebel insignias, in pledging allegiance to the government.

In front of the stage was a long table bearing more than 400 firearms that belonged to the rebels.

The surrendering guerrillas were led by Malupandi "Commander Lupay" Cosain, a vice mayor from Lanao del Sur province who had joined the Muslim insurgency.

The group was largest to surrender since the military launched a major assault against the MILF early this year. Government troops have seized 39 MILF camps, including 14 major rebel strongholds, Estrada said.



Bangladesh Power Development Board
Section-A

Invitation of Local Re-Tender


দেশে প্রথমে উদ্ধৃদ্ধ হউন
বিদ্যুতের অবৈধ সংযোগ বন্ধ করুন

Tender Enquiry No Pur-130 Dated: 03.08.2000

- Sealed local competitive bid (LCB) is invited by Director (Purchase), WAPDA Building (9th floor), Motijheel C/A, BPDB, Dhaka, Bangladesh from renowned registered supplier/agents of manufacturers for "Supply, Installation and Commissioning of Computer & Accessories" against System Loss Reduction Pilot Scheme BPDB Dhaka.
- The expenditure will be booked against Budget of 2000-2001 for System Loss Reduction Pilot Scheme, BPDB against JBIC loan BD-P45. Further information may be obtained from the office of the Director, Purchase, BPDB, WAPDA Building (9th floor), Motijheel C/A, Dhaka. Phone 880 2 955 0259 and Fax No 880 2 955 0532.
- A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by the interested bidders on submission of written application to by Director (Purchase), WAPDA Building (9th floor), BPDB, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000 & upon payment of a non-refundable fee of taka 200.00 (two hundred) only in the shape of Bank Draft/Pay Order in favour of Director, Purchase, BPDB, Dhaka.
- 1 (one) original & 3 (three) copies of sealed bid in the prescribed document/schedule must be accompanied by a security 2.5% (two and half per cent) of the total bid amount as bid bond in the shape of Bank Guarantee issued by the any scheduled bank of Bangladesh or by Foreign Bank endorsed by any scheduled bank of Bangladesh favouring Director, Purchase, BPDB, Dhaka & be delivered to the office of the Director, Purchase, BPDB, Dhaka on or before 11.00 AM (BST) on 25.10.2000.
- Bids will be opened in the presence of bidders' representative who choose to attend the opening of the bids at 11.30 AM (BST) on 25.10.2000.
- Offers sent by Post/Telex/DHL/Courier/Fax/E-mail will neither be received nor it will be considered for acceptance.
- BPDB reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids without assigning any reason thereof.

Buddy/Jana-629(3)/2000-2001
DPP-23894-2/10
G-1748

Director Purchase
WAPDA Building (9th floor), BPDB
Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000



Directorate General Defence Purchase
Ministry of Defence
New Airport Road, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1215

Tender Notice

1. Sealed tenders in foreign currency are invited from bonafide manufacturers/dealers/suppliers/indentors (enlisted firms in DGDP) for supply of the following items for Bangladesh Air Force.

Sl. No.	Name of items & qty	Date of selling From To	Date of opening	Currency	Tender No
a.	HF Transceiver along with accessories Qty-10 set	12-10-2000 to 22-11-2000	23-11-2000	Foreign	7898/AP-4
b.	Ni-Cad Battery, Qty-100 Ea	12-10-2000 to 22-11-2000	23-11-2000	Foreign	7899/AP-4
c.	Multichannel Voice Recorder, Qty-02 Ea	12-10-2000 to 22-11-2000	23-11-2000	Foreign	7900/AP-4
d.	Spares for Walkie Talkie R/T GP-88/300, Qty-23 L/I	12-10-2000 to 22-11-2000	23-11-2000	Foreign	7901/AP-4
e.	Spares for HF R/T SG-2000, Qty-66 L/I	12-10-2000 to 22-11-2000	23-11-2000	Foreign	7902/AP-4
f.	Spares for VHF AM R/T FSG-60/71 MPC & FSG-4, Qty-324 L/I	12-10-2000 to 22-11-2000	23-11-2000	Foreign	7903/AP-4
g.	Air Band Transceiver along with accessories, Qty-10 set	12-10-2000 to 22-11-2000	23-11-2000	Foreign	7904/AP-4
h.	IC Tester, Qty-05 Ea	12-10-2000 to 22-11-2000	23-11-2000	Foreign	7905/AP-4
j.	Pulse Signal Generator, Qty-01 Ea	12-10-2000 to 22-11-2000	23-11-2000	Foreign	7906/AP-4
k.	Frequency Counter, Qty-01 Ea	12-10-2000 to 22-11-2000	23-11-2000	Foreign	7907/AP-4
l.	Digital Multimeter, Qty-06 Ea	12-10-2000 to 22-11-2000	23-11-2000	Foreign	7908/AP-4

2. Tender schedule with detailed specifications/conditions will be available on payment in respective value (Non-refundable) on any working day between 0800 hrs to 1300 hrs. The tender will be opened on the specified date at 1000 hours in presence of the bidders (if present).

ISPR/Misc/2000/803
DPP-23798-2/10
G-1745

Squadron Leader
for Director General



Passers-by walk in front of a huge poster at the world's first John Lennon Museum in Yono, in suburban Tokyo, yesterday. The 3,600-square-metre museum contains about 130 items associated with the life and career of the music legend. --AFP photo