

Two Israeli soldiers killed in WB

RAMALLAH, West Bank, Oct 12: Two Israeli soldiers were killed today by a furious Palestinian crowd in the flashpoint West Bank town of Ramallah, witnesses said, reports AFP.

Their bodies could be seen lying on the street after they were dragged from a Palestinian police station where they were being held.

Palestinian police said they were members of a special plainclothes undercover unit whom they arrested in order to protect them from the crowd.

An Israeli army spokesman said four soldiers had been arrested by the Palestinian police. The fate of the other two remained unclear.

Israeli television reported that a third soldier had also been

killed, with the fourth seriously injured. The report could not be immediately confirmed.

Israeli military sources told AFP that all four soldiers were reservists driving in a civilian car who had lost their way.

The killings came as Israeli and Palestinian security chiefs were due to meet for negotiations chaired by the chief of the United States Central Intelligence Agency.

The violence began when news of the arrests spread and hundreds of mostly young Palestinians demonstrated outside the police station demanding the soldiers be handed over.

When the police refused, the youths charged the station, grabbed the soldiers and began beating and stabbing them, wit-

nesses told an AFP correspondent.

The soldiers were killed by the crowd inside the police station, according to witnesses. Their bodies were then dragged into the street.

An AFP correspondent saw one blood-stained body, clad only in khaki military-style trousers. It had injuries to the head.

Israeli television showed chaotic images of hundreds of youths demonstrating outside the police station, and Palestinian police trying to clear the street.

Palestinian security forces took up strategic positions as rumours spread of a possible Israeli army incursion into the town, which is exclusively controlled by the Palestinian Authority.

Under accords between the two

sides, Israeli security forces are not allowed into areas under complete Palestinian control unless by prior agreement.

The centre of the town was in chaos, as two Israeli helicopter gunships and a reconnaissance plane were flying low over the town, the correspondent said.

Schools had closed down, and people were boarding up their homes and shops fearful of further violence and retaliation by Israeli troops. A long line of traffic was heading out of the town, an AFP photographer said.

An AFP photographer was also assaulted by the crowd in the ensuing chaos.

Ramallah has been a flashpoint in a wave of violence over the past fortnight that has killed more than 100 people, the vast majority Palestinians.



Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat (R) meets with British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook in Gaza City on Wednesday. Cook arrived to land his diplomatic weight to international peace efforts in the Middle East. --AFP photo

Philippine vice president resigns from Cabinet

MANILA, Oct 12: The Philippine vice president resigned today from her Cabinet post, citing "serious accusations" that President Joseph Estrada received millions of dollars in payoffs from illegal gambling operators, reports AP.

Gloria Macapagal Arroyo said she was resigning as secretary of social welfare, but will continue to serve as vice president.

Earlier Thursday, Estrada denied the payoff allegations and said he would not step down as urged by the nation's leading churchman.

Estrada insisted he had not received "a single cent" in illegal gambling money and called the allegations a "politically motivated hatchet job."

"I am confident that the investigations will eventually clear my name," he said in a nationally broadcast statement, his first since the scandal erupted late last week.

A provincial governor testified Wednesday that Estrada received more than 530 million pesos (11 million dollar) in payoffs, most of it from an illegal numbers game called jueteng.

BRIEFLY

Zhu begins S Asia tour: Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji left here yesterday afternoon for an official visit to Japan and the Republic of Korea (ROK), at the invitation of Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori and ROK President Kim Dae-Jung respectively. Xinhua reports from Beijing.

During the trip, Premier Zhu will also attend the Third Asia-Europe meeting to be held in Seoul of ROK.

Philippine ferry on fire: About 700 passengers of a Philippine inter-island ferry were plucked to safety today after a pre-dawn fire swept through the vessel while on its way to Manila, the coastguard and officials said, AFP reports from Manila.

Coastguard cutters and at least six passing commercial vessels swiftly responded to a distress call aired by the captain of Superferry 6 and helped pick up the passengers who abandoned the ship an hour into the blaze, the coastguard said. The blaze, the cause of which was not known, occurred around 5.25 am Thursday (0325 BST), near Verde Island in Batangas province, about 100 kilometres south of Manila.

Five killed in Maluku islands: Christians and Muslims in Indonesia's Maluku islands fought with guns, grenades and gasoline bombs on Thursday, witness said, AP reports from Ambon.

At least five people, all of them Muslims, were killed and dozens of both faiths were injured at Galala village on the main island of Ambon. Hundreds of troops and police were deployed to the scene, John Tomasso, a local government official said.

Eight dead in Grozny blast: Eight people died Thursday including three policemen in a blast in the war-ravaged Chechen capital Grozny. Interfax news agency reported citing local pro-Moscow Chechen police. AFP reports from Moscow.

Kumaratunga's party emerges as largest in Lankan polls

COLOMBO, Oct 12: President Chandrika Kumaratunga's party today emerged as the largest in the Sri Lankan parliament, but fell short of a majority leaving a small Muslim party holding the balance of power, reports AFP.

The People's Alliance won 107 seats in Tuesday's parliamentary polls while the main opposition United National Party (UNP) bagged 89 seats, the election commission announced.

The Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC), which contested on its own in several districts but fielded some candidates under the People's Alliance (PA) symbol, won a total of 10 seats.

But four of its seats were won under the SLMC symbol, while six others had stood on a joint ticket with the PA and were counted among the PA's total of 107 seats.

The result thrust the small Muslim party into the role of kingmaker, as without its support Kumaratunga could find it difficult to form a government in the 225-seat national assembly.

The Marxist JVP, or People's Liberation Front, also emerged as a significant force after it won 10 seats in the polls.

Another 15 seats went to smaller nationalist parties and

minority Tamil groups.

Kumaratunga's party was left just six seats short of the required 113 MPs needed to form a government on its own and the horse-trading looked set to begin.

But the PA claimed victory and PA leader S. B. Dissanayake said he was confident of forming a minority government with the help of a regional Tamil party, the Eelam People's Democratic Party (EPDP), which won four seats in the Jaffna peninsula.



Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga (R) and her estranged brother Anura Kumara Dissanayake (L) joined in Buddhist religious rites yesterday at the funeral of their mother and former prime minister Sirima Bandaranaike. Bandaranaike, 84, died of a heart attack on October 10 shortly after casting her vote for the parliamentary elections. --AFP photo

N Korea, US vow to end hostility

SEOUL, Oct 12: North Korea and the United States today released a historic statement vowing to end decades of hostility and organise a visit by President Bill Clinton to the communist state, reports AFP.

The two sides committed themselves to intensive talks to end disputes over nuclear weapons, terrorism and security that have made the Korean peninsula the world's last Cold War frontier.

It was the most important declaration since they fought each other in the 1950-53 Korean War which has never been officially ended. The United States still has 37,000 troops based in South Korea to guard against any new invasion.

The joint statement was reported by North Korea's state media Thursday ahead of its release in Washington, where a top North Korean envoy has held talks this week with Clinton and other top US officials.

The two sides agreed that improved relations were needed to ensure peace between North and South Korea and in the Asia-Pacific region, said a version of the statement reported by the North's Korean Central News

Agency (KCNA).

"As the first important step both sides declared that any of the two governments entertains no hostile intention toward the other and affirmed the commitment to make all efforts to establish new relations free from past antagonism," said the KCNA version of the statement.

"Both sides agreed to strive to preserve the atmosphere helpful to removing distrust, achieving mutual confidence and handling in a constructive manner issues of primary concern," it added.

US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright has already announced she will visit Pyongyang to meet the North's supreme leader Kim Jong-Il. The other surprise from the statement was that she will organise a Clinton trip.

"It was agreed that Secretary of State Madeleine Albright will visit the DPRK (North Korea) in the near future in order to directly convey President Bill Clinton's views to Kim Jong-Il, chairman of the national defence commission of DPRK, and make arrangements for the president's visit," said the statement.

45 killed in China mine accidents

BEIJING, Oct 12: At least 45 people have died in two separate accidents at Chinese mines, state media reported today, says CPA.

A gas explosion at a coal mine in northwest China killed 25 people on Wednesday morning, the official Xinhua news agency said.

Some 120 rescuers were searching for more victims at the mine in the Honggu area of Lanzhou city, Gansu province, the agency said.

In a second accident, more than 20 miners died in a landslide at a phosphorus mine in Mianzhu, in the southwestern province of Sichuan, on Wednesday afternoon.

Most of those killed at the phosphorus mine were resting in work sheds, the agency said.

Gore, Bush declare strong support for Israel



Republican presidential nominee George W. Bush (L) waves as he and Democratic presidential nominee Al Gore (R) take the stage before starting their second debate, in Wait Chapel at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, NC, on Wednesday. --AFP photo

WINSTON-SALEM, North Carolina, Oct 12: Al Gore and George W. Bush both declared strong support for Israel and called on PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat to restrain the violence rocking the Mideast Wednesday night as they stepped gingerly around foreign policy issues in a nationally televised campaign debate, reports AP.

Gore also called on the Syrian government to press for the release of three Israeli soldiers who have been captured by Hezbollah militia forces in Lebanon, where Syria is the main power.

Through the first half hour of their 90-minute second debate, the two presidential hopefuls disagreed over several past US interventions abroad and sparred over the Clinton administration's handling of Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein.

The rivals, locked in a tight, back-and-forth race for the White House, met on a stage at Wake Chapel on the campus of Wake Forest University. They have a final debate next week. Their

running mates, Republican Dick Cheney and Democratic Sen. Joseph Lieberman, met last week for their only debate of the campaign.

Asked by television journalist Jim Lehrer, who controlled issues taken up in the debate, about the Middle East, Gore said, "We need to insist that Arafat send out instructions to halt some of the provocative acts of violence that have been going on."

Bush, given a chance to answer the same question, began by saying that in times of tension overseas, "We ought to be speaking with one voice. I appreciate the way the administration has been working to calm the tensions."

He also said the United States ought to call on Arafat "to have his people pulled back."

Gore defended the administration's handling of Iraq's Saddam. Bush, whose father was president during the Gulf War, declared that the "coalition against Saddam is unraveling... Sanctions are being violated."

If Saddam is developing weapons of mass destruction, he said,

"There are going to be consequences if I'm president."

The focus on foreign policy was a rarity for the campaign, in which the two candidates have clashed repeatedly over domestic issues such as tax cuts, health care, Medicare and Social Security.

But with the peace process in jeopardy in Israel and a Yugoslavia fresh from a popular uprising, the debate became something of a foreign policy exam for two men vying to become commander-in-chief of the most powerful nation in the world.

That tested Bush's knowledge of foreign affairs, said by Democrats to be a weakness.

When Lehrer rattled off a list of military commitments in recent years, Gore said he agreed with each of the decisions Clinton had made.

Bush dissented from the decision to send troops to Haiti, and said the mission in Somalia, started by his father, President George Bush, had gone wrong when it turned from peacekeeping to "nation building."

Discovery blasts off on 100th space shuttle flight

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla., Oct 12: Space shuttle Discovery roared off the launch pad on Wednesday on an ambitious construction mission to the International Space Station, marking the 100th launch of the US shuttle programme, report agencies.

The seven astronauts have a complex and difficult job ahead, adding two segments to the International Space Station and conducting four spacewalks on consecutive days.

Rain and dark clouds moved away from Cape Canaveral about an hour before launch, ending a week of frustration for the launch team as bad weather and hardware surprises kept the orbiter grounded. The official launch time was 7:17 PM (0517 BST).

Veteran astronaut and shuttle

commander Brian Duffy was at the controls as Discovery began its nine-minute climb to orbit. To his right was rookie shuttle pilot Pam Melroy, the third woman in nearly 20 years of shuttle history to take that seat.

All good things are worth waiting for and I think you and your crew have waited long enough for this one, so good luck," launch director Mike Leinbach told Duffy before liftoff.

The space station was soaring 240 miles above the Bay of Bengal when Discovery finally soared. The chase will end with a docking on Friday.

Discovery contains two new segments for the international space station. The crew's job is to attach the girderlike truss and docking port; four spacewalks

will be needed to make all the connections, beginning Sunday.

The 11-day mission has been on hold for two years, as have subsequent assembly flights, because of Russia's difficulties in launching the space station's crew quarters. The module was finally placed in orbit in July and was outfitted by a visiting space shuttle crew in September.

The truss and docking port aboard Discovery must be installed on the space station before the first permanent crew can move in. NASA astronaut Bill Shepherd and his two-competent crew are scheduled to lift off from Kazakhstan on October 30.

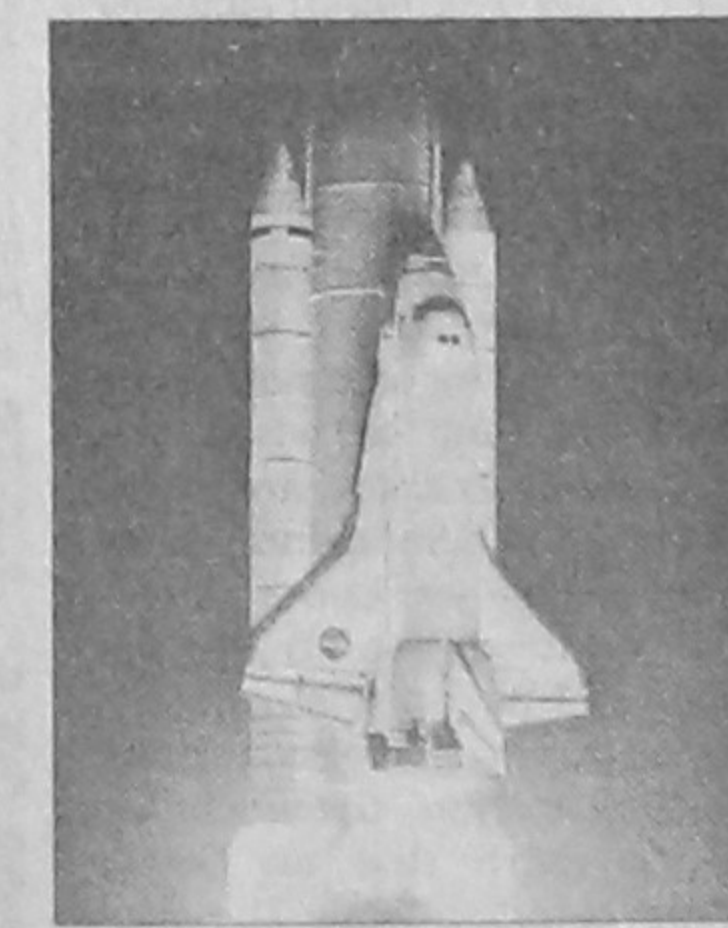
This will be NASA's fifth visit to the space station. But it's the first

actual construction mission since the first pieces of the complex were launched in 1998.

Six Americans and one Japanese make up the crew. Air Force Lt. Col. Pamela Melroy is making her first space flight; she is only the third woman to serve as a shuttle pilot.

In honour of the 100th space shuttle launch, a videotape was played for guests featuring shuttle scenes and the Philadelphia Orchestra playing the theme from "2001: A Space Odyssey." The orchestra is marking its 100th anniversary.

NASA's first shuttle flight was in 1981 and the 50th in 1992. The 25th was Challenger's doomed mission in 1986.



Space Shuttle Discovery lifts off from the Kennedy Space Centre in Florida Wednesday.

Asthma: Inhaled steroids don't stunt kids' growth permanently

UNDATED, Oct 12: Inhaled steroids a standard treatment for children with severe asthma do not permanently stunt growth, as doctors had feared, reports AP.

Doctors knew that steroids cut growth by about a third of an inch (7 millimeters) a year when children start using them, and had worried that youngsters' growth might continue to lag that much every year.

But the first research to take a long look at the drugs a five-year US study and a 10-year study in Kolding, Denmark, found that the effect is temporary and children resume normal growth after about a year.

The US study further found

that inhaled steroids can help control symptoms even in mild cases.

Up to now, doctors knew that in children with severe cases of asthma, steroids' effectiveness outweighed any side effects. But they weren't sure whether that was true in mild cases.

"We hope the results will convince more physicians, and parents as well, that treating children with mild to moderate asthma with inhaled corticosteroids will result in better asthma control and improved quality of life," said Dr Claude Lenfant, director of the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, which paid for the US

study.

The findings are reassuring news for both doctors and parents, said Dr Cleveland Moore, pediatric director at LSU's Morial Asthma Center.

The study at Kolding Hospital and the one at eight US centres were published in Thursday's New England Journal of Medicine.

The Danish team looked at the steroid budesonide's effect on the height of 211 people. They had spent an average of nine years on the drug.

The US study looked at both a steroid and a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory inhaler and their various effects on children with

mild to moderate asthma.

"When asthma is more severe, steroids are clearly the drug of choice, even though there is slight growth retardation," said Dr N Franklin Adkinson, executive director of the eight-centre Childhood Asthma Management Research Group. "Our focus was on mild asthma because there is no consensus that inhaled steroids are the drug of choice."

The steroid was much better than the other anti-inflammatory drug, nedocromil, at reducing the heightened sensitivity that turns allergies into asthma.

Both medicines also cut down the number of emergency room and urgent doctor visits, with

budesonide doing better than nedocromil. Budesonide also had benefits the other drug did not: less time spent in the hospital, less need for other asthma medicines, and more days without asthma attacks.

However, doctors did not find one improvement they had hoped for: better lung capacity. That may indicate that the children's lungs already had been damaged irreversibly, Lenfant and Moore said.

"This tells me these young kids need to be started with therapy with inhaled steroids early in life within two years of developing the disease," Moore said.

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

Tender Notice

1. Sealed tenders are invited in foreign currency from bonafide Manufacturers/ Dealers/ Suppliers/Indentors (Enlisted Firm & firm) for supply of the following items for Bangladesh "Army."

Ser No	Nomenclature	Date of Selling	Date of Opening	Currency	Tender No	
a.	Bitumen Distributor Truck complete with standard tools accessories incl: 5% fast and slow moving spare parts (Qty-02)	19.10.2000	19.11.2000	20.11.2000	Foreign	1094/P-7

2. Tendering schedule with detailed specifications/conditions will be available on payment as per I/T selling rate (not-refundable) during office hours between 0800 hours to 1300 hours. The tender can be dropped latest by 1000 hrs and opened at 1005 hours on the specified date of opening in presence of all tenderers (if present).

ISPR/Misc/2000/826
DFP-24384-9/10
G-1778

Lt Col
For Director General

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer
Sher-e-Bangladesh Nagar PWD Division No III
Dhaka

Notice Inviting Tender

(Tender Notice No.16/VII(2000-2001))

Sealed tenders in two envelope system (one for Technical offer and the other for Financial offer) are hereby invited from special class-1 (one) enlisted contractors of Public Works Department, Government of Bangladesh who had successfully completed a Metal Structure system in a single tender amounting to minimum Taka 3 (three) crores only for **Design and Construction (Design, Supply, Fabrication, Erection, Testing and Commissioning) of ALUMINIUM METAL DOME of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman NOVO THEATRE at Bijoy Sharani, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka** on turn-key basis in Bangladesh Form No 2911. The tenderer must form a consortium/association with well reputed foreign firms having adequate experience in the designing and constructions of similar nature of at least three Dome structures for Planetariums in any country. All payments for this work will be made in local currency. Tenderers must use best quality materials of internationally reputed manufacturers. The tenderers should visit the site before preparing the bid in order to find out space and ascertain design conditions.

The time for completion of the work will be 3 (three) months from the date of issuance of work order. A pre-bid meeting will be held in the office chamber of Chief Engineer, PWD on 6th November, 2000 at 3.00 PM.

Tender document may be examined from the office of the Executive Engineer, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, PWD Division No III, Dhaka and any queries regarding this tender may be made through Fax No 8117412.

Tender document may be purchased from the office of the Executive Engineer, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, PWD Division No III, Dhaka, Eden Bldg, PWD Division, Dhaka & Divisional Commissioner, Dhaka on cash payment of Taka 5 (five) thousand (non-refundable) only during office hours on all working days from 15.10.2000 to 31.10.2000. Earnest money amounting to Taka 4.00 (four) lacs in the form of Call Deposit/Bank Draft/Pay Order/Security Deposit Receipt from any scheduled bank of Bangladesh in favour of Executive Engineer, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar PWD Division No III, Dhaka shall have to be submitted along with the technical offer of the tender.

The tender will be received by the office of the Executive Engineer, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar PWD Division-III, Dhaka, PWD Eden Bldg, Division, Dhaka/Divisional Commissioner, Dhaka up to 12.30 PM on 27th November, 2000. The technical offer will be opened on the same day at 2.00 PM in the office of the Executive Engineer, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar PWD Division-III, Dhaka in presence of tenderers or his/their authorised representative, if any.

The authority reserves the right to accept any tender or reject all the tenders without assigning any reason thereof.

Md Azizul Hoque Khan
Executive Engineer
SB Nagar PWD Division-III
Dhaka. Phone: 9110766

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