

International

ME peace process in tatters as Israel threatens to suspend all negotiations

UNGA condemns excessive use of force by Tel Aviv

JERUSALEM, Oct 21 : The Middle East peace process was in tatters today after one of the bloodiest days since violence erupted three weeks ago prompted Israel to threaten to suspend all negotiations, reports AFP.

While the Palestinians and Israelis traded gunfire and accusations, Jerusalem also suffered a heavy diplomatic blow.

The UN General Assembly in New York voted by a large majority late Friday to condemn what it called Israel's excessive use of force against Palestinian civilians.

The resolution was adopted by 92 votes to six, but 46 countries abstained. Israel, the United States and four small Pacific Ocean states voted against.

The motion split EU nations, with nine voting in favour and six abstaining.

The non-binding resolution condemned "acts of violence, especially the excessive use by the Israeli forces of force against Palestinian civilians."

It expressed support for the understandings reached at the Sharm el-Sheikh summit and urged "all parties concerned to implement these understandings honestly and without delay."

There was little sign of any understanding on the ground Friday as nine Palestinians were killed in fierce clashes.

Four were killed in intense clashes with Israeli troops in the flashpoint West Bank town of Nablus, following a funeral for a Palestinian killed the previous day.

Four teenagers were among the five other Palestinian victims in clashes elsewhere.

Pakistan worried at arms induction by India

ISLAMABAD, Oct 21 : Pakistan has expressed its concern over the induction of large quantities of arms and military equipment by India, reports PPI.

The concern was expressed by a spokesman of the Foreign Office here on Friday in Islamabad when he was asked to comment on a report in the Washington based weekly "Defence News" that India was buying military equipment worth 25 billion dollars from different sources.

The spokesman emphasised that Pakistan wants to avoid arms race either nuclear or conventional. However he said whatever happens in our region we cannot be oblivious of that and we will take all measures so that our security remains impregnable and any aggressive design is deterred.

Asked the signing of Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)

Friday's violence, in which more than 200 were injured, brought the death toll to 123 since the fighting broke out three weeks ago. The overwhelming majority of casualties have been Palestinians.

Israel, insisting that it had stuck to a truce that was due to take effect Friday, warned that it would take a "time-out" in the peace process.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak said the time-out would last "as long as necessary".

"We can't ignore what has happened over the past three weeks and say nothing has happened," he told Israeli television.

Barak complained that Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat "doesn't want to give up anything" for the cause of peace.

The Palestinians, meanwhile, appealed for a halt to "this killing rampage," as Arab heads of state gathered in Egypt for a summit to discuss the violence.

Arafat, in Cairo for the Arab summit, dismissed Barak's remarks, saying: "The children of the Arab nation are stronger than any statement."

The Arab leaders meeting in Cairo aim to make Israel pay a diplomatic price for its deadly crackdown on the Palestinians.

By reversing steps toward normalisation with Israel, the Arabs hope to send a message that the Jewish state will only win their acceptance by negotiating a "real peace" rather than by imposing one by force.

Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shara, whose country wants the summit to take a hard line against Israel, urged Arab states to scrap all ties and dealings with Israel.

Vajpayee to be discharged from hospital today

NEW DELHI, Oct 21 : Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee will be discharged on Sunday from a Bombay hospital, 13 days after undergoing knee surgery, officials from his office said here today, reports AFP.

"There are no restrictions on him at all," Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pramod Mahajan was quoted as saying on television.

He added the prime minister has been advised not to tax his left leg, which was operated upon.

A previous report said the prime minister had been discharged from the Breach Candy hospital.

Officials in New Delhi said following his discharge the prime minister will not rest in Bombay as planned at first, and instead will fly directly to the Indian capital on Sunday.

A kilometre-long (0.6-mile) banner put up outside the barricaded hospital carried 2,000 get-well messages scribbled by children and actors and actresses of India's Bollywood in Bombay, witnesses said.

The prime minister has invited the hospital nurses who attended him to visit the Indian capital, a television network added.

Vajpayee went into orthopaedic surgery on October 10 in a 65-minute operation to have a joint in his arthritic left knee replaced.

The premier's office functioned during Vajpayee's hospitalisation from the seventh floor of the hospital.

Siamese twins to be separated next month

LONDON, Oct 21 : Jodie and Mary, the Siamese twins at the centre of an ethical and legal row in Britain, are to undergo surgery to separate them in the second week of November, a British newspaper reported today, says AFP.

One of the twins is expected to die if she is separated from her sister, but doctors fear that if they do not operate, both the twins could perish.

The twin's parents, from the Maltese island of Gozo, went to court to get an injunction preventing the operation, but the House of Lords, Britain's highest court, said the surgery could go ahead.

According to the Guardian newspaper, doctors at St Mary's Hospital in Manchester, northern England, where the three-month-old girls are being treated, have now set a date for the complex surgery.

However, this could be brought forward if the condition of Jodie and Mary -- not their real names -- deteriorates any further.

Mary is the weaker of the two and depends on Jodie to keep her alive, but this dependence is weakening her sister, doctors believe.

Rwanda's first reconciliation conference, aimed at fostering harmony in the wake of widespread ethnic bloodshed, ended here late Friday with a call for political reforms, reports AFP.

Rwanda still lives very much under the shadow of the 1994 genocide during which Hutu extremists planned and carried out the slaughter of between 500,000 and 800,000 Tutsis and

Chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat alleged that Barak's "time-out" was a condition set by hawkish right-wing leader Ariel Sharon, with whom Barak restarted negotiations Friday to form an emergency national-unity government.

Amid the new tension, key international players stepped up their diplomacy, with the United States -- which brokered the Sharm el-Sheikh agreement -- playing down Barak's time-out.

However the fighting extended alarmingly into southern Lebanon late Friday, according to police there.

Israeli helicopters and artillery pounded a border region from where guerrillas fired machine guns and hand grenades, Lebanese police said.

Three unidentified guerrillas fired machine guns and hand grenades across the border fence in the direction of an Israeli post facing the gate of Abbassiyeh in the western sector of southern Lebanon, security sources said.

An Israeli military source said guerrillas were trying to enter Israeli territory from Lebanon near the Israeli village of Rajah. There were no casualties on the Israeli side, the source said.

The Lebanese sources could not confirm whether shots were fired from southern Lebanon against northern Israel.

An Israeli military source confirmed only that shots were fired on the ceasefire line between Israel and Lebanon.

Friday's clashes literally exploded the ceasefire deadline which expired during the day.

Israeli foreign ministry spokesman Noam Katz called the deadline "flexible."

Clinton denies rift with Gore

BOSTON, Massachusetts, Oct 21 : US President Bill Clinton strongly denied reports Friday that a rift has developed between him and Vice President Al Gore, reports AFP.

"It's not true," Clinton said. "I can categorically say it's not true."

His statement came in response to a lengthy article in Friday's New York Times reporting that relations between the two men had deteriorated in recent weeks.

Questioned on the state of relations with his top lieutenant and would-be successor, Clinton asserted that he was prepared to do everything in his power to see Gore elected president.

The vice president has largely kept his mentor at arms' length, worried that the more charismatic and popular president might overshadow him or worse -- remind voters of the scandals that have plagued the administration.

Clinton -- legally prohibited from running again -- enjoys sky-high job approval ratings, but many Americans take a dim view of his character, in large part a holdover from his tawdry affair with ex-White House intern Monica Lewinsky and subsequent impeachment.

Clinton underscored the US president's commitment to providing unqualified support for Gore's presidential campaign.

"We've done rallies in the past and (Clinton) will be out there to help him out," he said.

Colombia launches offensive to beat back leftist rebels

BOGOTA, Oct 21 : The Colombian government ordered a large-scale military operation Friday to beat back leftist rebels who have launched a series of attacks in the northwest of the country, reports AFP.

The operation was ordered by President Andres Pastrana in response to attacks by units of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) on the town of Dabeiba, located near the border with Panama.

There was no independent confirmation of the reports.

At least 32 bodies have been transferred from Dabeiba to Medellin, army spokesman Mayor Oscar Anzola said.

The military and police victims are believed to number more than 50," Radio Caracol said, quoting a reporter on the scene at the Medellin airport as the bodies were flown in.

Rwandan reconciliation meet ends with call for reforms

KIGALI, Oct 21 : Rwanda's first reconciliation conference, aimed at fostering harmony in the wake of widespread ethnic bloodshed, ended here late Friday with a call for political reforms.

And in 1996, Rwandan Tutsi soldiers backing a rebellion in Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo) were accused of mass killings of Rwandan Hutus living as refugees in Zaire.

South African President Thabo Mbeki joined a cross-section of Rwandans from home and abroad for the three days of reconciliation talks here.

More than 100 people have

Bangladesh Rifles Headquarters Administrative Directorate, Cue & Ord Sector Peekhkhana, Dhaka Re-Tender Notice

Dated: 15th October 2000, 30 Ashwin 1407

Sealed tenders are invited by this organisation from enlisted only with this section for goods of serial No 'Ka' and 'Kha' and enlisted/non-enlisted contractors for goods of serial No 'Ga' for purchasing at the quantity as mentioned against the undermentioned goods.

Serial number Name of goods Number Cost of schedule

Ka Nylon net mosquito curtain 7,838 pieces 750/-

Kha Polyester drill cloth navy blue (mufti) 2,605 meters 400/-

Ga Mosquito killing oil (sycophying) 1,400 litres 400/-

2. Schedule of tender can be purchased from RP on duty at the gates number 3 and 4 at Peekhkhana, BDR Headquarters at the specific cost till 30-10-2000 Monday, 1400 hours from the date of publication of advertisement. The undersigned can be contacted to see the preserved sample or for any other information during office hours that is from 0830 hours to 1400 hours excepting government holiday. Tenderers participating in the tender can submit tender on 31-10-2000, Tuesday till 1200 hours in the tender box kept at the No 4 gate at Peekhkhana, BDR and tender box will be opened on the same day at 1230 hours in presence of the tenderers (if anyone remains present).

3. The authority reserves the power to reject or accept any or all tenders without assigning any reason.

DAQMG On behalf of the Director General

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