

# Arafat seeks UN protection for Palestinians

Journalist dies, preparation to bury 4 more dead

CAIRO, Oct 28 : Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat appealed to the international community to hurry to protect his people from Israeli attacks after a month of violence, in remarks published today, reports AFP.

The Palestinian people are awaiting the speedy provision of international protection for them," Arafat said in an interview with Egypt's government newspaper Al-Ahram, as the death toll from the clashes neared 150.

He was recalling an Arab demand for the United Nations Security Council and General Assembly to "guarantee the safety" of Palestinians, "with a view to establishing an international force" in the Palestinian territories.

The United Nations remains responsible for the Palestinian territories and their people until they achieve their firm rights in Palestine," Arab leaders said in the final statement of a summit in Cairo October 21 and 22.

The vast majority of those killed since confrontations broke on September 28 have been Pal-

estinian. The spiral of violence was sparked by Israeli hardline opposition leader Ariel Sharon's visit to the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound in occupied east Jerusalem, a site sacred to both Jews and Muslims.

On Wednesday, the Palestinian representative at the UN made a formal request for the Security Council to meet to consider sending a UN force to protect Palestinians from Israeli violence.

Arafat said his people were also waiting for a UN commission to start investigating the recent troubles -- another demand of the Arab summit.

The Palestinian leader told Al-Ahram that the summit had issued a "message of peace" that Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak had rejected by "suspending (peace) negotiations and continuing to mobilise his troops."

Israel denounced the "language of threats" of the Cairo summit, which pledged financial and moral support for the Palestinian uprising, and called a "time-out" in peace negotiations

with the Palestinians.

Arafat pressed for "political separation" from Israel by establishing an independent Palestinian state and recalled that the PLO Central Council will meet next month to deliberate when to declare statehood.

Last month the Palestine Liberation Organisation delayed a plan to announce statehood on September 13, but said the council would meet again before November 15 to discuss the matter.

Meanwhile, a Palestinian journalist died in hospital in Jordan today from injuries suffered in a gas explosion in a security headquarters in the West Bank town of Bethlehem some 10 days ago, his employers said.

Aziz Yusef al-Teneh, 32, was director of the official Palestinian news agency Wafa's Bethlehem office. He was in the headquarters of Force 17, a special unit charged with the security of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and other top officials, when a gas explosion ripped through the building on October 19.

Wafa said Teneh had worked

for the agency since 1988.

Two members of Arafat's personal guard were killed and 10 others injured in the blast.

Wafa said Teneh, who was married just a month ago, was taken to Amman for treatment, but died on Saturday.

Earlier, Palestinians prepared to bury four more of their dead today following an upturn in violence the previous day, as the United States continued to plea for calm before peace talks can resume.

But the prospects were growing that political developments in Israel might kill the peace process altogether, with Prime Minister Ehud Barak having moved a step closer to forming an emergency government with his political adversary, Ariel Sharon.

The Palestinian territories awoke to calm Saturday after a day that also left almost 200 wounded in what had been declared a "day of rage."

Most of the violence occurred in the West Bank, but the Gaza Strip also witnessed fiery clashes between Palestinians and Israeli soldiers.



Four Palestinians pray in front of Israeli police at a street in Jerusalem's Old City after they were prevented from entering the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound for Juma prayers. Israeli police announced on Friday that they were lowering to 35 the age limit for Palestinians to be allowed to attend the Juma prayers at the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound. The hotly contested site, holy to both Muslims and Jews, has been the scene of clashes since a wave of violence erupted over Israeli right-wing leader Ariel Sharon's visit to the complex on September 28.

## Divers continue search for more bodies in Kursk sub

SEVEROMORSK, Russia, Oct 28 : The search for more bodies from the Russian submarine Kursk entered its second week today dogged by bad weather and haunted by the renewed anguish of relatives, reports AFP.

Divers resumed the terrible task of attempting to bring more bodies to the surface after a note found on one dead sailor revealed that 23 people had survived the initial blast, only to suffer a lingering death in the darkness.

Three Norwegian divers were trying to gain access to the ninth compartment, where sailors are thought to have taken refuge after the submarine blew apart and sent it to the bottom of the Barents Sea.

## Police open fire on Tibetan refugees in Nepal

KATHMANDU, Oct 28 : At least one person was killed when police opened fire on a group of absconding Tibetan refugees in eastern Nepal Friday, hospital sources and state news said, reports AFP.

The clash occurred after police tried to arrest 24 Tibetans who had escaped police custody while en route to the Department of Immigration in Kathmandu.

At least nine policemen and six Tibetan refugees were injured in the clash. The refugees are said to have pelted policemen with stones and the police responded with live fire, the state-run news agency RSS reported.

## Japan stages biggest ever nuclear drill

TOKYO, Oct 28 : Japan today mobilised some 12,000 residents and military forces as Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori led the nation's biggest ever nuclear accident drill, reports AFP.

The drill, carried out at a nuclear plant in Kashima, some 650 km west of Tokyo, simulated an emergency closure of the reactor, followed by a massive radiation leak due to a halted cooling water supply.

In Kashima, about 100 people were evacuated by Self-Defence Force's trucks to local shelters, while another 12,000 participants stayed inside their home, a local government official said.

## Air India blast 2 Sikh men held in Canada

VANCOUVER, Canada, Oct 28 : After a 15-year investigation, federal police announced the arrest of two Sikh men, charged with killing 329 people aboard an Air India flight that exploded off the coast of Ireland on June 23, 1985, reports AFP.

The men, who were arrested in Vancouver, British Columbia, were identified as Repudman Singh Malik, 53, and Ajai Singh Bagri, 51, according to Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) spokeswoman Cate Galliford.

Galliford said police expect to make further arrests.

The RCMP has established that the explosion of Air India's Boeing 747 Flight 182 was caused by a bomb, in an investigation that has so far cost more than 20 million US dollars.

## 26 of a Sikh family feared drowned in UP

KHATIMA, UP, Oct 28 : Twenty-six people of a Sikh family from a village in Lakhimpur Khuri on their way to Nanakmat Shrin in the Neighbouring Udham Singh Nagar district were feared drowned after their tractor trolley fell into Sharda canal on Thursday night, police said here yesterday, reports PTI.

The accident occurred when the hook connecting the trolley, carrying 37 people of the family from Ratna farms in Mailani, broke and the trolley fell in the canal on Khatima-Purampur road in Udham Singh Nagar district, they said.



Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori speaks during a meeting of ministers on Friday in Lima. The Peruvian Congress approved a series of agreements brokered between the government and the opposition, including setting the date for new elections on April 18.

—AFP photo



Indian opposition leader Sonia Gandhi (C) gestures exuberantly as senior party leaders display the victory sign after she filled-up her nomination paper at her residence in New Delhi yesterday to seek reelection as head of her Congress Party. The Italian-born Sonia's candidature was supported by 25 senior party leaders. The elections are due to be held by early November.

## Laden behind attack on USS Cole in Yemen?

WASHINGTON, Oct 28 : US intelligence agents have "hard evidence" that Osama Bin Laden was behind the blast that killed 17 sailors aboard the USS Cole in Yemen, USA Today reported Friday, says AFP.

The evidence shows that the Saudi-born millionaire financed the attack and sent one of his aides to supervise it, the daily said, citing anonymous sources.

The blast occurred October 12 when a small boat pulled alongside the US destroyer at the Yemeni port of Aden and detonated.

Bin Laden was in Jalalabad, Afghanistan Thursday morning, the report said.

US officials downplayed the report, and the FBI refused to confirm it.

"This story is overwritten. They are strong suspicions that people with links to Bin Laden are involved in this but the notion of hard evidence is at

this point an overstatement," said an official who requested anonymity.

"We're not confirming. It's too early at this stage," said Steven Berry of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

State Department spokesman Richard Boucher also said it was premature "to speculate on what the results of the investigation might be."

"We are prepared to pursue this investigation wherever it leads, and to take appropriate action based on the conclusions," Boucher said.

If investigators conclude that Bin Laden and his organisation are behind the blast, Washington may take retaliatory action, as it did in 1998, following attacks on US embassies in Tanzania and Kenya which claimed 224 lives.

The United States subsequently bombed terrorist bases in Afghanistan and a pharmaceutical factory in Sudan.

## 4 Pakistani children killed in blast

QUETTA, Pakistan, Oct 28 : Four children were killed and three others were injured today in an explosion at a Pakistani village near the town of Chaman close to the Afghan border, local officials said, reports AFP.

Several children were playing with an object, presumably an abandoned grenade or some other device, which exploded, they said.

Police said three children died on the spot and another expired from injuries on the way to hospital.

## Jamaat calls for early polls in Pakistan

CHAKRI, Pakistan, Oct 28 : Hundreds of thousands of people assembled here under the banner of Pakistan's leading Islamic party to call for immediate national elections and voice support for oppressed Muslims throughout the world, reports AFP.

This dusty uninhabited wasteland has turned into a vast hive of activity as an estimated 300,000 Jamaat-i-Islami supporters opened a three-day congregation on Friday.

The current military regime of General Pervez Musharraf should immediately organise national elections and hand over power to people's representatives," Jamaat chief Qazi Hussain Ahmad told the opening session.

He said his party would participate in the elections, warning the

regime against carrying out any amendment to the 1973 constitution, which Musharraf suspended after seizing power.

Ahmad rejected the forthcoming local district polls without participation by political parties which the regime has scheduled in phases starting from December 31 in order to devolve power to people at the grass-roots village level.

"It is no solution to the problems confronting the country, instead it will open a Pandora's box," the Jamaat leader said, adding Pakistan needed general elections to steer it out of the current crisis.

Pakistanis have been hit by soaring fuel, electricity and commodity prices resulting from new tax measures, rising crime and a crumbling economy.

## Philippines opposition forms united front against Estrada

CEBU, Philippines, Oct 28 : Opposition parties in the Philippines today unveiled a united front in a bid to oust embattled President Joseph Estrada from office over corruption allegations, reports AFP.

"It is imperative that the President resign immediately to avoid irreparable damage to the economy and to restore the people's faith and confidence in government," Philippine Vice-President Gloria Arroyo said.

She was speaking at a meeting of anti-Estrada forces in the central city of Cebu, where she took on the post of leader of the "united opposition."

The meeting marked the formal launch of the opposition front, bringing together Arroyo, head of the Lakas (Strength) party, and

two smaller parties, Reporma (Reform) and Promdi (Provincial). During the meeting Reporma's leader, former defense secretary Renato de Villa and Promdi head, former governor Lito Osmena, endorsed Arroyo as leader of the opposition to Estrada.

Arroyo cited the scandal over accusations that President Estrada had received millions of dollars in pay-offs from illegal gambling syndicates and warned that unless he was replaced, the loss of confidence would cause serious damage to the economy.

"Our economy is sinking fast, battered by rising prices of basic commodities. We are concerned that the deterioration of the economy and the rapid loss of faith... is making the country vulnerable to extremist threats," she said.

## CTBT signing to serve Pakistan's interest: FM

KARACHI, Oct 28 : It is in Pakistan's interests to sign the nuclear Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar said today, reports AFP.

He told a news conference that signing the treaty would remove difficulties holding up economic assistance from abroad.

"We have examined the treaty and reached the conclusion that it is in Pakistan's interest to sign it," he said.

"CTBT safeguards Pakistan's interest."

He said CTBT signing would be welcomed by the world and that Japan as well as European countries would then resume full economic co-operation with

Pakistan.

Japan suspended multi-million dollar annual lending to Pakistan after it conducted nuclear tests in May 1998 in response to atomic detonations by regional rival India.

Sattar said the government was striving to achieve a national consensus on the issue of signing the test ban treaty, but gave no timeframe for completing the process.

He said Pakistan would maintain its moratorium on further nuclear tests.

"We will not be the first to resume nuclear testing."

He said Islamabad desired good neighbourly relations with India but New Delhi was not giving a positive response.



Cuban President Fidel Castro (C) and Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez (R) talk with a woman and her child on Friday at the tomb of Simon Bolivar in Caracas. Castro is on an five-day official visit to Venezuela.

## Communists shocked at Jyoti Basu's retirement plan

CALCUTTA, Oct 28 : Leftist partners in the world's longest-running elected Communist government, in the Indian state of West Bengal, reacted with shock today at the news of their octogenarian chief minister planned to quit next week, reports AFP.

Partners in West Bengal's coalition, headed for 23 years by Jyoti Basu, said they would try to persuade India's best-known Communist leader to stay on in power.

But Basu's political rivals predicted his exit would pave the way for a change in government after state elections next year. Pranab Mukherjee, a West Bengal-based leader from India's main opposition Congress Party, which has been unsuccessfully

trying to oust Basu's government for more than two decades, said: "We are prepared to take on the Left Front with its new leader."

Indian Railways Minister Mamata Banerjee, a bitter regional foe of Basu's Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI-M) party who has repeatedly accused his government of unleashing a reign of terror on non-communists, said Basu was running away from state elections due next year.

"The people of the state will do a post-mortem of Basu's long rule. He got a golden opportunity to turn West Bengal into a prosperous state. But everything has deteriorated by it industry, health, education and infrastructural development."

## Kosovo holds first post-war polls under UN guidance

PRISTINA, Yugoslavia, Oct 28 : Kosovo's ethnic Albanians went to the polls today in what the Yugoslav province's UN administration has dubbed "the first democratic, free and fair election" in their history, reports AFP.

Voting in the municipal elections began at 7:00 am (11:00 BST) in 1,466 polling stations in 30 municipalities, and was due to continue until 7:00 pm (23:00 BST), with more than 900,000 voters due to elect 920 councillors.

But in contrast to most municipal elections, the key issues were not refuse collection or street lighting but the separatist momentum in Kosovo that could prompt the Albanian majority to step up its drive for independence.

The vote supervised by the Organisation for Cooperation and Security in Europe (OSCE) is the first to be held in the province since the United Nations took over its administration in June 1999.

Sixteen months after NATO bombing forced an end to the Kosovo war, the poll has received enthusiastic support from the province's ethnic Albanians, but Kosovo's Serb 100,000-strong minority is boycotting the election.

The OSCE reported a heavy turnout among Kosovar Albanians but no security incidents in early voting across the province.

Th excitement was almost tangible as eager voters flocked to polling stations on a cold, dry morning.

## Gbagbo forms new govt in Ivory Coast 155 killed in clashes

ABIDJAN, Oct 28 : Ivory Coast's new President Laurent Gbagbo formed his government on Friday, with 17 members from his Ivorian Popular Front (FPI) party and six from other parties, reports AFP.

The prime minister and head of the government, charged with planning and development, appointed earlier Friday, is Afi N'Guessan.

Gbagbo brought in four ministers from the former ruling Ivory

Coast Democratic Party (PDCI), ousted in a coup on Dec 24.

The Ivorian Workers' Party (PFI), whose leader Francis Wodie was a presidential candidate, was allocated two ministerial posts.

Earlier, some 155 people died in political and ethnic clashes Thursday in the Ivory Coast, according to the Rally for Republicans (RDR) party, which counted many members among the victims.

## Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

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## Retender Invitation for Supply of Packet Made of Jute Goods

Tenders in sealed envelopes are invited from bonafide manufacturers/suppliers establishments for using packet for the Bangladesh Diary for 2001 and Desk Calendars to be published by the External Publicity Wing for the year 2001.

Schedule of tender can be purchased from the office of the undersigned during office hours till the day before of submitting tender on payment of Taka 700/= (seven hundred) taka in cash (non-refundable).

Interested tenderers can deposit the rate offer in the box kept at the main gate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on November 07, 2000 till 2:00 PM.

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

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Sealed tenders are invited from reputed offset printing establishments for printing 1,00,000 (one lakh) sets of GSP certificate of origin form by 7.11.2000 at 3.00 PM. Schedule of tender can be procured till 6-11-2000 during office hours from the General Section of the Bureau on payment of Taka 400/- (four hundred) in cash non-refundable. The background of the form will have to be submitted by preparing it by printing/computer with the tender. The background of the form should be exactly the same of the specimen form. The specimen form may be procured from the Publication Section of the Bureau. The Publication Section may be contacted for information in details.

DFP-25840-24/10 G-1890

Abdul Mazid Bhuiyan Director (Information)