

## International

# Arafat seeks UN protection for Palestinians

Journalist dies, preparation to bury 4 more dead

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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 Repudaman Singh Malik, 53, and Ajay 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 Kheri on their way to Nanakmata Shrine in the Neighboring Udhamsingh 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-Purapur road in Udhamsingh Nagar district, they said.

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.

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.

—AFP photo

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