

International

Hijacking of Russian plane ends, gunman arrested

UDVA, Israel, Nov 12: A Chechen gunman who seized a Russian airliner surrendered to Israeli authorities today and all 58 people on board were safe, a military official said, reports AP.

Army Col Ofer Ophir said the lone hijacker was in Israeli custody and the passengers were unharmed.

The Vnukovo Airlines plane landed at a military air base in Uvda, in Israel's southern desert, early Sunday morning after being commandeered during a flight from southern Russia to Moscow. The plane refueled in Baku, Azerbaijan, before reaching Israel.

Israel, Russia and Azerbaijan had said initially that up to four hijackers were on board and were threatening to blow up the plane.

But there was only one gunman, and he turned over his weapon and surrendered, Israeli authorities said.

As the hijacking ended, Prime Minister Ehud Barak's plane reversed course for a second time and headed back toward the United States, where he was scheduled to meet US President Bill Clinton on Sunday.

Barak left Israel on Saturday night. But at a stop-over in London, he decided to return to Israel to deal with the hijacking crisis, he was still in the air as the hijacking approached a resolution, and decided to

turn around and head back to London and on to Washington, said David Zisso, Barak's media adviser at the Defense Ministry.

The hijacking began moving toward a peaceful resolution at about 9 am three hours after the plane landed in Israel.

At that time, the captain of the Vnukovo Airlines plane came down a stairway and handed over weapons to Israeli security forces, said army spokesman Brig. Gen. Ron Kitrey.

At the same time, the hijacker also came down the stairs, and was met by a vehicle that took him to the terminal building, Kitrey added.

Kitrey and other Israeli officials initially said the hijackers acted in support of the Palestinian uprising, a six-week-old conflict that has claimed nearly 200 lives. But later he said that information was incorrect, and that the hijacking was part of the ongoing conflict between Chechnya and Russia.

The gunman seized the plane Saturday night shortly after takeoff from Makhachkala, the capital of the southern Russian region of Dagestan in the Caucasus Mountains. It was headed for Moscow, but the hijackers diverted the airplane to Baku, Azerbaijan, where it refueled before heading toward Israel.



The hijacked Dagestan Airlines Tupolev TU-154 carrying 48 passengers and 10 crew stands on a runway in the civilian part of Ovda airport, some 50 km north of the Red Sea resort of Eilat yesterday. The plane was hijacked overnight on a flight from Dagestan in the northern Caucasus to Moscow.

—AFP photo

Zemin begins SE Asian tour

VIENTIANE, Nov 12: Chinese President Jiang Zemin began a state visit to Laos today on the first leg of a Southeast Asian tour that reflects China's desire to expand its influence in a region still recovering from economic crisis, reports AP.

Jiang, who arrived late Saturday, was received by Lao President Khamtay Siphandone at the Hor Kham presidential palace in Vientiane Sunday, and was due to meet other communist party leaders, including Prime Minister Sisavath Keobounphan, Lao officials said.

After Laos, Jiang will travel to Cambodia on Monday before going to Brunei later in the week for a leaders' summit of the Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation forum.

Two Indian ministers resign

NEW DELHI, Nov 12: Two Indian ministers from the ruling Hindu nationalist BJP party have been forced to resign over their alleged role in the murder of a policeman during sectarian violence in 1985, reports said today, reports AP.

Junior Minister for Defence Production Harin Pathak and a provincial minister from the western Indian state of Gujarat, Ashok Bhatt, submitted their resignations late Saturday, the Indian Express said.

Pathak, a federal minister from Gujarat, and Bhatt, have been accused of inciting the murder of a policeman during communal and caste-based riots in the western state following a controversial government proposal to reserve a certain number of state jobs for lower-caste Hindus and tribals.

Both deny the allegations and say they will "prove their innocence" before the Gujarat High Court.

Eight dead in Seoul clinic fire

SEOUL, Nov 11: Eight patients died and another 25 were injured when a blaze swept through a clinic that treats the mentally ill and drug addicts on Saturday, police said, reports AP.

The pre-dawn fire erupted at Kim Kyung-Bin Clinic in south west Seoul, where psychopaths, alcoholics and drug addicts were locked up in their rooms with windows sealed by iron bars.

The fire gutted the five-storey building and all eight died from smoke inhalation, officials said. It took 40 minutes for 160 firemen with 31 fire engines to put out the blaze.

TV showed firemen using electric saws to tear iron bars off the windows and help patients and nurses escape down ladders from the second floor.

"I thought I was going to die. The metal door was locked up from the outside and there were no windows," said a 50-year-old patient.

Four bodies were found in the basement and three on the second floor, police said.

Delhi urged to announce ceasefire in Kashmir

SRINAGAR, India, Nov 12: A prominent Muslim politician in Indian Kashmir urged New Delhi on Saturday to announce a ceasefire against Islamic guerrillas in the frontier Himalayan state, reports AP.

Ghulam Mohammad Shah, former chief minister of the northern province, also asked New Delhi to include Pakistan in peace talks to resolve the dispute over Kashmir.

Tripartite talks can lead to an ever-lasting resolution of the Kashmir issue," Shah, who heads the Peoples' National Conference political party, told a rally in Srinagar, Kashmir's summer capital.

"But for this a congenial atmosphere has to be created," he said

Bangladesh for involvement of five big powers in UN peace missions

UNITED NATIONS, Nov 12: The five permanent members of the Security Council -- the only states with veto powers over war and peace -- are under increasing pressure to release some of their "well-trained, well-equipped" troops for UN peacekeeping operations, reports IPS.

Bangladesh has proposed that each of the five veto-wielding members -- namely the United States, United Kingdom, France, China and Russia -- be obligated to provide about five per cent of the total number of troops needed for each peacekeeping operation they help create.

"This will be in keeping with their responsibilities as permanent members," says Ambassador Anwarul Karim Chowdhury of Bangladesh, a country, which is the fourth largest troop contributor to UN missions.

All five permanent members (P-5) have taken an identical stand

on the issue: Fund and equipment, Yes, troops, No.

The Bangladesh proposal, initiated at a closed door meeting of the Security Council, comes at a time when UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan is complaining that he is finding it increasingly difficult to raise troops for peacekeeping missions -- particularly so for the troubled UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL).

The five permanent members -- along with most Western nations -- are keeping away from most peacekeeping missions primarily because they don't want their soldiers to return home in body bags.

"Spilling Third World blood is okay. But spilling P-5 blood is obviously a No-No," says a Third World diplomat.

Annan says that member states in the Security Council

with "significant military capacity" -- and who vote for UN peacekeeping missions -- should be prepared to back up their votes with troops.

"They can't leave us in the lurch if this is to be a viable mission. We need strong, viable military units and someone has got to contribute," he says.

Over the last several months, Annan has made several appeals to member states -- particularly those with "well-trained, well-equipped" troops -- to provide military contingents to one of the most troubled peacekeeping missions in Sierra Leone. But the reaction has been negative.

Last week, Annan warned that proposed troop withdrawals by India (about 3,000 troops) and Jordan (about 1,830 troops) could have a negative effect on the UN's peacekeeping efforts in Sierra Leone.

If UNAMSIL does not receive

the peacekeepers it needs now, he said, it will be impossible to further strengthen the Mission into the year 2001, as had been previously envisaged.

The Jordanians had earlier threatened to withdraw their soldiers unless Western nations -- particularly members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization -- agreed to beef up UNAMSIL with additional troops.

Annan told reporters that Jordan's decision raised "a very serious question: 'Can the Security Council adopt resolutions that require us to deploy troops, and those in the Council do nothing, particularly those major league countries with large forces?'"

After India and Jordan decided to withdraw their troops, the only countries offering additional troops were Bangladesh, Kenya and Ghana.

110 killed in Congo fighting

KIGALI, Nov 12: More than 110 soldiers have been killed fighting for control of the southeastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) town of Pepa this week, rebel chief Sylvain Buki told AFP Saturday.

"Our commanders on the ground had counted by this morning more than 100 dead on the enemy side," Buki, chief of staff for the Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD), said by telephone.

He said about 10 rebels had also been killed in four days of fighting.

Rwandan troops backing the RCD claimed Friday they had retaken Pepa from forces loyal to DRC President Laurent Kabila, who captured the town at the end of October.

Buki said the enemy dead were from the government's Congolese Armed Forces (FAC), and from Rwandan Hutu Interahamwe militias and Burundian Hutu rebels, who back Kabila.

He said Zimbabwese troops supporting Kabila's forces "were further behind and were able to retreat."

Calcutta film festival begins

CALCUTTA, Nov 12: Amidst a galaxy of cine personalities from abroad, the sixth Calcutta film festival got off to a glittering start yesterday with the promise to showcase the world in a capsule, reports PTI.

Former West Bengal chief minister Jyoti Basu inaugurated the week-long gala event, featuring 140 films from various parts of the world, by lighting a ceremonial lamp with leading Bangladeshi film actress Gulshan Ara Champa and Bengali Cinestar Shatabdi Roy lending a helping hand.

Speaking on the occasion, chief minister Buddhadev Bhattacharjee said the festival aimed at bringing about a better understanding of the world through celluloid at a time when it had been reduced to a global village.

It has been our policy to create a cultural environment which would lead to this understanding. This even forms a part of our endeavours in that direction, he said.

Veteran film maker Mrinal Sen said the festival was going from strength to strength and hoped that it would soon become one of the leading international movie events. Referring to the current edition of the festival, he said it rightly aims at putting the world in a capsule.

A number of film personalities from abroad including celebrated Polish director Krzysztof Zanussi, Argentine filmmaker Elio Suiela, Italian director Ricky Tognazzi and French movie critic Jean-Claude Carriere graced the dias of the overflying main auditorium at the Nandan film complex.

Suiela's creation The Adventures of God was screened as the inaugural film.

bases have been targeted by the terrorists," said political analyst Baseer Naveed, referring to an explosion at an army garrison in the western city of Quetta in July which killed nine people, mostly soldiers.

"If the soldiers cannot save themselves, how can common men feel secure?"

The Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) a powerful political party representing Indian immigrants, was accused of organising last week's bombing at the newspaper office but strongly denied any involvement.

The MQM, formed in the mid 1990s has won elections in Sindh's urban centres, but complains it has not been allowed to govern according to its mandate.

Musharraf's earliest speeches after the coup spoke of his commitment to tackle the security problem, particularly the sectarian violence between Sunnis and Shias and the enmity between indigenous Sindhis and Indian immigrants, known as Mohajirs.

Arafat seeks UN protection force

Bomb blast, shootings shake Gaza Strip, West Bank

UNITED NATIONS, Nov 12: Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat pressed his case on Friday for a 2,000-member UN protection force but France proposed a smaller unarmed military observer group and Israel rejected both plans, reports Reuters.

Amid tight security, Arafat, president of the Palestinian Authority, left the United Nations headquarters without speaking to reporters after addressing the 15 member Security Council in a private session.

A spokesman for Arafat, Marwan Jilani, did not flatly turn down the French proposal. But Israeli ambassador Yehuda Lancry, who addressed the council after Arafat, said he saw no need for an international force.

US Ambassador Richard Holbrooke said Israel was right to reject the force because Palestinians had not discussed it with them first. "It's not that we're opposed per se to something because it came from one side or

the other," he said.

"We're simply not going to support something which is unilaterally proposed without ever having been discussed with the other side directly," Holbrooke added.

Lancry said any observer group should be the result of a bilateral agreement with the Palestinians. "What we need now is not an international presence which really can run against the spirit of the peace process," he said.

"We need a direct approach with the Palestinian partner in order to bring back the calm and the security in order to resume the peace talks," he said.

The Palestinians want the force to deploy between Israeli forces and Palestinians on the West Bank and Gaza Strip, putting an end to violence.

French ambassador Jean-David Levitte, supported by Britain, suggested to Arafat that the United Nations dispatch an unarmed military observer force

to the region to report to the Security Council on the violence and liaise between Palestinian police and Israeli security forces, diplomats reported.

In West Bank, Israelis and Palestinians exchanged fire near Bethlehem and a bomb went off near a Jewish settlement Sunday as eight people were injured on another day of Palestinian uprising against Israeli occupation.

Eight Palestinians were hurt, including a 12-year-old boy who was seriously injured in the head, when the Israeli army fired at least three shells near Bethlehem, hospital sources said. The Palestinians had just participated in a funeral at the Beit Jalah church.

The soldiers launched the shells from Gilo, a Jewish settlement adjacent to east Jerusalem, in response to automatic weapon fire from Beit Jalah, a majority Christian town that faces the settlement, military sources said.

In the Gaza Strip, a bomb exploded by a road near the

Israeli settlement of Kfar Darom as two carloads of settlers were passing, causing no casualties but damaging the vehicles, an army spokesman said.

Palestinians also opened fire on Israeli cars and buses travelling between Jerusalem and Bethlehem, again without causing injury.

Palestinian sources said a group calling itself the "Hussein Abayot brigade" claimed responsibility for the shootings.

Hussein Abayot, 37, a military official of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's Fatah group, was killed by an Israeli helicopter gunship on Thursday which the Israelis said deliberately targeted him.

Six Palestinians were also killed Saturday in various confrontations in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, taking the total death toll to 210 since the intifada, or uprising, broke out after a visit by Israeli opposition leader Ariel Sharon to a disputed religious site in Jerusalem.

Protesters demand N-free Taiwan

TAIPEI, Nov 12: Chanting anti-nuke slogans in the rain, over 100,000 people rallied Sunday to support Taiwan's president, who faced political crisis after scrapping a partially completed nuclear plant, reports AP.

Protesters in the capital, Taipei, and the southern port city of Kaohsiung demonstrated for President Chen Shui-bian, whose decision last month to abandon the US \$5.4 billion project has prompted calls for his ouster.

Protesters waved purple and green banners that read "No Nuclear Plant, Support Chen Shui-bian," and distributed pamphlets reminding the public of past nuclear disasters abroad. Over a hundred policemen with riot shields cordoned off roads leading to the Presidential Palace.

Chen has faced intense criticism from opposition lawmakers

who say that his bypassing of the legislature to scrap the plant was unconstitutional, and a coalition of opposition leaders met Saturday to discuss details of Chen's ouster.

The leaders declined to elaborate on their plans after the meeting.

Thousands of protesters braved a light rain in Taipei on Sunday, carrying pink daisies and white balloons painted with the Chinese character for "nuclear" with a black cross over it.

"Mother Taiwan, Do Not Build the Nuclear Plant," read one banner held aloft by Buddhist nuns, Taiwanese academics and Western human rights activists.

Members of Taiwan's aboriginal tribes and mothers carrying their children also joined the

rally. The crowd blew horns and chanted Chen's nickname, "Abian."

"I'm her not just to support the president, but to support the decision to scrap the nuclear plant. We're doing this for our kids, for the future generation," said Yidee Huang, a 30-year old businesswoman.

In Kaohsiung, anti-nuke activists wore skull masks, chanting slogans from flatbed trucks filled with oil drums painted yellow and black with a radioactive sign. Traffic was at a standstill while the protesters held a motorcade.

Opponents argue that Taiwan is incapable of storing nuclear waste, and the plant would threaten the environment, already damaged by decades of policies emphasizing industrial growth over all else.

Karachi violence shakes Pak regime

KARACHI, Nov 12: Violence has returned to the streets of this troubled Pakistani port city, which enjoyed a few rare months of peace following the military coup a year ago, reports AP.

Known as the crime capital of Pakistan, Karachi was a hotbed of sectarian, political and ethnic violence throughout the second half of the 1990s.

But with the arrival of military ruler General Pervez Musharraf, who ousted prime minister Nawaz Sharif in a bloodless coup, the thugs and zealots who tormented the city of some 12 million people retreated into the shadows.

That is until recently, when there has been a palpable rise in tension amid signs the authorities are losing their tenuous grip on law and order here.

Last week an unidentified woman blew herself to pieces in the ground floor reception area of a newspaper office, taking two other lives with her.

Newspaper editors immediately blamed the authorities for

failing to provide adequate security and police rounded up some 100 people in a desperate show of force. Still, senior officers admit they have few real clues as to the identity of the bomber or her motives.

In another incident late last month, three people died and about a dozen were injured in a powerful explosion at a large Islamist gathering here.

"There have been at least six explosions in the eastern district of Karachi, which has never been the case in the recent past," said bomb squad chief Moimuddin Ahmed.

Housewife Gul Rukh, summing up the atmosphere, said she felt unsafe shopping or driving after sunset in some areas of the city.

"It appears that the honeymoon period of General Musharraf is over," she said.

Jamil Yusuf, the chief of the Citizen-Police Liaison Committee, said Karachi was accustomed to shooting and mob violence but the trend toward bomb-

ings was an alarming development.

"You may still find charred bodies lying in the mortuaries and bullet-riddled corpses on the streets -- though not in such big numbers like in 1994 or 1995 -- but the bombing trend can be more lethal," he said.

Aftab Nabi, the police chief of southern Sindh province of which Karachi is the capital, said the bombings were "certainly a matter of serious concern and a challenge for us."

"The law and order situation has improved compared to what it was a year back but I admit we need more co-ordination with the intelligence agencies."

Some 75 people have been killed and more than 300 injured in bomb blasts throughout Pakistan this year alone. Authorities have made a few arrests of so-called "Indian intelligence agents." But the vast majority of the explosions remain unsolved.

"General Musharraf's government is the first military regime in Pakistan in which even the army



Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research

Ref No Sect/Engg/112/79-97/P-2 (949/)

Dated: 30-10-2000

Tender Notice

Tenders are invited from electrical contractors enlisted with the council for electrification work of fibre research division building under the underconstruction modernisation project at Rajshahi laboratory (as per schedule).

Tenders can be purchased on 21-11-2000 during office hours from the cashier of BCSIR Secretariat, Dhaka on payment of Taka 400/- in cash (non-refundable) and tenders will have to be submitted in the tender box kept at the office of the Superintending Engineer, BCSIR, Dhaka on 23-11-2000 by 3:00 PM. Tenders will be opened the same day at 3:30 PM before tenderers/representatives (if there is any). All information may be known from the office of the undersigned.

DFP - 27028-7/11

G-1995

BCSIR, Dhaka

Bangladesh Gas Fields Company Limited
(A Company of Petrobangla)
Post Box No-8, Brahmanbaria

গ্যাস জাতীয় সম্পদ। এর অপচয়
রোধ করে জাতীয় দায়িত্ব পালন করুন

House Required (Re-Notice)

An independent house for minimum 5500 square feet at Dhanmondi, DOHS, Mohakhali, Gulshan, Banani or Uttara areas in the Dhaka city is wanted for use as the liaison office-cum-rest house for this company. Apart for arrangement for keeping 3-4 cars full time, there should have the facility for keeping 1 truck occasionally. Moreover, there should be an open space of minimum 30 feet X 30 feet area for installing 130 feet long self-supported tower in order to ensure the telecommunication system of the company within the boundary wall of the house. If there is no 30 feet X 30 feet open space within the boundary wall of the house, then the house should be of RCC frame structure from the infrastructural point of view so that it is possible to install a 3 leg self-supported mast on the roof of the house. There should be room measuring 12 feet X 15 feet suitable for use to install telecom equipment within 25 feet-30 feet from that tower or mast. Besides, BGFL will install a 21 kilowatt capacity Diesel Generator in that house with its own expenses for which there should be room with the area of 10 feet X 12 feet on the ground floor or an open space for 10 feet X 12 feet. Both tower or mast for the installation of telecommunication system will have to be favourable for the result of the location of the house path/site survey. Landlords will have to give such assurance that the appropriate authority/Civil Aviation has no objection in installing tower/mast of the height as mentioned in the area concerned.

Interested landlords are requested to deposit the application/proposal with signature in the box kept at the present liaison office at 97, Purana Paltan (Bijoy Nagar), Dhaka in a sealed envelope on 28th November, 2000 by 2:00 PM in the afternoon mentioning the name, address, documents regarding ownership, structural design of the house and design/plan as approved by the RAUK with the rate of monthly rent on square feet basis (covered area, place for keeping vehicles, open space and rate of monthly rent separately/gross). Mentionable that, the rate of the monthly rent should have to be same for 5 years. Application/proposal will be opened the same day at 2:15 PM in presence of the interested landlords, if anyone remains present.

Selected landlords will have to make a 5 (five) years term contract as per terms and conditions of the existing contract for rent of house. The house will have to be handed over to the company from 1st January, 2001 and the contract for rent of the house will be effective from the date of such hand over.

Bangladesh Gas Fields Company Limited Authority reserves the right to accept any application/proposals or reject all application/proposals without assigning any reason.

PRS-09/27(SVCS)/2000

DFP-27235-9/11/00

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Deputy General Manager
(Services).