

1. KUALA LUMPUR: Police arrested five senior members of Kumpulan Militan Malaysia, including an 'acquaintance" of Osama bin Laden, mastermind of the al-Qaeda terrorist network and Sept 11 attacks on the United States.

They were arrested at their homes under the Internal Security Act. A sixth person, also sought for militant activities, is expected to be arrested within 48 hours.

The five are religious teacher Shaari Mustapha, 35, self-employed Nik Abdul Rahman Mustapha, 28, (both from Kelantan); self-employed Abdul Murad Sudin, 39, from Teluk Intan; night market trader Azahar Abdul Samad, 32, from Jerantut; and Public Works Department engineer Bakkery Mahamud, 45, from Kuantan. Page 1

2. PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad visited Hyderabad's "futuristic technotownship" at Hitech City, the world's "most valuable software services company" Infosys and an education institute that aims to be a global centre for excellence and combines education with research.

Dr Mahathir, who is in India for a two-day visit, was briefed on the IT vision for Andhra Pradesh by its Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu. He has set a vision for his State based on Malaysia's Vision 2020 and aims to totally eradicate poverty and "to see India as a developed nation". Page 1

3. KUTA (Indonesia): Eight bombers in two vans staged the deadly Bali terrorism attack, a newspaper reported today, as President Megawati Sukarnoputri was expected to discuss the investigation with members of her Cabinet.

Citing police and intelligence sources, local daily Tempo said the bombers might have used remote control devices to blow up the two bars filled mostly with foreigners in Bali's busy Kuta tourist district.

Police have said that the explosion, which killed more than 180 people, was caused by a car bomb and that the powerful plastic explosive C4 was used. Page 1

4. HYDERABAD: ASIA is beginning to look to their region for future growth. This prospect is further strengthened by the recent International Monetary Fund (IMF) assessment that the major economies - the US, European Union and Japan - are no longer viewed as the engines of growth.

The IMF figures show that projected real gross domestic product (GDP) for 2003 will be strongest in Asia with China leading the pack followed by South Korea, India, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Taiwan, the Philippines and Thailand. Us and Japan will be struggling.

Thus pragmatism dictates that governments look to areas where they can be sure of growth to ensure continued growth and prosperity for its citizens.

Asean, with some of the more stable economies, is being courted by other developed and developing countries. India and China, two of the most populous countries, seek to strengthen their links and ties with the regional grouping. Page 2

5. KUALA LUMPUR: Investigations into the brutal murder of Hasleza Ishak, second wife of Raja DiHilir Perak Datuk Seri Raja Jaafar Raja Muda Musa, are completed and police announced more arrests soon as a third confession was recorded today.

"We have solved the murder," Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Norian Mai told a Press conference at Federal police headquarters in Bukit Aman this afternoon. Page 4

6. PUTRAJAYA, Oct 16: The Cabinet approved the Government-to-Government (G2G) agreement draft between Malaysia and 11 countries which will supply labour force to the country.

Human Resources Minister Datuk Dr Fong Chan Onn said a few pacts with the source countries, starting with Vietnam and Nepal, would be signed before the end of the year.

Among the new terms to be incorporated are the workers must be able to at least communicate in either Bahasa Malaysia or English, free of any criminal record and the host governments be accountable in bringing their workers back if they violated Malaysia's laws. Page 5

7. PUTRAJAYA: Malaysia will develop a better system of communication with its honorary consuls and consuls-general abroad to keep them informed of the country's policies.

Deputy Foreign Minister Datuk Dr Leo Michael Toyad said the ministry realised the need for a "better interface" between representatives of the country in foreign missions. Page 5

8. PETALING JAYA: Malaysia will discuss all outstanding issues, including the water problem, with Singapore on a separate and stand-alone basis, Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar said today.

"If Singapore wants to discuss the outstanding issues one by one, we do not feel it will impose any problem on us. Malaysia is agreeable to discussing the water problem separately and other outstanding issues on a stand alone basis," he said. Page 7

9. KUCHING: SARAWAK Government has taken the initiative to educate teachers on ways to protect the environment.

It will be carried out through the Natural Resources and Environmental Board (NREB).

The move, under the Integrated Environmental Education and Awareness Programme, is to highlight to the teachers on the importance of environmental protection, Environment and Public Health Minister Datuk William Mawan Ikom said. Page 12

10. KUANTAN: Pahang Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob has criticised the way the International Islamic University planned its development projects at its medical campus site in Indera Mahkota here.

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