
REUTER - LONDON - Two explosions rocked the railway stations of Paddington and Victoria in central London on Monday morning. No one was injured in Paddington but in Victoria a British Rail spokesman said there were an unknown number of injuries.

AFP - MOSCOU - Les entretiens des ministres des Affaires étrangères irakien et soviétique, MM. Tarek Aziz et Alexandre Bessmertnykh, ont commencé lundi matin à Moscou. L'entretien des 2 ministres devrait en principe durer un peu moins d'une heure car le chef de la diplomatie irakienne doit être reçu au Kremlin vers 10h30 locales (07h30 GMT) par le président Mikhail Gorbatchev.

AFP - TOKYO- Les cours du pétrole brut ont franchi lundi à Tokyo la barre des 14 dollars le baril pour s'échanger à des niveaux légèrement supérieurs à 13 dollars pour la qualité Dubai (livraison mars), son niveau le plus bas depuis 7 mois.

AFP - RYAD - Le ministre saoudien des Finances Mohammad Abal-Khaïl a confirmé dimanche soir que son pays a contracté des emprunts à des banques étrangères. Le ministre saoudien n’a pas précisé le montant des emprunts ou le nom des banques concernées. De sources bancaires, on indique toutefois que cet emprunt serait de 3,5 à 3,6 mrds de dollars.

AFP - COLOMBO - Quarante-huit soldats ont été tués et 8 autres blessés dans une embuscade tendue par la guérilla tamoule dimanche dans le nord-ouest du Sri Lanka.

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WAR IN THE GULF

THE GUARDIAN: Ground war waits on talks

LONDON - "The United States ruled out any pause or ceasefire in the Gulf War yesterday. But the allies are ready to give today’s talks in Moscow between President Gorbachev and Iraq’s Foreign Minister one last chance to achieve an unconditional Iraqi withdrawal before unleashing the ground forces poised for attack... Fearful of allied war-planes, the Iraqi Foreign Minister travelled overland from a battered Baghdad to the Iranian border, and into the heartland of Iraq’s old enemy to board a special Aeroflot plane that had been sent to Tehran from Moscow... Mr Aziz said at Tehran airport: ‘If the US rejects our offer and overlooks the international demands, we will have no alternative but to continue our struggle.’... There is little optimism in the allied capitals that the Moscow talks will produce an unequivocal Iraqi pull-back. Mr Dumas said he was waiting ‘with much interest but little hope’. Britain, in common with the US, has retreated from its uncompromisingly negative interpretation of Iraq’s withdrawal offer, but diplomats remain sceptical. Iraq’s UN ambassador has said that the 9-point rider attached to Baghdad’s offer - including Israel’s withdrawal from Arab lands - was not a list of conditions but of ‘issues’ for later discussion... In the Gulf, preparations for the ground offensive intensified."

USSR

THE INDEPENDENT: Soviet parliament reconvenes

MOSCOW - "The Soviet parliament opens a new session today, with the prospect of 4 months of debate on economic reform laws aimed at bringing about a market-based system. The agenda will include bills on privatisation, pricing and regulation of the stock exchange. But the debate may be overtaken by a series of massive price increases... The government daily IZVESTIA last week forecast retail prices would double or treble as the government cut the subsidies that have been kept artificially low... TASS news agency said the Supreme Soviet would also ratify a 6-power treaty on German unification and pass laws on human
rights and reform of the military during the upcoming session, which is expected to last until June. Other laws on the agenda include consumer rights and methods of settling labour disputes."

ENVIRONMENT

KYODO NEWS: Worldwatch advocates "green taxes"

WASHINGTON - "The worldwatch institute on Saturday called for replacing income taxes with environmental or 'green' taxes as a key source of revenue to save the earth. Worldwatch said in an annual report that taxes on the carbon content of fossil fuels 'hazardous wastes' pesticides and other environmentally hazardous goods could generate more than $130bn a year in the US alone allowing personal income taxes to be cut by at least 30%... 'GNP becomes an obsolete measure of progress in a society striving to meet people's needs as efficiently as possible and with the least damage to the environment' the annual 'state of the world' report said. The US 'the world's no. 1 economic power' and neighboring Canada produce roughly twice as much garbage per person as West European countries or Japan do" it said."

ECONOMIES DES PAYS DE L'OCDE

Etats-Unis

LA TRIBUNE: Les exportations freinent la récession

PARIS - "Dans un panorama économique uniformément morose depuis le début de l'automne dernier, le commerce extérieur américain fait figure d'exception. Pour la 3ème année consécutive, la balance commerciale a poursuivi en 1990 son redressement avec un déficit ramené à 101 mrds de dollars, qui retrouve ainsi son meilleur niveau depuis 7 ans... L'affaiblissement du dollar et l'avantage de compétitivité qu'il procure n'est pas étranger à la progression de 8,3% des exportations américaines sur l'ensemble de l'année passé. En revanche, la hausse des importations s'essouffle (+4,6%) sous les effets conjugués et antagonistes de la crise du Golfe, de la récession qui s'est progressivement mise en place et des tensions pétrolières. L'année 1990 aura également apporté un autre élément dont les Américains ne manqueront pas de se réjouir: le 1er recul (-4,2%) des importations japonaises, qui a permis de réduire le déficit bilatéral à 41 mrds de dollars... Le relai de l'exportation est indispensable à une industrie américaine qui se dévitalise au fil des mois. Le déclin de la production industrielle entamé en octobre dernier s'est poursuivi le mois dernier. Selon les chiffres communiqués à la fin de la semaine passée par la Réserve fédérale, la production a diminué de 0,4% tandis que le taux d'utilisation des capacités de production est tombé à 79,9%, son niveau le plus bas depuis 4 ans."

Finland

FINANCIAL TIMES: Economy shrinks

HELSINKI - "Economic growth in Finland will shrink for the first time since the war from +0.3% in 1990 to minus 0.5% in 1991, according to a Ministry of Finance forecast. Mr Sixten Korkman, director-general of the Ministry of Finance, said the sharp drop in gross domestic product (GDP) was due mainly to a fall in trade with the Soviet Union as well as to a global slump in the forest industry. He estimated, however, that GDP growth in 1992 could be 1-2%."
to an annual total of only between 100 and 200 aircraft during the next few years, according to the latest forecasts of Airbus Industrie. Mr Adam Brown, planning director of the European aircraft consortium, said the decline in the level of new orders would occur irrespective of the length and depth of the current economic recession... the steep decline in new orders reflects the huge order backlog built up during the last few years by the world’s 3 leading manufacturers - Boeing, Airbus and McDonnell Douglas. The number of commercial jets on order totalled 3,746 aircraft at the end of last year... But Mr Brown said annual deliveries by the 3 aircraft suppliers were expected to remain stable at around 600-700 jets a year during the next 10 years... Airbus also expects concentration to increase in the airline industry. 'Our forecast shows that worldwide 12 airlines or airline entities, each of which will need delivery of over 200 aircraft during the next 20 years, will account for 54% of all deliveries during this period’, Mr Brown said.”