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AFP: LE MONDE EN BREF

ALGER - L’Algérie est gouvernée depuis mardi soir par un haut Comité d’Etat de 5 membres, dont 4 figures "historiques" et le ministre de la Défense, le général major Khaled Nezzar, qui y apparaît comme l’homme fort. Le gouvernement algérien, qui est dirigé par M. Sid Ahmed Ghozali, reste en place.

MOSCOU - 14 anciens dirigeants soviétiques arrêtés après la tentative de putsch d’aôut dernier contre le président Mikhaïl Gorbachev ont été inculpés formellement de "conspiration en vue de prendre le pouvoir", selon TASS.

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OECD MINISTERIAL ON LABOUR MARKET POLICIES

REUTER: OECD chief calls wealthy nations’ record on jobs unsatisfactory

PARIS - OECD Secretary-General Jean-Claude Paye, warning that jobless rates will rise this year, gave rich industrial countries a black mark for their attempts to tackle the root causes of unemployment. 'The record so far has not been all that satisfactory, Paye told Labour ministers of the 24-nation OECD at the start of a 2-day meeting. 'Despite solid economic growth over a prolonged period, our labour market institutions, private sector practices and government policies have not succeeded in mobilising and using the full potential of our human resources’,' he said. With unemployment levels unlikely to recede to 1991 levels before 1993, despite the expected economic rebound, Paye said remedial measures are needed, especially to help the most needy and vulnerable. 'But the fundamental challenge is to ensure these actions are consistent with the objective of fundamental reform, and do not delay, impede or imperil the adjustment that is needed to provide the basis for sustained growth of employment’, he said."

AFP: Mme Aubry insiste sur les politiques à long terme

PARIS - "Le ministre français du Travail, Mme Martine Aubry, a insisté mardi sur la nécessité de mettre en œuvre des politiques à long terme contre le chômage, devant le comité de l’emploi, du travail et des affaires sociales de l’OCDE. ‘Certes, des mesures conjoncturelles sont nécessaires (...) pour faire face à l’augmentation du chômage. Cependant elles ne doivent pas conduire à reléguer au second plan les politiques qui visent à favoriser des évolutions structurelles positives sur le marché du travail’, a déclaré Mme Aubry à l’occasion d’une réunion des ministres de l’OCDE sur les politiques du marché du travail pour les années 90’, mardi et mercredi à Paris. La France, a souligné le ministre, connaît ‘la difficulté particulière posée par la coexistence de problèmes aigus à court terme et de la nécessité d’avoir des politiques qui visent le moyen et le long terme’. Elle a insisté sur la ‘nécessité de poursuivre dans la voie de la résolution des problèmes de fond’ posés aux économies des pays de l’OCDE en matière d’emploi, de formation et de fonctionnement du marché du travail.”

OIL

FINANCAIL TIMES: IEA: Sluggish oil demand predicted

"Growth in world oil demand is expected to be sluggish this year, according to the IEA’s latest monthly oil market report. The western monitoring body expects an increase in demand of 500,000 barrels a day to 66.8m b/d - 1% above last year’s level, which was depressed by the effects of the Gulf war and the recession. Most of the growth in oil consumption by members of the OECD is expected to come from North America following a pick-up in economic activity. Demand from the former Soviet Union is expected to decline by 7% to 7.7m b/d."
REUTER: Russian oil output put as low as 280 million tonnes by mid-1990s

MOSCOW - "Russian oil output could fall to 280 or 300 million tonnes by the mid 1990s, down from a peak of 569 million in 1988, a group of Russian economists said on Tuesday. Presenting a report on the challenges facing the Russian economy, economists from the influential Institute of World Economy and International Relations said this would mean that Russia ceased to be an oil exporting country. 'General trends of output mean we can predict a decline in oil output by 50% from 1988', institute director Vladlen Martynov told journalists. Boosting output would need huge government investment and a major restructuring of the sector... In Paris, the IEA said yesterday that oil production in the former Soviet Union fell to 10.4 million barrels per day (bpd) in 1991, down 9.5% from 1990 and 17.7% lower than at its peak in 1988. The West's energy watchdog forecast that output from the Commonwealth of Independent States would average 9.5 million bpd in 1992."

YUGOSLAVIA

FINANCIAL TIMES: EC prepares to recognise Yugoslav republics

"The first United Nations peace observers arrived in Yugoslavia yesterday as the European Community prepared to recognise the breakaway republics of Croatia and Serbia from today. In Lisbon, Mr Joao de Deus Pinheiro, foreign minister of Portugal, current holder of the EC presidency, confirmed that all 12 Community members were expected to meet today's deadline for recognising the 2 republics. However, EC differences about the next political steps were underlined when Greece started a diplomatic campaign to prevent Community recognition of a third Yugoslav republic, Macedonia."

EAST-WEST VENTURES: TELECOMMUNICATIONS

FINANCIAL TIMES: AT&T, Dutch PTT in Ukraine deal

NEW YORK/AMSTERDAM - "American Telephone & Telegraph and state-owned PTT Telecom of the Netherlands have formed a joint venture with the Ukraine government to modernise and operate the long-distance and international telecommunications network in the former Soviet state. The deal represents a significant expansion in eastern Europe for both companies, particularly for AT&T, the biggest US long-distance telephone operator, which will own 39% of the venture. The Dutch company will hold 10% and 51% will be owned by the Ukraine's state committee of communications."

IRAQ - NUCLEAR WEAPONS

WALL ST. JOURNAL: Five German firms believed to have supplied material

BONN - "A Bonn government official said that 5 German firms are believed to have supplied Baghdad with material before the Persian Gulf war that would have enabled it 'to produce a great number' of centrifuges that can quickly enrich uranium for atomic weapons. Tuesday's announcement came as Iraq admitted to United Nations investigators for the first time that it built such a system. 'The significance of this ... is that Iraq acknowledged it has been pursuing a production-scale centrifuge enrichment program rather than simply a research program', said Robert Gallucci, one of the members of a UN special commission charged with destroying Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. By using a centrifuge, experts can enrich uranium in a relatively quick, sophisticated manner."

OECD ECONOMIES

United States

FINANCIAL TIMES: Retail sales in 30 years

WASHINGTON - "US retail sales edged up 0.7% last year, the smallest advance in 30 years, the government said, as recession-skittish consumers shied away from show-rooms and shopping malls. It was the slimmest gain in this vital economic sector since sales actually fell 0.1% in 1961. Economists said they expect little improvement before midyear because of consumer worries over jobs and incomes."

WALL STREET JOURNAL: Sales of US cars slumped
DETROIT - "Sales of domestic cars slumped to an anemic 5.3 million unit annual rate in early January. The latest sales pace compares with a rate of 5.9 million units in December and a 5.7 million unit rate in early January 1991. The dismal early January sales reinforced an emerging consensus among industry executives and analysts that the US auto market is so depressed it has nowhere to go but up."

Canada

WALL ST. JOURNAL: Bombardier Inc. near to accord for De Havilland

MONTREAL - "Bombardier Inc. is close to reaching an agreement to acquire control of the de Havilland division of Boeing Co.’s Canadian unit, government and union officials said. A sale would end Boeing’s 18-month effort to unload de Havilland, which the Seattle-based aircraft maker acquired from the Canadian government in 1986. Boeing agreed last year to sell de Havilland to France’s Aerospatiale SNI and Italy’s Alenia SpA. However, in October the European Community commission blocked the acquisition, ruling that it would give Aerospatiale and Alenia too big a share of the European market for commuter turbo-prop aircraft. Jerry Dias, president of the de Havilland local of the Canadian Auto Workers, said the union understands that Bombardier and the Ontario government have agreed to pay C$100 million (US$86.9 million) for de Havilland, a Toronto-based maker of commuter aircraft."