

World

Iran, Russia reach trade accords

United Press International
TEHRAN, Iran — Iran appeared to be moving closer to communist bloc countries Thursday in a series of U.S. reprisals and the announcement of additional Western sanctions for the holding of the American hostages.

Soviet trade delegation was expected to arrive in Tehran and a number of other trade agreements have been reached at an official level, an Iranian official said.

The official said an Iranian trade mission planned to visit the Soviet Union soon to delve deeper into economic cooperation and international trade.

Another sign of a blossoming relationship between Iran and the

Soviet Union, state-run Radio Moscow reported Thursday Iran has been given permission to use Russian territory as an overland trade route "in case of emergency."

The Soviet move was seen as an attempt to counter a possible U.S. naval blockade of Iranian ports.

These developments came as Iran took other major moves aimed at closer economic relationship with Eastern Bloc members, including announcing trade agreements Wednesday with East Germany and Romania.

The government also established diplomatic relations with South Yemen, the only Marxist state in the Arab world.

In a related development, the Na-

tional Guidance Ministry announced plans to expel American reporters from Iran for a second time.

The position of the 50 Americans held hostage by Islamic militants at the U.S. Embassy for 173 days seemed to have reached a virtual stalemate, with no new initiatives in sight.

A spokesman for the militants said that everything was "normal" and no new development was expected.

Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini proclaimed Thursday an official day of "mourning" for the alleged slaying in neighboring Iraq of Ayatollah Sayed Mohammed Bagher Sadr, a Moslem Shiite leader Khomeini called a "martyr."

Battling between Islamic and left-wing students at universities around the country appeared to be easing off and there were no immediate reports of any fresh outbreaks.

While Iran openly shifted its foreign policy toward the Eastern Bloc, it withheld comment on Japanese and European Economic Community endorsement of American sanctions.

The National Guidance Ministry stopped renewing visas for American correspondents Wednesday and announced the Revolutionary Coun-

cil will decide Saturday whether to expel the reporters.

Foreign press ministry chief Abolhassem Sadegh said United Press International, which is staffed by non-Americans, would be allowed to remain for the time being "as a link with the United States."

Scattered reports from Iran's western frontier said fighting between Kurdish insurgents seeking autonomy and government forces has not abated.

One report said the death toll within the past 24 hours was 40.

Group tries to aid diplomatic hostages

United Press International
BOGOTA — The Organization of American States Human Rights Commission visited the besieged American Embassy Thursday for the second time to mediate the 58-day stalemate between the government and leftist guerrillas holding 16 diplomatic hostages.

Commission Chairman Tom Farer, Rutgers University professor, led a four-man delegation into the

A source close to the government said a military tribunal will drop charges against nine jailed members of the leftist movement in a move that could meet the major demand of the M-19 guerrillas holding the embassy.

Negotiators for the embassy guerrillas and the government held their 19th round of ransom talks Wednesday.

embassy to talk with the M-19 guerrillas and their hostages who include U.S. Ambassador Diego Asencio.

The OAS commission went into the embassy for the first time Tuesday and walked out two hours later with a freed diplomatic hostage, Dominican Consul Rafael A. Sanchez.

There were indications the eight-week crisis may be nearing the end.

London gold up due to TV

United Press International
LONDON — The dollar fell sharply on nearly all the world's money markets Thursday in response to declining prime interest rates, the price of gold was steady in trading.

An ounce of gold sold for \$515 in London and \$515.50 in Zurich, a rise of \$7.50 from Wednesday's close in London, and \$8 on the Swiss market.

A rise in the London market was caused by the controversy about a British television program concerning the death of a Saudi Arabian prin-

cess and her lover.

"There was some selling from the Middle East, possibly reflecting fears of Saudi Arabia canceling export contracts with Britain," said a dealer for Barclay's Bank International.

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