

Let's Talk

Registration:
August 23-Sept 1
1-5 pm

707 Texas Ave.
Suite 210 Bldg. D

696-6583

www2.cy-net.net/~letstalk

English as a Second Language

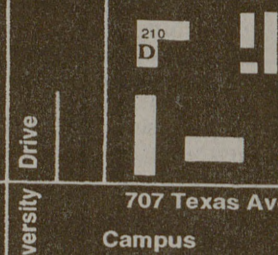
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WORLD

Explosion rocks Moscow mall

Blast in video-game arcade injures 30; officials unsure of cause

MOSCOW (AP) — A video-game machine exploded in an upscale shopping mall adjacent to the Kremlin yesterday, injuring 30 people, police said.

Moscow police spokesman Viktor Biryukov said it was unclear whether the blast was planned or accidental. He said the explosion, which hit at 8:04 p.m. (12:04 p.m. EDT), caused no fire.

Fire officials evacuated the busy Manezh shopping center, an underground complex just outside the

Kremlin's northwest wall. The explosion hit on the bottom floor of the complex in a room of video game machines.

Television footage showed ambulances rushing to the scene, their lights whirring. The complex was roped off to keep onlookers from entering the mall.

The mall, which opened to much fanfare in 1997, includes top-name retailers. The game room is next to a huge food court, and both are popular hangouts for Russian

teen-agers. Biryukov said three people were hospitalized, of 30 injured total.

The Moscow prosecutor's office opened a criminal case into the blast, the ITAR-Tass news agency reported.

Bombings are often used in Russia to settle disputes between rival criminal gangs and businesses. There was no indication whether yesterday's blast had organized crime connections.

The area around the Kremlin's

high red brick walls has a share of violence recently.

In November, a man in a car just outside the Kremlin wounding three guards, died of a heart attack in months later.

In May, a man was driving his car onto Red Square, threatening to set himself on fire. Police let him tell about his problems. He set a gasoline can and he was hospitalized in emergency room.

Serb military commander denies war-crime charges

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) — The highest-ranking Bosnian Serb military official in U.N. custody pleaded innocent yesterday to charges that he committed crimes against humanity in a bloody 1992 ethnic purge of non-Serbs.

Gen. Momir Talic, the Bosnian Serb military chief of staff, sat quietly with his hands in his lap during his 10-minute arraignment before the tribunal. The U.N. war crimes tribunal did not immediately set a trial date for Talic, who faces a maximum sentence of life imprisonment if convicted.

Talic, 57, was secretly indicted in March along with former Bosnian Serb Cabinet minister Radislav Brdjanin. He was arrested last week while attending a conference in Vienna. Brdjanin had been arrested and brought to The Hague July 6.

The men, who will stand trial together, are accused of planning and orchestrating a violent purge of

more than 100,000 Muslims and Croats from northwest Bosnia in 1992. Their indictment describes the campaign as "a plan designed to expel ... non-Serb populations on political, racial or religious grounds" and alleges they were personally responsible for the torture, murder, imprisonment and deportation of Muslims and Croats.

"These people will stay under the reach of the law for the rest of their lives."

— Louise Arbour
U.N. Chief Prosecutor

Prosecutors allege that troops under their command ran the infamous Omarska, Keraterm and

Trotopje prison camps where detainees were "killed, tortured, and continually subjected to physical and psychological maltreatment and inhumane treatment."

On her last official day on the job, departing Chief Prosecutor Louise Arbour of Canada said she is confident that other top suspects indicted by the tribunal eventually will be brought to justice.

"These people will stay under the reach of the law for the rest of their lives," Arbour said. "One day either they will be apprehended or, in the case of high-ranking figures, the chances are good that they will see it to be in their best interest to surrender."

Arbour and her successor, Swiss federal prosecutor Carla del Ponte, discussed investigative strategies during meetings last week. She said more indictments would come.

"We are very far from finished," Arbour said.

Al Fayed: Son planned to marry Diana

LONDON (AP) — Marking exactly two years since Princess Diana's death, Mohamed Al Fayed yesterday displayed the ring he insists would have marked her engagement to his son Dodi.

The ring and a glass of champagne that Al Fayed said is the one the couple last drank from before their deaths in a Paris crash were added to shrines at his Harrods department store.

At Diana's former Kensington Palace home, her most ardent admirers petitioned for a permanent memorial.

Jill Marseilles, who stood outside the palace for two days this week collecting 4,000 signatures, said she was "overwhelmed" by the response.

"The palace will have to take notice now," Marseilles said. "Last year, people came here to pay their respects. This year, they are getting angry."

Al Fayed, whose dealings with the government and Diana's family have grown embittered, said the deaths on Aug. 31, 1997, were a conspiracy plotted by people who did not approve of Diana's relationship with an Egyptian.

He said his son and Diana were planning to marry and the diamond ring Dodi had bought was to have been an engagement ring.



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