

THE BATTALION

News in Brief

**Britain begins investigation of 54 immigrant deaths**

DOVER, England (AP) — Britain launched a major inquiry Monday into "the profoundly evil" crime syndicates that smuggle immigrants after 58 people — thought to be Chinese — were found dead in the unrefrigerated, sealed compartment of a tomato truck. Two men huddled near the door at the back of the

Dutch-registered truck survived the five-hour journey across the English Channel, from the Belgian port of Zeebrugge to the southeast port of Dover.

Too traumatized to be questioned immediately, the survivors were hospitalized at a secret location for fear they would be abducted or killed before identifying the agents who sold them their deadly, illicit passage to the West.

The National Crime Squad, a police body, will lead

the drive to catch the traffickers, working with intelligence, customs and immigration officials.

**Bus explodes in Venezuela**

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — A Venezuelan shuttle bus exploded when its driver poured gasoline into the carburetor in an attempt to start it, newspapers reported Monday. Four people were killed and eight injured.

The van ran out of gas early Sunday as it was carrying 11 passengers home to the Caracas suburb

of Petare from a party in the nearby town of Guatopo, police said.

The driver, 25-year-old Cesar Fermin, flagged a passer-by who provided gasoline, but the 1993 Dodge van failed to start.

When the driver poured gasoline directly into the carburetor, fumes filled the passenger compartment where most of the passengers were asleep, investigators said. A spark then ignited the fumes, and the van exploded into flames, they said.



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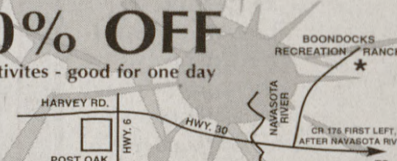
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