

# WorldWatch

by Staff

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## Culture

The *New Yorker* magazine reports the latest trend in body ornamentation is "subcutaneous jewelry." Small jewelry charms are inserted under the skin—in the forehead, back of the hand, or anywhere the skin can be pinched—producing boil-like bulges in the shapes of the charms.

## Disease

The microbes are winning the war; every common pathogenic microbe—staphylococcus, tuberculosis, malaria, streptococcus—is resisting medicine's "miracle drugs." Dr. Jim Horton, infectious disease physician at Carolina's Medical Center, says, "The problem is global, and we must approach it rationally and ethically."

## Earthquakes

- » A powerful 6.1 magnitude earthquake killed more than 4,750 people in Afghanistan on February 4. Ten days later, an aftershock measured 5.3.
- » Southern Mexico was rocked by a 6.3 temblor that lasted nearly 50 seconds on February 3.
- » A 5.1 quake shook the mountainous region near Nagano, Japan, during the Olympic ski competition on February 11.

## France

President Jacques Chirac is calling for "a grand partnership between Russia and France . . . in tomorrow's multipolar world." France is gravitating rapidly toward the Russia-Iran-Syria axis, though it has declined to join in joint military anti-U.S., anti-Israel exercises in the eastern Mediterranean.

## Germany

- » Chancellor Helmut Kohl underscored Germany's commitment to multilateral cooperation in meeting the challenges of rapid global change. He said, "European integration ranks as one of Bonn's highest priorities in preparing . . . for the establishment of a common European currency and for the expansion of the Atlantic alliance."
- » German authorities are searching for 3 right-wing extremists after discovering a bomb factory in Jena. They expressed alarm at the increasing readiness of Neo-Nazis to engage in violence.

## Religion

» Within the next 12 months, Germany's Roman Catholic counseling offices will stop providing pregnant women with the certificates needed to obtain abortions without risk of criminal prosecution. The church hopes it will be able to remain a part of the state system.

» Self-esteem advocate Robert Schuller claims that it is an "unchristian, uncouth strategy to attempt to make people aware of their lost and sinful condition." He declares that "man's problem is not sin, but low esteem."

## **Middle East**

Yassir Arafat has threatened a renewal of the intifada that would "cross out" the peace accords if negotiations fail. He also said he would declare a Palestinian state and "whoever doesn't like that may drink from the sea in Gaza or the Dead Sea."

## **Weather**

» Several El Niño-related storms struck from north of San Francisco to northern Mexico this winter, causing at least 7 deaths. Over 50% of California's counties have been declared disaster areas.

» On the night of February 25, central Florida was hit with El Niño-related tornadoes that killed at least 42 and destroyed hundreds of homes.