

WorldWatch

by Staff

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Earthquake

A predawn quake struck Jabalpur, India, on May 22, killing at least 38 and injuring about 1,000. Another earthquake in Bangladesh killed 95 and damaged 7,000 homes.

Germany

» German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel outlined his country's concerns about the Middle East to Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak. Stressing Germany's "serious and deep concern" about the standstill in the peace process, Kinkel urged Egypt to take a more active role in it.

» Kinkel also says Germany wants a "Europe without divisions and a security policy that encompasses all of Europe. We want to erase the dividing lines of the Cold War definitively from the political map and from people's minds. The alliance and Europe are on the right track."

Middle East

» The Arab League, currently under Egyptian leadership, recommended that its members cease normalizing relations with Israel and restore the old economic boycott.

» The Egyptian Press has accused Israel of spreading AIDS among its populace.

» Iran test-fired a new Chinese-made cruise missile able to strike ships from aircraft. This will enable Iran to close the Straits of Hormuz, if necessary. Russia is also supplying Iran with a missile, expected to be tested within three years, that can carry a non-conventional warhead to Israel.

NATO

NATO's eastward expansion, creating a two-tiered security structure in Central Europe, is raising fears that a rift will arise between the new NATO members and their former Warsaw Pact allies. Such a division could spur conflicts that could easily escalate.

Satanism

Every Labor Day weekend, about 10,000 "spiritual nomads" from 20 countries converge in Nevada's Black Rock Desert to revel, blaspheme, and worship Satan. They set up "theme camps" such as "Motel 666" and "McSanta's Bistro," where God is challenged to consume them with brimstone.

Technology

Researchers have created the first working, artificial human chromosome. Experts say this represents a quantum jump in our ability to probe the complex molecules that make up humankind. They see it as "the next big step" in someday using artificial chromosomes to package treatments for diseases affecting the immune system, such as AIDS, sickle-cell anemia and beta-thalassemia.

Weather

» Dozens of tornadoes ripped through central Texas on May 27, the deadliest hitting the small town of Jarrell, killing 27 people. Winds near 300 mph stayed on the ground for an unusually long 25-30 minutes, flattening houses, ripping auto bodies from their chassis and even tearing pavement from the streets.

» Weather forecasters believe that the El Nino condition is reforming, presaging severe winter storms ahead. Such storms could rival those of 1982-83, identified by some as "the event of the century."