

WorldWatch

by Staff

Forerunner, "WorldWatch," January 1997

Israel

Israel is concerned that Egypt is making plans for war against her. Egypt recently signed a contract with a San Diego firm to construct a Military Training Center that will enable their armed forces to simulate battles and pinpoint enemy soldiers, tanks and other vehicles.

Pestilence

U.S. and European public health officials have agreed to establish a global early warning network to alert doctors and governments about budding epidemics. Up to now, small outbreaks of disease are treated locally, but these can quickly grow into worldwide epidemics if transported by jetliner.

Science

The Visible Human Project is an attempt to record the human anatomy digitally. Scientists first scanned the donated cadavers of a man and a woman using computed tomography (CT) and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans. Then they embedded the bodies in gel and froze them to -70°C, after which a milling machine ground away a millimeter of their surface at a time. Each time, the exposed surface was photographed digitally and conventionally. In this way, scientists hope to compare the images with diseased tissue in living patients.

Weather

On November 8, a cyclone left more than 1,000 Indians dead and hundreds of thousands homeless. Crops and livestock in one of India's most fertile regions were destroyed. Losses are estimated at a staggering \$555 million in a nation where the annual per capita income is less than \$500.

Russia

Russia and China expect to sign an agreement cutting troop levels along their 2,500-mile border when their foreign ministers meet next spring. Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov said, "The development of Russia-China relations will help build stability in the post-Cold War world and is not aimed at creating a bloc to counter other countries."

Sexual Perversion

Twenty-seven Episcopal Church bishops are demanding an investigation into a report that a "cadre of gay and bisexual, cross-dressing Episcopal priests" conducted bizarre sexual rituals at the altars in darkened churches on Long Island, New York. The bishop of the diocese denied personal involvement and said, "If they were consenting adults, my position is that they were certainly free to take that action."

Germany

Germany and France are preparing a joint peace-keeping force for Bosnia under an expected UN mandate once the mandate for the NATO-led force expires. This 5,000-strong Franco-German brigade forms the nucleus of a European corps that includes Belgium, Spain and Luxembourg.

European Union (EU)

The EU's heads of state pledged to change the EU treaty in June to accommodate a dozen new countries, most of them Eastern European. The new treaty will give the EU powers now held by national governments. Helmut Kohl said, "Without any preconditions, we all agreed that the treaty should be finalized."