

# NEWS DIGEST

your quick guide to news from around the world

## Lithuanians accused offering arms for sale

**1** MIAMI — Two Lithuanians were accused Monday of trying to sell Soviet-era nuclear weapons to federal agents posing as arms brokers for drug smugglers.

No weapons changed hands, but the pair were caught on audio and video tape negotiating the sale of Bulgarian-made tactical nuclear weapons and nonnuclear surface-to-air missiles, investigators said.

"The significance shows there are people out there who have the ability to move weapons — strategic weapons — around the world," said Dennis Fagan, agent of charge of the Customs Service in Miami.

Alexander Porgrebeshski, 28, and Alexander Darichev, 36, both Lithuanian nationals, were arrested Friday after they reached a \$1.3 million deal for 40 anti-aircraft missiles and transportation to Puerto Rico. The nuclear weapons deal was to follow.

The defendants appeared in federal court Monday on conspiracy charges and were held without bail.

## Thai scientists make fast food for elephants

**2** BANGKOK, Thailand — Dig in, Jumbo.

Six Thai elephants gave a big trunks-up to Thailand's first elephant chow, a huge tablet developed to replace the rapidly disappearing plants elephants usually eat.

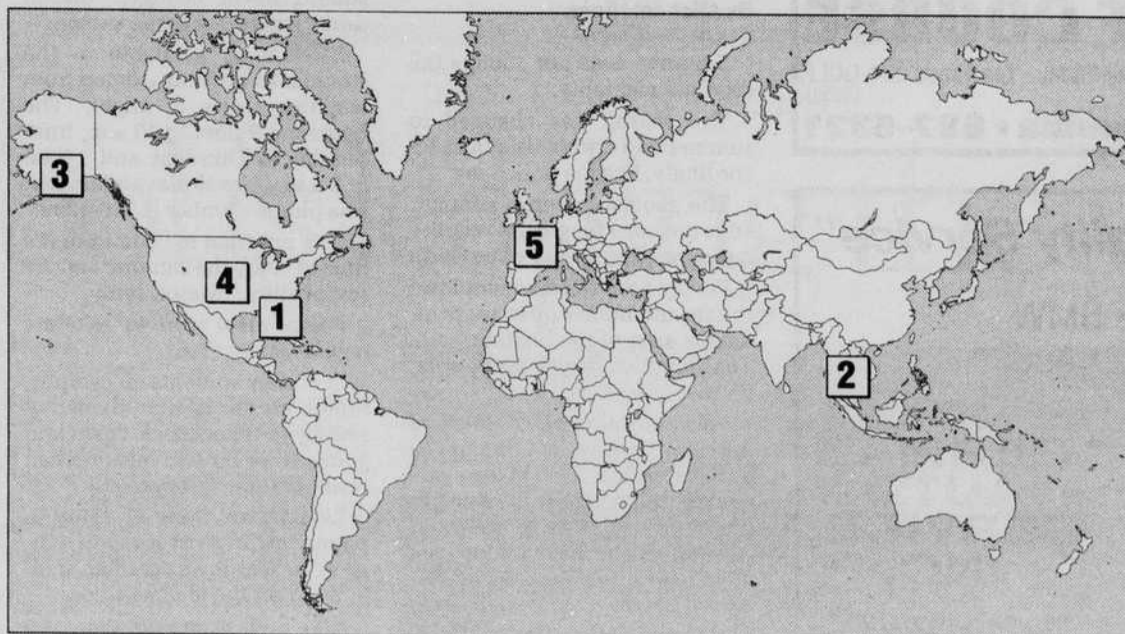
The elephants at Bangkok's Dusit Zoo all ate with gusto when fed for several months with chewable tablets made of concentrated sugar cane, corn, molasses, vitamins and minerals, zoo director Alongkorn Mahannop said Monday.

The one-pound tablets, developed by researchers at Bangkok's Kasetsart University and the Dusit Zoo, will be tested in other zoos and in the country's northern jungles, he said.

Excessive logging and development have left Thailand severely deforested, virtually wiping out the elephants' natural habitat.

In response, many mahouts — elephant owners — have taken their animals to Bangkok and other cities, where the pachyderms walk the roads begging for food or serve as tourist attractions. Several have been hit by cars.

The concentrated food must still pass final tests, but Alongkorn said after that Kasetsart may offer the tablets cheaply to elephant owners.



## Climbing class swept 1,000 ft. off mountain

**3** ANCHORAGE, Alaska — Members of a mountain-climbing class for beginners slipped in the snow, tumbled into their fellow students and dragged all of them 1,000 feet down a mountainside strewn with rocks. Two people were killed and 12 injured.

The accident took place Sunday evening as students in the Mountaineering I class at the University of Alaska-Anchorage made their way down from the summit of 5,000-foot Ptarmigan (pronounced TAR-mih-gan) Peak while roped together in groups of twos and threes for safety.

One team slipped and swept the others down the 60-degree slope to a field of boulders.

"The top group lost it," said climber Mona Eben, 43, of Anchorage. "They kept sliding and eventually they slid into me and we all got tangled in each other's ropes."

Eben suffered a broken leg and bruises.

Those killed were students Mary E. Fogarty, 40, of Anchorage and Steven M. Brown, 23, who had recently moved to Anchorage from Royal Oak, Mich.

One climber was in serious condition Monday, and 10 more were in fair condition.

The class was for students with little or no climbing experience. It had met since June 10 to learn rock and snow climbing.

The class had spent Saturday practicing techniques for ascending and descending in snow before starting for the summit of the rugged mountain Sunday morning. The peak is 16 miles southeast of downtown Anchorage.

## Grand jury to look into Oklahoma bombing

**4** OKLAHOMA CITY — A grand jury was chosen Monday to investigate allegations that the Oklahoma City bombing was the work of a larger conspiracy and that federal authorities had prior knowledge of the plot.

The county grand jury was empaneled after a petition drive mounted by State Rep. Charles Key and Glenn Wilburn, an accountant who lost two grandsons in the April 19, 1995, blast.

Although the federal indictment of Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols alleged they acted with "others unknown," federal authorities now doubt there was a larger conspiracy. And they vehemently deny any prior knowledge of the attack.

McVeigh awaits execution for bombing the Alfred P. Murrah federal building, and Terry Nichols faces a federal trial beginning Sept. 29.

Oklahoma County District Attorney Robert Macy has already said he will file state murder charges against McVeigh and Nichols, regardless of the grand jury's actions.

The 12 grand jurors were selected in open court in less than three hours.

Four prospective jurors who said they knew people killed or injured in the bombing were chosen, while a fifth woman who knew someone killed in the blast was dismissed.

Key and Wilburn's petition names seven witnesses who have said they saw at least one other person with McVeigh in Oklahoma City on the day of the bombing, which killed 168 people and injured hundreds more.

## Cousteau honored in Notre Dame memorial

**5** PARIS — In one of France's largest memorial services in decades, nearly a thousand people gathered Monday to honor Jacques Cousteau as a man who led the curious on a voyage of discovery through the world's oceans.

President Jacques Chirac joined Cousteau's family, government officials and average citizens at Notre Dame Cathedral to praise Cousteau's underwater exploits.

The entire mass was broadcast live on French national television. Since Cousteau's death last week, French TV has shown and reshown his films and documentaries, and French magazines have devoted special sections to his life and work.

Cousteau, who died Wednesday at age 87, was famous throughout the world for his popular television series "The Undersea World of Jacques Cousteau."

Cousteau's widow and his children wept quietly in the front row of Notre Dame cathedral, as solemn hymns echoed among the vaulted ceilings.

A misty aqua light cast by the stained glass windows added a deep melancholy to the service, which was attended by about 1,000 people, including diplomats and former members of Cousteau's exploration team.

Several thousand other mourners lined the square in front of Notre Dame and nearby streets. Many tourists who had come to visit the famous Paris cathedral waited patiently until the service was over to enter.

OREGON DAILY EMERALD SUMMER STAFF

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Associate Editors: Ryan Frank, Carl Yeh  
Editorial Editor: Mike Schmierbach  
Photo Editor: Chad Patteson  
Reporter: Michael Hines

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