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May 30, 2002

## **World In Brief**

### **Kaliningrad key for EU, says Putin**

**Moscow:** President Putin told Romano Prodi, President of the European Commission, that future relations with Europe depended on resolving the anomaly of Kaliningrad, the Russian enclave sandwiched between Poland and Lithuania, which appear set to join the European Union in 2004 (Alice Lagnado writes).

“Our overall relations with the EU depend on how this issue of vital importance to Russians is resolved,” he said. Moscow insists that Kaliningrad’s inhabitants should enjoy visa-free travel to the rest of Russia.

### **\$25m reward**

**Washington:** America has offered \$25 million (£17 million) for the capture of the five leaders of Abu Sayyaf, a terrorist group from the Philippines that has held two US hostages for more than a year. The group is said to have close ties to al-Qaeda. The same sum was offered for Osama bin Laden.

### **Starvation threat**

**Johannesburg:** More than ten million people across southern Africa are facing starvation, three times more than first estimated, the UN World Food Programme said. Four million tonnes of food would have to be imported if a disaster on the scale of that in Ethiopia in the early 1980s was to be averted, it said.

### **Monkey rap**

**Paris:** Joey Starr, a French rap singer, was ordered to pay more than €0,000 (£6,400) in fines and damages after being sued by Brigitte

Bardot, the film star and animal rights campaigner, for beating up a pet monkey on television. Starr was seen slapping the animal in a broadcast from his home. (AFP)

## Virtual lions

**Rome:** Modern gladiators will soon be able to pay to test their wits against fearsome beasts in the Colosseum, via the Internet. The Culture Ministry added that 40 webcams would enable spectators to use the Emperors' passage into the arena and climb to top seats. [www.colosseumweb.org](http://www.colosseumweb.org)

## Priest freed

**Monrovia:** A British priest abducted two weeks ago by Liberian rebels was freed and handed over to the Vatican Embassy in neighbouring Guinea. The Rev Garry Jenkins was last seen in northwestern Liberia, where he was trying to help dozens of blind civilians fleeing fighting. (AFP)