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Synthetic Communications: An International Journal for Rapid Communication of Synthetic Organic Chemistry

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information: <u>http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/lsyc20</u>

Aldol Condensation: A Stereoselective Approach to Tetrahydrophenanthrene Derivatives and 3-Oxabicyclo[3.3.1]nonan-6-ones

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Published online: 24 Sep 2006.

To cite this article: Phillip A. Zoretic , Michael S. Biggers , Christopher K. Biggers & Myron L. Caspar (1991) Aldol Condensation: A Stereoselective Approach to Tetrahydrophenanthrene Derivatives and 3-Oxa-bicyclo[3.3.1]nonan-6-ones, Synthetic Communications: An International Journal for Rapid Communication of Synthetic Organic Chemistry, 21:1, 31-42, DOI: <u>10.1080/00397919108020787</u>

To link to this article: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00397919108020787

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ALDOL CONDENSATION: A STEREOSELECTIVE APPROACH TO TETRAHYDROPHENANTHRENE DERIVATIVES AND 3-OXA-BICYCLO[3.3.1]NONAN-6-ONES

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ABSTRACT: Aldol condensation of the lithium enolate of **2** with mmethoxyphenylacetaldehyde afforded **3a** and **3b** with good erythro stereoselectivity (5:95). Acid catalyzed cyclization of **3a** gave the tetrahydrophenanthrene **5** while **3b** yielded the 3-oxobicyclononanones **6**. A mechanism is discussed to account for the derived products and a detailed ¹H NMR structural analysis of the [3.3.1] bicyclic systems is utilized to indirectly characterize the threo and erythro alcohols **3a** and **3b**.

Substituted tetrahydrophenanthrene-2-carboxylic acid derivatives¹ have been useful in veterinary medicine for the treatment of underdeveloped females, for caponization in the poultry industry, for the fattening of cattle, and as anti-fertility agents. Recently we reported² that the 1,4-addition process $(1\rightarrow 2)$ and subsequent trapping of the resulting enolate with formaldehyde gas occurs with a high degree of stereo-selectivity. As indicated in Scheme I this methodology might be extended to a facile two-step entry to highly functionalized tetrahydrophenanthrene-2-carboxaldehydes and related

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Scheme I

3a: R=H, R₁=OH, threo **3b**: R=OH, R₁=H, erythro

steroid^{3,4} intermediates via an acid catalyzed cyclization of precursor alcohols **3**.

Reaction of enone <u>1</u> with lithium divinyl cuprate (Scheme I) at -55°C and subsequent trapping of the regiospecifically generated enolate with *m*-methoxyphenylacetaldehyde⁵ afforded a 5:95 mixture of diastereomeric alcohols **3a** and **3b**, respectively, as determined by ¹H NMR analysis. Interestingly, addition of $ZnCl_2^6$ prior to trapping with the aldehyde gave a 60:40 ratio of the respective alcohols **3a** and **3b**. Based on steric considerations it is reasonable to assume that the 1,3-aldol condensation in the above cases should occur trans to the C-4 methyl and the C-3 vinyl in enolate **2** to afford an equatorially disposed group at C-2 in **3**. That this postulation is correct was proven by the following NMR studies. Irradiation [500 MHz, ¹H NMR] of the C-4 methyl group in **3a**

showed significant enhancements for the acetal, vinyl and C-2 methines. Likewise, irradiation of the C-4 methyl group in 3b showed the same enhancements, indicating that the C-2 proton is axial in both alcohols. The possibility that 3a and 3b were



regioisomers, resulting from alkylation at both C-2 and C-6, was ruled out since each isomer afforded the same diketone 4 when subjected to Collins oxidation.

It might be anticipated that the stereochemical disposition of the alcohols depicted in 3 would be inconsequential during an acid catalyzed cyclization to afford the tetrahyrdophenanthrene nucleus. Contrary to this expectation it was found that two different modes of cyclization (Scheme II) are operative with alcohols 3a and 3b. Treatment of the faster moving threo alcohol 3a with 10N HCl in MeOH (1:5) and subsequent hydrolysis of the resulting 50:50 mixture (5 and the methyl acetal of 5) with 10% HCl-THF afforded an 88% yield of carboxaldehyde 5. When an identical acid catalyzed cyclization was carried out with the slower moving erythro alcohol 3b a 55:45 ratio of the [3.3.1] bicyclic acetals 6a and 6b was obtained in 90% yield.

The determination of the erythro and threo stereochemistry in alcohols **3a** and **3b** is not straightforward. It is well documented that boron,⁷ and zinc⁶ enolates of cyclohexanone⁸ favor enhanced threo selectivity and that the lithium enolate⁹ is non-selective. The threo:erythro ratios in these cases can readily be determined from NMR coupling constants (J_{threo} > $J_{erythro}$)⁶. However in the case of the threo and erythro

Scheme II





isomers 3a and 3b the presence of an additional substituent at C-3 precludes an estimation of the relative rotamer population of each alcohol. Thus application of the relevant J-values could not be confidently used to determine the diastereoselectivity. In this context, it was surmised that the best indirect way to ascertain the diastereoselectivity observed in the aldol condensations of enolate 2 was to determine the stereo-chemistry of the rigid¹⁰ bicyclic acetals 6, since each acetal must reflect the configuration of the carbinol carbon of alcohol 3b.

Based on NOE (500 MHz ¹H NMR) studies it was shown that irradiation of the acetal methine proton in isomer **6a** showed an enhancement of both benzylic protons (δ 3.29 and δ 2.84) as well as the C-9 proton at δ 2.7; thus confirming the (1,3,5) coaxial relationship between the benzylic substitutent at C-4 and protons at C-2 and C-9 in **6a**.





Scheme

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 $R = CHEt_2$, $Ar = m - CH_3OC_6H_4$

Irradiation of the acetal methine in **6b** showed a NOE enhancement of the C-8 equatorial proton (endo:endo orientation of the C-8e and C-2 protons) which is indicative of an equatorial acetal methine. Due to the similar chemical shifts of the benzylic protons and the C-9 proton in **6b**, an NOE experiment could not be performed, leaving the stereochemistry at C-4 and C-9 unproven.

Fortunately it was found that after treating alcohols 3a or 3b, respectively, with saturated NaHSO₃, cyclization to all four isomeric acetals were obtained upon heating.¹¹ Thus reaction of 3a (Scheme III) gave a 45:55 ratio of 7a and 7b (~100%) and subsequent chromatography afforded pure 7a (41%) and pure 7b (38%). Treatment of 3b gave approximately a 50:50 ratio of 8a and 8b (~100%) which was chromatographed to afford pure 8a (45%) and pure 8b (30%).

Table I.	Isomeric	[3.3.1] Bicyclic	Acetals'	Chemical S	Shift	Assignments
Isomers	Δδ	<u>C4-H(δ)</u>	<u>C₂-H(δ)</u>	<u>C_{8c}-1</u>	H(δ)	
7 a	0.46	4.30	2.90	1.7	78	
7 b		3.84	2.33	2.2	23	
8 a	0.19	4.17	2.76	~2.2	dd	
8 b		3.98	3.22	~1.8	dd	

With all four bicyclic acetals in hand it was now possible to carry out an NMR study to determine the configuration at C-4 in acetals 7 and 8 thus providing indirectly the diastereoselectivity observed in the aldol condensation reaction. Conceptually the C-7 and C-8 protons in acetals 7 and 8 could serve as a valuable probe in verifying the proposed stereochemical assignments. Toward these ends it was observed that the axial proton at C-8 appeared as a ddd at $\sim \delta 1.6$ and that the deshielded C-7 axial proton (ddd) appeared at $\sim \delta 2.8$ in all four isomers. Using the chemical shift values of the indicated axial protons, the assignments of the remaining protons¹² in each isomer could readily be deduced from the corresponding COSY spectrum.

It was observed that the relative differences in δ values ($\Delta\delta$) for the C-4 proton in 7a and 7b (Table I) is large (0.46) as compared to 0.19 in 8a and 8b. This difference is consistent with the deshielding of the C-4 proton in 7a by the axial pentoxy group at C-Likewise the observed deshielding of the C-9 proton in 7 a 2. coupled with the observed shielding of the C-8 equatorial proton and the noted J_{2a-8a} "W" coupling (J=1Hz) in 7b is consistent with the stereochemical assignments depicted in 7 a and 7b.

The ¹H NMR spectra of **8a** showed J_{2a-8a} coupling (J=1 Hz) which is indicative of an equatorially disposed C-2 pentoxy group. The observed deshielding of the C-8 equatorial proton in **8a** relative to that in **8b** is also consistent with an endo:endo relationship of the C-2 pentoxy and the C-8e proton. These results and the observed deshielding of the C-9 proton in **8b** is consistent with the stereochemistry depicted in **8a** and **8b**.

It might be postulated that the marked difference observed in the acid catalyzed cyclizations of **3a** and **3b** is a direct consequence of the disposition of the benzylic group in



acetals 6 and 9 as shown in Scheme IV. In support of this hypothesis it was demonstrated that cyclization of a 50:50 mixture of acetals 7a and 7b with 10N HCl-MeOH (identical to that used with 3a) afforded cleanly a 60:40 ratio of aldehyde 5 and the corresponding acetal 11. An identical cyclization of a 60:40 mixture of acetals 8a and 8b afforded approximately a 40:60 mixture of the methyl acetals 6a and 6b and two minor products. The latter products were presumably the hemiacetals of 6a and 6b but were not characterized. Based on these findings it can be argued that the distinct selectivity observed in the acid catalyzed cyclizations of 3a and 3b is a function of the spacial orientation of the benzylic substituent relative to the carbonyl group in the initially formed bicyclic That is, in the case of the intermediate acetals 9 the acetals. benzylic and carbonyl groups are predisposed to give the transient intermediate 10 which after dehydration yields 5 and 11, respectively. Since the axially disposed benzylic function can not approach the plane of the carbonyl component in acetals 6 for further cyclization, these acetals are isolated directly from the acid catalyzed cyclization of $3b^{13,14}$.

Acknowledgment. We are indebted to the donors of The Petroleum Research Fund, administered by the American Chemical Society, for partial support of this research and to Mr. Dean Marbury for the high-resolution mass spectra data and to Dr. Anthony A. Riebiro of Duke University for recording the 500 MHz ¹H NMR spectra.

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- 11. It was further noted that washing with NaHSO₃ was necessary to affect cyclization. Presumably a catalytic amount of acid is required for this process.
- 12. It was also observed that the respective equatorial protons at C-7 and C-8 could be identified as dd's, since the absence of e,e coupling was clearly demonstrated in the COSY spectra.
- 13. The ¹H NMR data for the compounds in this work are: **3a** ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 7.20 (m, 1 H, m-Ar H), 6.73 (m, 3 H, oand p-Ar H's), 5.30-5.54 (m, 1 H, -C<u>H</u>=CH₂), 5.03-5.24 (m,

2 H, $-CH=CH_2$, 4.39 [s, 1 H, $CH(OR)_2$], 3.83-3.97 (m, 1 H, CHOH), 3.78 (s, 3 H, OCH₃), 3.30-3.53 (m, 2 H, CHEt₂), 3.05-3.19 (overlapping C₃-H and ArC \underline{H}_aH_b , 2 H), 3.05 (d, 1 H, OH, J = 11 Hz), 2.85 (dd, 1 H, Ar- CH_aH_h , $J_{vic} = 7$ and $J_{gem} =$ 13 Hz), 2.08-2.50 (overlapping C_{2a} -H, C_{5a} -H, C_{6a} -H and C_{6e}-H, 4 H), 1.79-1.91 (m, 1 H, C_{5e}-H), 1.30-1.68 [m, 8 H, CH-(CH2-CH3)2], 1.0 (s, 3 H, CH3), 0.78-0.91 [m, 12 H, CH- $(CH_2-CH_3)_2$]; **3b** ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 7.22 (m, 1 H, m-Ar H), 6.81 (m, 3 H, o- and p-Ar H's), 5.57-5.78 (m, 1 H, -CH=CH₂), 5.10-5.32 (m, 2 H, -CH=CH₂), 4.49 [s, 1 H, CH(OR)₂], 3.80 (s, 3 H, OCH₃), 3.75-3.90 (m, 1 H, CHOH), 3.53 (d, 1 H, OH, J = 11 Hz), 3.35-3.60 (m, 2 H, $CHEt_2$), 2.68-2.97 (overlapping C2-H, C3-H and ArCH2, 4 H), 2.13-2.55 (overlapping C_{5a}-H, C_{6a}-H and C_{6e}-H, 3 H), 1.2-1.8 [overlapping C_{5e} -H and CH-(CH₂-CH₃)₂, 9 H], 1.10 (s, 3 H, CH₃), 0.80-1.0 [m, 12 H, CH-(CH₂-CH₃)₂]; 5 ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 9.55 (s, 1 H, CHO), 7.85 (d, 1 H, C₉-H, J_{9-10} = 10.4 Hz), 7.56 (d, 1 H, C_{10} -H , J_{9-10} = 10.4 Hz), 7.10-7.28 (m, 3 H), 5.76-5.96 (m, 1 H, CH=CH₂), 5.08-5.16 (m, 2 H, CH=CH₂), 3.91 (s, 3 H, OCH₃), 3.80 (d, 1 H, C<u>H</u>-CH=CH₂, J = 10.4 Hz), 3.11-3.20 (m, 2 H), 2.12-2.29 (m, 1 H), 1.81-1.98 (m, 1 H), 1.11 (s, 3 H, CH₂); 6a¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.21 (t, 1 H, m-Ar H), 6.77 (m, 3 H, o- and p-Ar H's), 5.74 (m, 1 H, C_{10} -H), 5.18 (m, 2 H, C_{11} -H's), 4.58 (d, 1 H, C_2 -H, J_{2a-8a} = 0.9 Hz), 4.18 (ddd, 1 H, C₄-H, $J_{4-5} = 0.9$, $J_{4-12} = 6.3$ and $J_{4-12} = 6.3$ $_{12'}$ = 8.8 Hz), 3.78 (s, 3 H, Ar OCH₃), 3.40 (s, 3 H, C₂-OCH₃), 3.20 (dd, 1 H, ArCH₁₂<u>H</u>₁₂', J₄₋₁₂' = 8.8 and J₁₂₋₁₂' = 13.8 Hz), 2.92 (ddd, 1 H, C_{7a} -H, $J_{7a-8e} = 9.1$, $J_{7a-8a} = 12.1$, and $J_{7a-7e} = 16.9 \text{ Hz}$, 2.84 (dd, 1 H, ArC $\underline{H}_{12}H_{12'}$, $J_{4-12} = 6.3$ and $J_{12-12'} = 13.8$ Hz), 2.74 (br d, 1 H, C₉-H, $J_{9-10} = 8.2$ Hz), 2.40 (br s, 1 H, C₅-H), 2.30 (dd, 1 H, C_{7e}-H, $J_{7e-8a} = 7.2$ and $J_{7a-8a} = 7.2$ $_{7e}$ = 16.9 Hz), 2.12 (dd, 1 H, C_{8e}-H, J_{7a-8e} = 9.1 and J_{8a-8e} = 13.9 Hz), 1.51 (dddd, 1 H, C_{8a} -H, $J_{2a-8a} = 1$, $J_{7c-8a} = 7.1$, $J_{7a-8a} = 12.1$ and $J_{8a-8e} = 13.8$ Hz), 0.96 (s, 3 H, CH₃);

chemical shifts were determined from the ¹H COSY spectrum; 6b¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.20 (t, 1 H, m-Ar H), 6.73 (m, 3 H, o- and p-Ar H's), 5.71 (m, 1 H, C₁₀-H), 5.17 (m, 2 H, C₁₁-H's), 4.45 (s, 1 H, C₂-H), 4.05 (dd, 1 H, C_4 -H, $J_{4-12} = 8.8$ and $J_{4-12'} = 6.4$ Hz), 3.77 (s, 3 H, Ar OCH₃), 3.46 (s, 3 H, C₂-OCH₃), 3.19-3.28 (two overlapping dd's, 2 H, ArC<u>H₁₂H_{12'}</u>, $J_{4-12'} = 6$, $J_{4-12} = 9$ and $J_{12-12'} = 14$ Hz), 3.20 (br d, 1 H, C₉-H, $J_{9-10} = 9$ Hz), 2.87 (ddd, 1 H, C_{7a}-H, J_{7a-8e} = 8.9, J_{7a-8a} = 12.5 and J_{7a-7e} = 16.3 Hz), 2.39 (br s, 1 H, C_5 -H), 2.33 (dd, 1 H, C_{7e} -H, $J_{7e-8a} = 6.9$ and $J_{7a-7e} = 16.3$ Hz), 1.82 (ddd, 1 H, C_{8a} -H, $J_{7e-8a} = 6.9$ Hz, $J_{7a-8a} = 12.5$ and $J_{8a-8e} = 14.0$ Hz), 1.72 (br dd, 1 H, C_{8e} -H, $J_{7a-8e} = 9$ and $J_{8a-8e} = 14$ Hz), 0.95 (s, 3 H, CH₃); chemical shifts were determined from the ¹H COSY spectrum; 7a ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) & 7.20 (t, 1 H, m-Ar H), 6.80 (m, 3 H, o- and p-Ar H's), 5.70 (m, 1 H, C₁₀-H), 5.13 (m, 2 H, C₁₁-H's), 4.65 (s, 1 H, C₂-H), 4.30 (dt, 1 H, C₄-H, $J_{4-5} = 2$ Hz and $J_{4-12} = 7$), 3.80 (s, 3 H, OCH₃), 3.38 [p, 1 H, C<u>H(Et)₂</u>, J = 5.8 Hz], 2.90 (br d, 1 H, C₉-H, $J_{9-10} = 7.7$ Hz), ~2.82 (apparent ddd, 1 H, C_{7a}-H, $J_{7a-8e} = 9$, $J_{7a-8a} = 12$ and $J_{7a-7e} = 17$ Hz), 2.60 (d, 2 H, $ArCH_{12}H_{12'}$, $J_{4-12} = 7.2$ Hz), 2.43 (br s, 1 H, C₅-H), ~2.42 (br dd, 1 H, C_{7e} -H, $J_{7e-8a} = 7$ Hz, $J_{7a-7e} = 16$ Hz), 1.71-1.91 (overlapping C_{8e} -H and C_{8a} -H, 2 H), 1.32-1.55 [m, 4 H, (CH_2 -CH₃)₂], 0.90 (s, 3 H, C₁-CH₃), 0.84 (t, 3 H, CH₂-CH₃, J = 7 Hz), 0.79 (t, 3 H, CH_2 - CH_3 , J = 7 Hz); chemical shift were determined from the ¹H COSY spectrum; 7b ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) & 7.22 (t, 1 H, m-Ar H), 6.81 (m, 3 H, o- and p-Ar H), 5.72 (m, 1 H, C₁₀-H), 5.14 (m, 2 H, C₁₁-H's), 4.37 (d, 1 H, C₂-H, $J_{2a-8a} = 1.0$ Hz), 3.85 (dt, 1 H, C₄-H, $J_{4-5} = 1.8$ and $J_{4-12} = 6.8$ Hz), 3.80 (s, 3 H, OCH₃), 3.47 [p, 1 H, C<u>H(Et)₂</u>, J = 5.9 Hz], 2.90 (ddd, 1 H, C_{7a} -H, $J_{7a-8e} = 8.8$ and $J_{7a-8a} = 12$ Hz, $J_{7a-7e} = 17$ Hz), 2.64 (d, 2 H, ArC<u>H₁₂H₁₂</u>, $J_{4-12} = 6.8$ Hz), 2.43 (br s, 1 H, C_5 -H), 2.25-2.39 (overlapping C_{7e} -H and C_9 -H, 2 H), 2.23 (dd, 1 H, C_{8e} -H, $J_{7a-8e} = 8.8$ and $J_{8a-8e} = 14$

Hz), 1.41-1.60 [overlapping C_{8a}-H and (CH₂-CH₃)₂, 5 H], 0.90 (s, 3 H, C1-CH3), 0.88 [overlapping t's, 6 H, (CH2- $(CH_3)_2$; chemical shifts were determined from the ¹H COSY spectrum; 8a¹H NMR (CDCl₃) & 7.22 (t, 1 H, m-Ar H), 6.78 (m, 3 H o- and p-Ar H's), 5.76 (m, 1 H, C₁₀-H), 5.20 (m, 2 H, C_{11} -H's), 4.73 (d, 1 H, C_2 -H, $J_{2a-8a} = 1.0$ Hz), 4.17 (ddd, 1 H, C₄-H, $J_{4.5} = 1.1$, $J_{4.12} = 6.6$ and $J_{4.12'} = 8.7$ Hz), 3.79 (s, 3 H, OCH₃), 3.32 [p, 1 H, C<u>H(Et)₂</u>, J = 5.8 Hz], \sim 3.17 (dd, 1 H, ArCH₁₂<u>H</u>₁₂', J_{4-12} ' = 8.7 and J_{12-12} ' =14.2 Hz), 2.97(ddd, 1 H, C_{7a} -H, J_{7a-8e} = 9.0, J_{7a-8a} = 12 and J_{7a-7e} = 16 Hz), ~2.85 (dd, 1 H, ArC $\underline{H}_{12}H_{12'}$ J₄₋₁₂ = 6.6 and J_{12-12'} =14.2 Hz), 2.76 (br d, 1 H, C₉-H, J_{9-10} = 8 Hz), 2.38 (br s, 1 H, C₅-H), 2.30 (dd, 1 H, C_{7e}-H, dd, J_{7e-8a} = 6.2 and J_{7a-7e} = 16 Hz), 2.20 (dd, 1 H, C_{8e} -H, $J_{7a-8e} = 9$ and $J_{8a-8e} = 12$ Hz], 1.35-1.54 [overlapping C_{8a} -H and $(CH_2-CH_3)_2$, 5 H], 0.96 (s, 3 H, C₁-CH₃), 0.89 (t, 3 H, CH₂-C<u>H₃</u>, J = 7 Hz), 0.78 (t, 3 H, CH_2 - CH_3 , J = 7 Hz); chemical shifts were determined from the ¹H COSY spectrum; **8b** ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ 7.20 (t, 1 H, m-Ar H), 6.70 (m, 3 H o- and p-Ar H's), 5.73 (m, 1 H, C₁₀-H), 5.19 (m, 2 H, C₁₁-H's), 4.73 (s, 1 H, C₂-H), 3.98 (dd, 1 H, C₄-H, $J_{4-12} = 5.0$ and $J_{4-12'} = 10$ Hz), 3.77 (s, 3 H, OCH₃), 3.75 [m, 1 H, C<u>H</u>(Et)₂], ~3.3 (dd, 1 H, ArCH₁₂<u>H₁₂</u>, J₄. $_{12'}$ = 10.3 and $J_{12-12'}$ = 14 Hz), ~3.2 (dd, 1 H, ArCH₁₂H_{12'}, $J_{4-12} = 5$, and $J_{12-12'} = 14$ Hz), 3.22 (d, 1 H, C₉-H, $J_{9-10} = 8$ Hz), 2.84 (ddd, 1 H, C_{7a} -H, $J_{7a-8e} = 9.4$, $J_{7a-8a} = 11.9$ and $J_{7a-7e} = 16.3$ Hz), 2.37 (br s, 1 H, C₅-H), 2.26 (dd, 1 H, C_{7e}-H, $J_{7e-8a} = 6$ and, $J_{7a-7c} = 16$ Hz), 1.50-1.93 (overlapping C_{8a} -H, C_{8c} -H and $(CH_2$ -CH₃)₂, 6 H], 0.95 (s, 3 H, C_1 -CH₃), 0.89 [t, 6 H, $(CH_2-CH_3)_2$], J = 7 Hz]; chemical shifts were determined from the ¹H COSY spectrum.

14. Satisfactory analytical and high-resolution mass spectral data were consistent with the proposed structures.

(Received in US 26 October, 1990)