

# Mengistu's men surrender

LONDON, May 31: Several members of the former Ethiopian government and military commanders have given themselves up to the rebels, according to a report broadcast by Ethiopian Radio Thursday, reports agencies.

The radio, monitored by the British Broadcasting Corporation, named 12 members of the former government, party officials and military leaders, who it said "gave themselves up to Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) combatants this afternoon."

They gave themselves up "in accordance with Wednesday night's announcement to stabilise the peace and security of Addis Ababa", the radio report said.

An announcement broadcast by the radio overnight Wednesday said that the EPRDF gave officials of the former regime 48 hours to surrender.

Hope for famine relief in the Horn of Africa has improved with the rebel takeover of Ethiopia and the uncovering of new food supplies in Sudan, a US aid official told Congress on Thursday.

But the official and other witnesses at a Congressional

hearing outlined a still-grim picture of the region where relief officials say millions of people face possible starvation.

"The changes we are witnessing offer hope that relief efforts in northern Ethiopia will now be easier and that the root causes of the needs in that region can be addressed," said Andrew S Natsios, Director of the US Agency for International Development's Foreign Disaster Assistance Office.

Natsios said, however, that the continuing conflict in Ethiopia was hampering US efforts to aid Sudanese and Somalis fleeing wars in their own countries.

Natsios testified before the House Select Committee on Hunger.

Major concern over the famine caused by drought and war in countries around Africa's northeastern tip has shifted in recent days from the

Sudan to Ethiopia, Natsios testified. Other affected countries include Somalia and Djibouti.

In Sudan, he said, predictions that 300,000 people would die were made before large amounts of food were discovered being hoarded by merchants waiting for shortages to push the prices up.

He said that a large number still could die, but much more food is available in the region than previously thought. He said the United States plans to provide about one-thousandth of the needs and can do that without additional appropriations.

Estimates of the amount of food needed very, however. Natsios said Ethiopia requires about 750,000 metric tons, while United Nations estimates top 1.3 million metric tons.

Meanwhile, the US Committee for Refugees, private

refugee information group, called for US military help in getting food and medical help to the displaced throngs.

Two dozen Ethiopians are dying every day in Sudan, a government official said Thursday in appealing for international aid for refugees from the civil war in neighbouring Ethiopia.

Col. Mohammed Khalifa, a member of Sudan's ruling military junta, said illness and lack of health facilities are killing the Ethiopians. He said he expects the death toll to rise.

Interior Minister Maj. Gen. Al-Zubairi Mohammed Salih said 100,000 Ethiopian soldiers and civilians have crossed into Sudan to the west since rebel forces took over the country on Tuesday.

He said 15,000 of them are starving and an equal number are suffering from malnutrition.



ADDIS ABABA (Ethiopia): Two Ethiopian women walk by the presidential palace Thursday as children play on the charred remains of an Ethiopian army tank destroyed during the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) takeover of the capital.

— AFP/UNB photo

## Roh's ability questioned

SEOUL, May 31: The country's top opposition leader on Friday questioned President Roh Tae-woo's ability to govern, warning that the president must form a neutral government.

"I think Mr. Roh Tae-woo's ability to rule the country has reached its limit, said Kim Dae-jung, President of the New Democratic Party, the No. 1 opposition party.

"The only way to settle the present political crisis is for him to form a neutral government, Kim said in a prepared statement for delivery at a major outdoor rally in Seoul.

Kim said the political crisis has been caused by Roh's inability to handle high inflation and corruption scandals. He also accused the government of intensifying a crackdown on political dissent and labour.

Roh has introduced wide democratic reforms, including greater freedom of the press, since taking office in 1988. Critics say he has backtracked in the past year.

MADRAS, May 31: Indian detectives probing the bomb assassination of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi are questioning journalists with possible links to Sri Lanka militants, police sources said yesterday, reports Reuter.

The Press Trust of India (PTI), news agency quoting official sources, said other investigators were seeking a third accomplice of the woman believed to have blown Gandhi up with plastic explosive strapped to her waist.

Authorities had earlier circulated a photograph of another man, burly and middle-aged, said to have been posing as a journalist, who is believed to have accompanied the assassin. Police are also looking for a fair complexioned woman also seen at the election rally with the assassin.

Police sources said officers of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) searched the offices of the periodical Tamil Nation, mouthpiece of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), which is edited in Madras and published in London, and seized documents.

The Tigers have denied a role in the assassination, but Indian Law and Justice Minister Rajiv's killing: Lankan woman arrested

NEW DELHI, May 31: Police in India's southern Tamil Nadu state have detained a young Sri Lankan woman for questioning in connection with the slaying of former Premier Rajiv Gandhi, the Press Trust of India (PTI) said, reports AFP.

Shanthini Josephine, 30, was picked up when she was found "under suspicious circumstances" at a railway junction station in Tamil Nadu's Madurai town late Wednesday, PTI said.

ter Subramanian Swamy has said evidence so far points to a planned conspiracy by the LTTE, which is fighting for a separate Tamil state in Sri Lanka's north and east.

Another CBI team went to Colombo, the Sri Lankan capital, on Thursday. Bradman Weerakoon, Adviser to Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa, told reporters the three officers would meet local officials in connection with the investigation.

Police sources in Madras say the man at the assassination scene posing as a journalist tossed a notepad he was holding onto the speaker's platform before fleeing.

The photograph now being circulated throughout the state shows him wearing a white "kurta" shirt and white pyjama trousers — dress common to northern India.

4 Lankan troops, 12 Tamils killed in fighting

COLOMBO, May 31: Government troops have resumed offensive operations following a four-day truce for a Buddhist holiday. Four Sinhalese soldiers and 12 Tamil rebel were killed, military officers said Friday, reports AP.

Six rebels were killed when troops laid an ambush at Kadaraveli village in eastern Batticaloa district, said officers of the Joint Operations Command.

Three more rebels were shot dead in two separate incidents in northern Sri Lanka, they said.

The four soldiers were killed and five more were wounded when rebels attacked troops moving out of a military camp at the northeastern town of Mullaitivu. Three rebels also were reported killed in the fighting, the officers said.

Rajiv's death upsets political calculations

NEW DELHI, May 31: The slaying of Rajiv Gandhi, the former prime minister and Congress Party leader, has upset all political calculations in India. No one knows how voters will react to the assassination, reports AP.

Bombay bookies called off all bets on India's general election when Gandhi was assassinated. The stock market tumbled, then bounced back the next day when the Congress Party asked Gandhi's widow Sonia to take his place. Prices plunged again when she refused the offer.

Forecasters are unsure whether voters will tilt toward Congress in sympathy over Gandhi's assassination, or if they might be frightened off by the party's confusion and by the leadership crisis it now faces.

Gandhi, the 46-year-old Congress leader and prime minister from 1984 until he lost the 1989 election, was killed May 21 when a young woman triggered a suicide bomb during a campaign rally in south India. No one claimed responsibility, but police suspect Tamil militants from neighboring Sri Lanka.

Forty per cent of the nation had gone to the polls on the previous day. After the killing, voting was postponed until mid-June for the other 60 per cent of the districts.

The breakdown of the results will tell much about the impact of Gandhi's assassination.

Neither had been expected to win a majority.

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Rao is an ex-foreign minister who dabbles in poetry and literary translations. His greatest political asset is that he does not belong to any faction

scientific pollsters had made Congress the odds-on favourite to win the most seats in elections for the 543-member Lok Sabha, the lower house of parliament. Running a strong second was the Bharatiya Janata Party, a right-wing Hindu revivalist party that wants to change the bedrock principle that India is a secular state.

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