

BRIEFLY

Yeltsin proposed for nobel peace prize: The leader of the European Parliament's Christian Democrat group Friday proposed Russian President Boris Yeltsin for the Nobel Peace Prize, reports AFP.

Egon Krenz of Germany, who made the proposal at an emergency meeting of European Parliamentary leaders said in Brussels. Yeltsin should receive the prize for spearheading the resistance to the three-day coup in Moscow against Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.

Gorbachev himself held the peace for his policy changes that contributed to the peaceful revolutions in Eastern Europe in which the hardline Communist regimes were overthrown.

ROK, DPRK put off PM level meet: Rivals South and North Korea agreed Friday to postpone a scheduled meeting next week of their prime ministers until late October, the Yonhap News Agency reported, reports AP.

The national news agency, quoting an unnamed government source in Seoul said the agreement came in a meeting of officials from the two countries at the border village of Panmunjom.

The government's National Unification Board, which handles dialogue with North Korea, declined to comment on the report.

Yonhap said North Korea proposed at the border meeting that the next prime ministers talks, originally set for Aug 27-30, be re-scheduled for Oct 22-25. South Korea accepted the North Korean suggestions, it said.

The October meeting would be about a month after both Koreas are expected to be admitted to the United Nations as separate members.

Cholera claims 28 in Sumatra: A cholera-related disease has killed 28 people and infected 521 others in the western Indonesian island of Sumatra, press reports said, in Jakarta on Friday, reports AFP.

The Suara Kaya daily said "Muntaber", a cholera-related disease that causes serious diarrhoea and vomiting, has killed 28 people in three districts in the Riau province, southwest of Singapore, this month.

The most seriously stricken district was benkalis, where 11 of the 28 victims died and where 318 people had to be treated, the daily said. The disease also struck the districts of Kampar and Indragiri Hilir, it added.

Suara Kaya quoted provincial health officials in Riau as saying that paramedic teams have set up emergency medical centres in the stricken regions.

Aid for Cambodian flood victims sought: Cambodia's Prime Minister called on the people Thursday to aid victims of floods that caused "unprecedented devastation" in four provinces and the national capital, reports AP from Bangkok.

Prime Minister Hun Sen's appeal was carried by the state radio and monitored in Bankok.

He said that floods in the middle of the month struck Kompong Speu, Takeo Kampot, and Kandal provinces as well as the capital, Phnom Penh. He did not say what caused the floods.

"This unprecedented devastation has resulted in losses of human lives and has seriously damaged roads, railroads, bridges, dams, dikes, schools, hospitals and property," Hun Sen said.

Large areas of rice fields were flooded, many farm animals were killed and communications lines cut, the Prime Minister said.

Rigging in Mexican polls alleged: The conservative opposition National Action Party said Thursday that it will bring its charges of electoral fraud to the government's human rights commission, reports AP from Mexico City.

The party, known as the PAN, said enough voting irregularities occurred during Sunday's national midterm elections to change the outcome of many races.

"There have been many violations of the electoral process, said Luis Alvarez, National Director of the PAN. "Some have been very skillfully executed, while others have been clumsy."

At stake in last Sunday's vote were all 500 seats in the chamber of Deputies, half of the 64-member Senate and six governorships.

Incomplete preliminary returns gave an overwhelming victory to the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party, or PRI, which claims fraud charges are part of opposition political strategy and have not been proved.

Rebels disrupt power supply in Lima: Pro-Cuban guerrillas blacked out nearly one-third of the capital Thursday and destroyed eight state-owned vehicles to protest high utility rates, police said. One reportedly died in the violence and at least 10 others were injured, reports AP from Lima.

Between 20 per cent and 30 per cent of the capital's seven million residents were left without power when members of the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement dynamited at least two power pylons at about 7pm (2400 GMT), police said.

Lights were slowly being restored hours later.

One of the downed pylons was in Canto Grande, a district just north of downtown, where two penitentiaries hold hundreds of political prisoners. The rebels then burned five state-owned buses, they said.

Rafsanjani orders return of looted Kuwaiti planes

KUWAIT, Aug 23: Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani has ordered the return of six Kuwaiti Airbus planes which Iraq seized from the emirate and later flew to safety in Iran, a Gulf-based Iranian diplomat said on Thursday, reports Reuters.

He said the order stemmed from a desire by Rafsanjani's government to improve relations with Gulf Arab states.

"Rafsanjani said in a meeting with officials that the planes belonged to Kuwait and must be returned," the diplomat said.

Pravda to drop link with party

LONDON, Aug 23: Pravda, the daily paper of the Soviet Communist Party for more than 78 years, is on Friday to drop its link with the party from the paper's masthead, the BBC reported Thursday, reports AFP.

Quoting the paper's Moscow-based editor, the BBC said the masthead which has proclaimed the paper to be the "organ of the Central Committee of the Communist Party" will from Friday declared it a "general political paper."

On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday Pravda supported the abortive coup attempt against Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev. The paper's editor was now nervously awaiting a call from the Kremlin, the BBC said.

Iceland recognises Estonia, Latvia

REYKJAVIK, Aug 23: Iceland recognised Estonia and Latvia as independent on Thursday, offering immediate talks towards settling up diplomatic relations with the two Baltic Republics, reports Reuters.

Conservative Prime Minister David Oddsson, announcing his government's decision, said Iceland would also consider extending the same recognition to the Russian Republic, if it decided to quit the Soviet Union.

Mongolia to try ex-PM, President for corruption

ULAN BATOR (Mongolia), Aug 23: The Mongolian government will try a Stalinist former Prime Minister, an ex-president and 10 other former leaders for corruption, a government spokesman said today, reports Reuters.

No court date has been announced for the 12 communist hardliners who once ran Mongolia.

Among them are former Prime Minister Sodnom, who retired in March 1990 when

Noriega allowed arms shipment at Bush's request

MIAMI, Aug 23: Toppled Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega allowed weapons to be shipped illegally at the request of George Bush when the US President was Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, Noriega's lawyer said in a court document released on Thursday.

Noriega also permitted illegal drug shipments through Panama under the direction of the US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the document alleged.

Noriega, brought to Miami after being ousted during the US invasion of Panama in December 1989, will go on trial on drug trafficking charges on September 5.

Lithuanians outlaw Communist Party

VILNIUS (U S S R), Aug 23: Lithuanians on Thursday outlawed the Communist Party and regained control of broadcast facilities that had been seized by Soviet troops during the bloody January crackdown, reports AP.

In neighbouring Latvia, where troops withdrew from most buildings Wednesday, officials considered taking the same step against Communists and braced for a feared attack by Soviet troops, even after the failed Soviet coup.

The Monday putsch has spurred the Baltic republics to step up their independence drives and take new steps to eliminate Soviet control.

Lithuanian lawmakers approved laws banning the Lithuanian party, claiming ownership of its party and demanding it turn over all archives and documents, said parliament spokesman Juraide Mustelkyde. They also ordered the chief prosecutor to "bring to trial all those who have acted against the laws of the republic of Lithuania."

The Lithuanian party branch split last March when the parliament declared independence. The loyalist half retained all the property, including office buildings and the republic's printing plant.

Soviet troops remained in control of the printing plant and a number of other build-

I am still a communist: Gorbachev

MOSCOW, Aug 23: Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev insisted on Thursday that he was still a communist and would not abandon his socialist ideals, reports AFP.

"I am not ready to change my position, I am a man of principle, I am not giving up my socialist principles," he told a Moscow news conference as he recounted his ordeal during a three-day coup mounted by hardline communist members of his government. "I am not a weather-vane," he added.

The Soviet President, who is also party leader, said he would continue to fight for party renewal.

"You cannot say that the party overall represents reactionary forces, and my battle for party reform will continue," he said.

"My duty remains the search for the means to get rid of reactionary forces" within the party, he said.

Syeduzzaman calls on Golam Ishaq

Former Finance Minister of Bangladesh M Syeduzzaman Friday called on the Pakistan President General Ishaq Khan in Islamabad, according to a message received in Dhaka.

They discussed matters of mutual interest.

Noriega allowed arms shipment at Bush's request

The Defence document, one of six released on Thursday, was originally filed on March 22 and was kept secret as part of a court procedure that allows authorities to review documents to check for classified material.

It indicated Noriega may admit some drug trafficking charges during his trial. His defence is expected to include an argument that he was cooperating with US intelligence agencies and that the CIA sanctioned his actions.

Noriega's lawyers have claimed that he accumulated more than 20 million dollars, mostly in payments for intelligence work for various governments.

Lithuanians outlaw Communist Party

Some Russians argue that they have suffered more than anyone at the hands of Soviet socialism.

Their Russian identity, they say, has been mixed up with being Soviet — a Marxist-Leninist concept that seeks to submerge national identity.

Russians celebrated Thursday what they saw as the victory of what is Russian in them over what is Soviet.

Russia's vice president, Alexander Rutskoi said: "They ask, 'where's Great Russia?' Great Russia began today at this square. We are now celebrating Russia's Victory Day."

Victory Day, May 9, is the Soviet holiday marking the defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II.

Iceland recognises Estonia, Latvia

Among them are former Prime Minister Sodnom, who retired in March 1990 when

Mongolia to try ex-PM, President for corruption

No court date has been announced for the 12 communist hardliners who once ran Mongolia.

Noriega allowed arms shipment at Bush's request

Noriega's lawyer said in a court document released on Thursday.

Lithuanians outlaw Communist Party

Lithuanian lawmakers approved laws banning the Lithuanian party, claiming ownership of its party and demanding it turn over all archives and documents, said parliament spokesman Juraide Mustelkyde. They also ordered the chief prosecutor to "bring to trial all those who have acted against the laws of the republic of Lithuania."

I am still a communist: Gorbachev

The Soviet President, who is also party leader, said he would continue to fight for party renewal.

Noriega allowed arms shipment at Bush's request

The Defence document, one of six released on Thursday, was originally filed on March 22 and was kept secret as part of a court procedure that allows authorities to review documents to check for classified material.

Lithuanians outlaw Communist Party

Lithuanian lawmakers approved laws banning the Lithuanian party, claiming ownership of its party and demanding it turn over all archives and documents, said parliament spokesman Juraide Mustelkyde. They also ordered the chief prosecutor to "bring to trial all those who have acted against the laws of the republic of Lithuania."

I am still a communist: Gorbachev

The Soviet President, who is also party leader, said he would continue to fight for party renewal.

Noriega allowed arms shipment at Bush's request

The Defence document, one of six released on Thursday, was originally filed on March 22 and was kept secret as part of a court procedure that allows authorities to review documents to check for classified material.

Lithuanians outlaw Communist Party

Lithuanian lawmakers approved laws banning the Lithuanian party, claiming ownership of its party and demanding it turn over all archives and documents, said parliament spokesman Juraide Mustelkyde. They also ordered the chief prosecutor to "bring to trial all those who have acted against the laws of the republic of Lithuania."

I am still a communist: Gorbachev

The Soviet President, who is also party leader, said he would continue to fight for party renewal.

Noriega allowed arms shipment at Bush's request

The Defence document, one of six released on Thursday, was originally filed on March 22 and was kept secret as part of a court procedure that allows authorities to review documents to check for classified material.

Lithuanians outlaw Communist Party

Lithuanian lawmakers approved laws banning the Lithuanian party, claiming ownership of its party and demanding it turn over all archives and documents, said parliament spokesman Juraide Mustelkyde. They also ordered the chief prosecutor to "bring to trial all those who have acted against the laws of the republic of Lithuania."

I am still a communist: Gorbachev

The Soviet President, who is also party leader, said he would continue to fight for party renewal.

Noriega allowed arms shipment at Bush's request

The Defence document, one of six released on Thursday, was originally filed on March 22 and was kept secret as part of a court procedure that allows authorities to review documents to check for classified material.

Lithuanians outlaw Communist Party

Lithuanian lawmakers approved laws banning the Lithuanian party, claiming ownership of its party and demanding it turn over all archives and documents, said parliament spokesman Juraide Mustelkyde. They also ordered the chief prosecutor to "bring to trial all those who have acted against the laws of the republic of Lithuania."

I am still a communist: Gorbachev

The Soviet President, who is also party leader, said he would continue to fight for party renewal.

Noriega allowed arms shipment at Bush's request

The Defence document, one of six released on Thursday, was originally filed on March 22 and was kept secret as part of a court procedure that allows authorities to review documents to check for classified material.

Lithuanians outlaw Communist Party

Lithuanian lawmakers approved laws banning the Lithuanian party, claiming ownership of its party and demanding it turn over all archives and documents, said parliament spokesman Juraide Mustelkyde. They also ordered the chief prosecutor to "bring to trial all those who have acted against the laws of the republic of Lithuania."

I am still a communist: Gorbachev

The Soviet President, who is also party leader, said he would continue to fight for party renewal.

Noriega allowed arms shipment at Bush's request

The Defence document, one of six released on Thursday, was originally filed on March 22 and was kept secret as part of a court procedure that allows authorities to review documents to check for classified material.

Lithuanians outlaw Communist Party

Lithuanian lawmakers approved laws banning the Lithuanian party, claiming ownership of its party and demanding it turn over all archives and documents, said parliament spokesman Juraide Mustelkyde. They also ordered the chief prosecutor to "bring to trial all those who have acted against the laws of the republic of Lithuania."

I am still a communist: Gorbachev

The Soviet President, who is also party leader, said he would continue to fight for party renewal.

Noriega allowed arms shipment at Bush's request

The Defence document, one of six released on Thursday, was originally filed on March 22 and was kept secret as part of a court procedure that allows authorities to review documents to check for classified material.

Lithuanians outlaw Communist Party

Lithuanian lawmakers approved laws banning the Lithuanian party, claiming ownership of its party and demanding it turn over all archives and documents, said parliament spokesman Juraide Mustelkyde. They also ordered the chief prosecutor to "bring to trial all those who have acted against the laws of the republic of Lithuania."

I am still a communist: Gorbachev

The Soviet President, who is also party leader, said he would continue to fight for party renewal.

Noriega allowed arms shipment at Bush's request

The Defence document, one of six released on Thursday, was originally filed on March 22 and was kept secret as part of a court procedure that allows authorities to review documents to check for classified material.

Gorbachev, Yeltsin begin massive house-cleaning

Surging crowds demand end to Communist Party power

MOSCOW, Aug 23: Communist Party hard-liners and perhaps even the party itself may be swept from power in a massive house-cleaning that Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin began Thursday, a day after foiling the coup, reports AP.

On his first day back in the Kremlin, the Soviet President fired and ordered the arrest of at least seven of the communist hardliners who led the coup, including his chief of staff, the KGB chief and the defense minister.

Another leading coup leader, national police chief and party stalwart Boris Pugo, committed suicide as officers arrived at his house to arrest him.

In a news conference on his first day back in power, Gorbachev said that "the main task is to get rid of the reactionary forces, to dismiss them from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union."

But at the same time, tens of thousands of demonstrators — the masses whose bravery helped stop the takeover — surged through the streets of Moscow, demanding that the party relinquish power.

Gorbachev seemed to lag

behind the popular outrage against the party, insisting at the news conference that "the party should become a vigorous force for perestroika."

He said he did not think "we will have to do any witch-hunting and act as we did at other times. Do."

It wouldn't be the first time Gorbachev has been out of step with efforts to weaken the role of the party. He long balked at proposals to strip the party of its constitutionally guaranteed "leading role" in society, although he finally agreed to the change in early 1990.

Other reformist leaders also differed with Gorbachev on whether perestroika could progress under the Communist Party banner.

Yeltsin, who bolstered his position by leading opposition to the coup, said he and Gorbachev would meet Friday to discuss formation of a "Government of National Trust," and that he would insist that proven reformers be installed in top jobs.

The party could be further harmed by defections of prominent members.

Three former Gorbachev

advisers who have all quit the party in recent months appeared with Yeltsin Thursday at a victory rally.

The three, Eduard Shevardnadze, Alexander Yakovlev and Stanislav Shatalin, later told reporters that Gorbachev had been weakened by the coup and his continued role as General Secretary of the Communist Party.

Yeltsin, president of the Russian Federation, left the party last year, along with other leading reformers, including the mayors of Moscow and Leningrad.

On Thursday, the president and Communist Party chief of the republic of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, reacted furiously to the party's role in the coup.

Nazarbayev, a rising force in Soviet politics, quit the party's ruling Politburo and Central Committee, issued a decree banning party cells from government and social organisations, and proposed separating the party in his republic from the national organization, according to the official news agency Tass.

He stopped short of quitting the party. But his actions

were a severe blow to the party and may prove a grave challenge to Gorbachev.

Last month, Yeltsin issued a decree ordering the removal of party cells from the Russian Federation, a step Gorbachev said he would fight. After Yeltsin and Nazarbayev joined forces in resisting the coup, it will be doubly hard for Gorbachev to oppose their efforts.

In a statement released through spokesman Mikhail Cherkov, Nazarbayev also revealed for the first time that national party officials tried to summon a session of the Central Committee on Tuesday, at the height of the coup. That disclosure could further fuel popular anger.

In another blow, the successionalist parliament of Lithuania voted Thursday to outlaw the Communist Party, and the parliament in Latvia debated similar legislation that would turn over party property to the republic's government.

The power of the party would be greatly diminished if the national and republican governments seek to strip its rich holdings in real estate, publishing houses and other forms of property.

Yeltsin, who bolstered his position by leading opposition to the coup, said he and Gorbachev would meet Friday to discuss formation of a "Government of National Trust," and that he would insist that proven reformers be installed in top jobs.

The party could be further harmed by defections of prominent members.

Three former Gorbachev

advisers who have all quit the party in recent months appeared with Yeltsin Thursday at a victory rally.

The three, Eduard Shevardnadze, Alexander Yakovlev and Stanislav Shatalin, later told reporters that Gorbachev had been weakened by the coup and his continued role as General Secretary of the Communist Party.

Yeltsin, president of the Russian Federation, left the party last year, along with other leading reformers, including the mayors of Moscow and Leningrad.

On Thursday, the president and Communist Party chief of the republic of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, reacted furiously to the party's role in the coup.

Nazarbayev, a rising force in Soviet politics, quit the party's ruling Politburo and Central Committee, issued a decree banning party cells from government and social organisations, and proposed separating the party in his republic from the national organization, according to the official news agency Tass.

He stopped short of quitting the party. But his actions

were a severe blow to the party and may prove a grave challenge to Gorbachev.

Last month, Yeltsin issued a decree ordering the removal of party cells from the Russian Federation, a step Gorbachev said he would fight. After Yeltsin and Nazarbayev joined forces in resisting the coup, it will be doubly hard for Gorbachev to oppose their efforts.

In a statement released through spokesman Mikhail Cherkov, Nazarbayev also revealed for the first time that national party officials tried to summon a session of the Central Committee on Tuesday, at the height of the coup. That disclosure could further fuel popular anger.

In another blow, the successionalist parliament of Lithuania voted Thursday to outlaw the Communist Party, and the parliament in Latvia debated similar legislation that would turn over party property to the republic's government.

The power of the party would be greatly diminished if the national and republican governments seek to strip its rich holdings in real estate, publishing houses and other forms of property.

Yeltsin, who bolstered his position by leading opposition to the coup, said he and Gorbachev would meet Friday to discuss formation of a "Government of National Trust," and that he would insist that proven reformers be installed in top jobs.

The party could be further harmed by defections of prominent members.

Three former Gorbachev

advisers who have all quit the party in recent months appeared with Yeltsin Thursday at a victory rally.

The three, Eduard Shevardnadze, Alexander Yakovlev and Stanislav Shatalin, later told reporters that Gorbachev had been weakened by the coup and his continued role as General Secretary of the Communist Party.

Yeltsin, president of the Russian Federation, left the party last year, along with other leading reformers, including the mayors of Moscow and Leningrad.

On Thursday, the president and Communist Party chief of the republic of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, reacted furiously to the party's role in the coup.

Nazarbayev, a rising force in Soviet politics, quit the party's ruling Politburo and Central Committee, issued a decree banning party cells from government and social organisations, and proposed separating the party in his republic from the national organization, according to the official news agency Tass.

He stopped short of quitting the party. But his actions

were a severe blow to the party and may prove a grave challenge to Gorbachev.

Last month, Yeltsin issued a decree ordering the removal of party cells from the Russian Federation, a step Gorbachev said he would fight. After Yeltsin and Nazarbayev joined forces in resisting the coup, it will be doubly hard for Gorbachev to oppose their efforts.

In a statement released through spokesman Mikhail Cherkov, Nazarbayev also revealed for the first time that national party officials tried to summon a session of the Central Committee on Tuesday, at the height of the coup. That disclosure could further fuel popular anger.

In another blow, the successionalist parliament of Lithuania voted Thursday to outlaw the Communist Party, and the parliament in Latvia debated similar legislation that would turn over party property to the republic's government.

The power of the party would be greatly diminished if the national and republican governments seek to strip its rich holdings in real estate, publishing houses and other forms of property.

Gorbachev describes Crimean ordeal

MOSCOW, Aug 22: Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev struggled to find words on Thursday to express how his wife and daughter suffered while the leaders of an abortive coup kept the family trapped in their Crimean holiday villa, reports Reuters.

Gorbachev told a news conference that his wife Raisa and daughter Irina found the ordeal very hard. Raisa was ill on Wednesday but now seemed to be recovering, he said.

"Yesterday we thought we were well. It's hard," he said. "I think everyone understand, I don't think I need to say. Someone who's been in that situation can imagine."

The person who coped best was his young granddaughter Anastasiya, Gorbachev said.

"She didn't understand anything, she ran around and asked to be taken to the beach. But in the last few days security required that we didn't go because there, anything can happen."

Gorbachev feared for his family's safety when a delegation including the head of the KGB government guard arrived unannounced at his villa on Sunday afternoon.

"I discovered at this point that none of my telephones were working and I realised this meeting would be something out of the ordinary," he said.

He said he summoned his family and told them his suspicions. "We all know how it used to be with members of the family in similar cases. Anything can happen," he said.

Gorbachev returned to Moscow with his family early on Thursday morning.

Meeting Western reporters for the first time since the coup collapsed, Gorbachev gave a dramatic account of the 72 hours he spent as a captive at his Crimean dacha, or



MOSCOW: Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev clenches his fists during a press conference held at the Foreign Ministry's Press Centre, here August 22 after his return from Crimea. — AFP/UNB photo

country home, where all telephone lines were cut. He said his wife, Raisa, was deeply shaken by the events, and he described how he and his aides rigged up old shortwave receivers to get information from the outside world.

He told of how former Chief of Staff and key coup leader Valery I Boldin arrived unannounced at the dacha on Sunday and demanded that Gorbachev turn over all power to Vice President Gennady Yanayev.

"You won't get that from me," Gorbachev recounted. "Tell that to the people who sent you here."

"I told them that you and those who sent you are advenc-

unannounced at the dacha on Sunday and demanded that Gorbachev turn over all power to Vice President Gennady Yanayev.

"You won't get that from me," Gorbachev recounted. "Tell that to the people who sent you here."

"I told them that you and those who sent you are advenc-

Iceland recognises Estonia, Latvia

REYKJAVIK, Aug 23: Iceland recognised Estonia and Latvia as independent on Thursday, offering immediate talks towards settling up diplomatic relations with the two Baltic Republics, reports Reuters.

Conservative Prime Minister David Oddsson, announcing his government's decision, said Iceland would also consider extending the same recognition to the Russian Republic, if it decided to quit the Soviet Union.

Mongolia to try ex-PM, President for corruption

ULAN BATOR (Mongolia), Aug 23: The Mongolian government will try a Stalinist former Prime Minister, an ex-president and 10 other former leaders for corruption, a government spokesman said today, reports Reuters.

No court date has been announced for the 12 communist hardliners who once ran Mongolia.

Among them are former Prime Minister Sodnom, who retired in March 1990 when

I am still a communist: Gorbachev

MOSCOW, Aug 23: Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev insisted on Thursday that he was still a communist and would not abandon his socialist ideals, reports AFP.

"I am not ready to change my position, I am a man of principle, I am not giving up my socialist principles," he told a Moscow news conference as he recounted his ordeal during a three-day coup mounted by hardline communist members of his government. "I am not a weather-vane," he added.

The Soviet President, who is also party leader, said he would continue to fight for party renewal.

"You cannot say that the party overall represents reactionary forces, and my battle for party reform will continue," he said.

"My duty remains the search for the means to get rid of reactionary forces" within the party, he said.

Lithuanians outlaw Communist Party

VILNIUS (U S S R), Aug 23: Lithuanians on Thursday outlawed the Communist Party and regained control of broadcast facilities that had been seized by Soviet troops during the bloody January crackdown, reports AP.

In neighbouring Latvia, where troops withdrew from most buildings Wednesday, officials considered taking the same step against Communists and braced for a feared attack by Soviet troops, even after the failed Soviet coup.

The Monday putsch has spurred the Baltic republics to step up their independence drives and take new steps to eliminate Soviet control.

Lithuanian lawmakers approved laws banning the Lithuanian party, claiming ownership of its party and demanding it turn over all archives and documents, said parliament spokesman Juraide Mustelkyde. They also ordered the chief prosecutor to "bring to trial all those who have acted against the laws of the republic of Lithuania."

The Lithuanian party branch split last March when the parliament declared independence. The loyalist half retained all the property, including office buildings and the republic's printing plant.

Soviet troops remained in control of the printing plant and a number of other build-

Noriega allowed arms shipment at Bush's request

MIAMI, Aug 23: Toppled Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega allowed weapons to be shipped illegally at the request of George Bush when the US President was Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, Noriega's lawyer said in a court document released on Thursday.

Noriega also permitted illegal drug shipments through Panama under the direction of the US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the document alleged.

Noriega, brought to Miami after being ousted during the US invasion of Panama in December 1989, will go on trial on drug trafficking charges on September 5.

Syeduzzaman calls on Golam Ishaq

Former Finance Minister of Bangladesh M Syeduzzaman Friday called on the Pakistan President General Ishaq Khan in Islamabad, according to a message received in Dhaka.

They discussed matters of mutual interest.

Some Russians argue that they have suffered more than anyone at the hands of Soviet socialism.

Their Russian identity, they say, has been mixed up with being Soviet — a Marxist-Leninist concept that seeks to submerge national identity.

Russians celebrated Thursday what they saw as the victory of what is Russian in them over what is Soviet.

Russia's vice president, Alexander Rutskoi said: "They ask, 'where's Great Russia?' Great Russia began today at this square. We are now celebrating Russia's Victory Day."

Victory Day, May 9, is the Soviet holiday marking the defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II.

Off the Record



MOSCOW: A young Soviet puts a rope on the monument to Felix Dzerzhinsky in front of KGB headquarters here August 22 shortly before a crowd began to try and pull the statue down. — AFP/UNB photo

'Now people are stronger than KGB'

MOSCOW: Five giant cranes pulled down a 14-ton statue of the founder of the Soviet secret police Thursday night, cheered by thousands who viewed KGB participation in the failed coup as the climax of decades of repression, reports AP.

Fireworkers exploded when the statue was lifted from its pedestal at 11:28 pm (2028 GMT). The crowd of about 10,000 people with the KGB!

"All of our lives the KGB was stronger than the people," said Ira Kalina, a spectator. "This is the first time in 70 years that the people are stronger."

Kalina's father, Ignati, was shot in dictator Josef Stalin's purges in 1938, and she spent four years in a labor camp in the Kazakhstan republic before being freed in 1953, the year that Stalin died.

The huge statue was harnessed with heavy metal cables and lifted into the air by the neck. It was suspended for several minutes as Moscow Deputy Mayor Sergei Stankevich pleaded with the crowd, "Keep back! Keep back for your safety."

But the crowd rushed to a flatbed truck next to the statue as crane operators tried to place it carefully on the truck to take it away. One man kicked the head of the statue.

"I am a World War II veteran. I lived through lies all my life, but I am glad I lived long enough to see this," said a white-haired spectator, Alexander Lipich.

Boom in sales of Gorbys doll

ORANGE (Call): The three-day coup in the Soviet Union sparked a boom in sales of the Gorbys doll, reports AP.

A 10-inch (25-centimeter) cloth-and-plastic rendering of Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev has been selling, at \$16.99 a pop, like blini (hotcakes) at Doll City USA here.

"Since Monday, we've been going crazy," manager Dale Noble said Wednesday. "One guy bought a case today," said he was giving away as Christmas presents.

Noble estimated nearly 1,000 of the dolls were snatched up by doll collectors and retailers around the country.

Diana interrupts holiday for AIDS patient

LONDON: Princess Diana interrupted her family holiday in Balmoral, Scotland, to be at the hospital bedside of a close friend who, is dying of AIDS, a Buckingham Palace spokesman said Thursday, reports AP.

The patient was identified as Adrian Ward-Jackson, 41, a governor of the Royal Ballet, by his brother, Nicholas Ward-Jackson, in a statement issued on his behalf by an official at St. Mary's Hospital in west London.

The princess flew to London Tuesday after being told that Ward-Jackson had only a few days to live, the palace spokesman said. She spent six hours at St. Mary's hospital on Thursday.

Nicholas Ward-Jackson said in the statement that his family "greatly appreciates" the friendship of the princess and others "during this sad time."

Diana is patron of the National AIDS Trust and has several times visited people suffering from Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome in an attempt to dispel public prejudice against victims of the disease.

The princess is patron of the English National Ballet and the London City Ballet.