

Russia wants to deport Honecker

HAMBURG (Germany), Nov 2: A Russian official says that if Germany wants former East German Communist Leader Erich Honecker back, it should deal with the power that really counts — Russia, a newspaper reported Friday, reports AP.

Russia's Justice Minister Nikolai Fyodorov was quoted by the Bild newspaper as saying his republic was ready to deport Honecker if the former Communist leader refused to return voluntarily.

"If the Germans want Honecker back quickly, they will have to observe the new power relations here and to address themselves to the one who can really solve the case, that is, to Russia," Fyodorov was quoted as saying.

Germany wants to put Honecker on trial for giving shoot-to-kill orders to East German border guards. Honecker, 79, was spirited out

of Germany in March from a Soviet military hospital near Berlin.

Fyodorov told the Hamburg-based Bild that Honecker's escape with Soviet help violated German laws. "That's why he has to be taken away from the territory of sovereign Russia," he was quoted as saying.

German officials have raised the issue of Honecker's return on several visits to Moscow, but the case remains unresolved.

During a visit to Moscow last month, German Justice Minister Klaus Kinkel said Russia was willing to let Honecker go, but that Soviet officials appeared to be reluctant.

German officials have said it remains unclear whether Honecker's case falls under federal or regional jurisdiction in a country.

Three Pakistanis flogged for adultery

LAHORE, Nov 2: Three men found guilty of adultery were publicly flogged on Friday in a stadium packed with thousands of people chanting Allahu Akbar, reports Reuter.

The flogging of the three Pakistanis, carried out in the Punjab town of Okara after the Friday prayers, was reminiscent of public floggings during the Martial Law rule of the late military ruler Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq.

The witnesses said two of the men were given 30 strokes and seven years imprisonment, while the third received five strokes and five years in jail. Public floggings are carried

out occasionally in Pakistan's tribal areas, but this was the first since the mid-1980s in the settled parts of the country.

The crowd chanted Allahu Akbar when the first stroke of the long cane came down on one of the men, witnesses said.

The right arm of the man who carried out the punishment was tied at the elbow to restrict his arm movement as prescribed under Islamic injunctions, jail authorities said.

"All of them (convicts) walked up to the jail bus after being flogged," one official said.

Fire in Chernobyl again

MOSCOW, Nov 2: A fire broke out in a shut-down reactor at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant on Friday but no radiation was leaked and no one was hurt, Tass news agency said, reports Reuter.

On Tuesday the Ukrainian parliament voted to shut-down within two years the power plant, site of the world's worst nuclear accident in 1986.

Tass said a cable caught fire in a generator room in the first reactor, which had been shut down since October 18 for scheduled repairs, but was extinguished by the plant's firefighters.

"The incident caused no breach in safety levels," it said. A fire last month permanently shut down the second reactor.

Thirty-one people died in the immediate aftermath of the April, 1986 explosion at the station's fourth reactor, which sent a cloud of radiation blowing across Europe.

Some environmental groups have put the overall death toll from radiation in the thousands. Hundreds of thousands of people have been moved from villages and remain under medical supervision in the Ukraine and neighbouring Byelorussia.

NLD leader gets news on Nobel prize

Suu Kyi still on hunger strike, critically ill in Rangoon

BANGKOK, Nov 2: Nobel peace prize-winner Aung San Suu Kyi is critically ill in Rangoon after going on hunger strike, the opposition National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (NCGUB) said here early today, reports AFP.

Aung San Suu Kyi, under strict house arrest for more than two years, reportedly began her hunger strike last week after she was refused permission to meet with United Nations human rights officials visiting Burma.

"According to information received from internal sources, her health is in a critical condition. We are worried about her condition," the NCGUB said in a statement released in the Thai capital.

A NCGUB spokesman said he was unable to confirm unofficial reports from Burma that Aung San Suu Kyi had died.

"Our sources say only that she is critically ill. We are trying to confirm the reports that she may have died," the spokesman said.

Aung San Suu Kyi, 46 and the daughter of Burma's independence hero, Aung San, was awarded the Nobel peace prize on October 14 in recognition of her non-violent struggle to topple the military junta in Rangoon from power.

The junta, the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), has refused to allow the Nobel committee to contact her with the news.

A UN human rights commission headed by special envoy Yoizo Yokota last week



toured the Burmese capital but were refused permission to contact Aung San Suu Kyi.

Aung San Suu Kyi emerged as a leading figure in the Burmese pro-democracy movement after the 1988 unrest that forced General Ne Win, who had ruled Burma with an iron fist since 1962, to step down.

Her National League for Democracy won May 1990

elections by a resounding majority, but the junta has yet to hand over power or convene a National Assembly despite repeated calls and sanctions from the west.

Government forces killed 247 Karen rebels, including some leaders, during a month-long campaign in the Irrawaddy Delta, a government official said, reports AP.

Col Than Tun, a member of

government Information Committee, told reporters Friday the military had fought eight major battles and 30 smaller skirmishes with rebels of the Karen National Union last month.

In addition to the 247 KNU rebels killed, six were captured and four surrendered, he said.

Government losses included 17 soldiers and 18 policemen killed and 23 others wounded, he said.

"Large amounts of weapons were smuggled into the delta by the KNU rebels from Palaw on the Tenasserim coast, 400 kilometers (250 miles) south-east of Rangoon, (and taken) across the Gulf of Martaban," the colonel said.

He said the military seized 220 weapons, including automatic rifles, rocket launchers and mortars, plus a large number of mines and more than 80,000 rounds of ammunition.

Both sides reported in early October that Karen fighters had penetrated Bogale district, about 50 miles (80 kilometres) southwest of Rangoon. The area had been free of insurgent activity for 19 years.

The Karen National Union is among a dozen insurgent groups that have been battling the central government for four decades for greater autonomy and other concessions.

Than Tun estimated that the Karens have 4,000 fighters, but said only about 40 armed rebels remain in the delta.

Off the Record

Goodbye Vladimir

BERLIN: Undeterred by protesters, work crews on Friday prepared to dismantle a huge granite statue of Lenin near the center of Berlin, reports AP.

Germans have staged protests and even went to court in an unsuccessful attempt to keep the 19-meter (63-foot) statue intact. But city officials disagreed and ordered the removal of the colossus.

Work crews began setting up scaffolding around the statue this morning as a half-dozen protesters staged a quiet demonstration.

The monument is to be dismantled and possibly put back together in a permanent exhibition elsewhere in Berlin.

City officials say the actual dismantling will take place Tuesday.

Too white to retain a job

SYDNEY: An Australian man has lost his job as a life guard because his skin is considered too light, reports Reuter.

Richard Garnsey, 25, was sacked by the Sutherland Shire Council in Sydney because it believed his fair skin put the council at risk of a compensation claim for skin cancer.

Garnsey, nicknamed Bluey because of his red hair and freckles, said on Friday the council doctor told him the reasons for his dismissal.

"He gave me information that I was not suitable for the job because of the colour of my skin," he told reporters. "But if you take precautions like 15-plus sun screen, a hat and shirt you're safe, no matter what the colour of your skin is."

Factor 15 is the strongest type of cream for protecting skin from the sun.

Sutherland Shire Clerk John Rayner told reporters the council was concerned about a potential compensation claim because its doctor had identified Garnsey as a risk.

Ordeal of a Third World servant in Britain

LONDON: A British couple who kept a Nigerian domestic servant in slave conditions, starving her and whipping her with an electric flex from a kettle, were jailed Friday for five years, reports AP.

Doctor Truman Abassah, 43, and his wife Philomena, 36, a health worker, lashed the 25-year-old Helen Samuels with flex, stuck pins into her and scratched her till she bled, a London court heard.

The couple stopped feeding her and in desperation she appealed for food from neighbours Doris and Reg Tapley, who passed it over the garden fence to her.

Samuels was brought to this country from Nigeria by the Abassahs. In the five years she worked for them she never had a day off, she told the court.

The sentence passed against the Abassahs was later welcomed by anti-slavery campaigners who said that similar fates often hit the thousands of young girls brought to Britain from Third World countries to work as servants.

Canada to welcome 2.5 lakh skilled immigrants every year

OTTAWA, Nov 2: Canada will begin favouring wealthy or skilled immigrants at the expense of those seeking to join their families and will impose visa restrictions on more nations to keep "bad apples" out, officials said on Friday, reports Reuter.

The Immigration Department held to earlier forecasts that Canada will accept about 2,50,000 immigrants in each of the next four years up from about 2,15,000 this year.

But it said an increasing number of immigrants will be selected because of the labour skills business acumen and investment expertise they can

bring.

My government wants to ensure Canada receives the highest possible economic benefits from immigration to enhance our prosperity and economic security, Immigration Minister Bernard Valcourt told reporters.

Meanwhile, Canada will slightly decrease the number of applicants from the so-called family class it accepts.

Immigration officials are drawing up a list of unidentified additional nations whose citizens will need visas to visit Canada.

Canada, grappling with a backlog of refugee claimants

has also warned other countries that their visa exemptions will also be removed if they fail to control access to their passports by people who are not their citizens.

Ottawa is considering legislative changes to better screen applicants boost the enforcement power of immigration officers and increase the ability to deport bogus refugee claimants.

We don't want to get the bad apples from everywhere, Valcourt said.

About 5,000 bogus claimants are expected to be deported this year, those who remain, however, will have the opportunity for language

training to better integrate into Canadian society.

The government was embarrassed earlier this year when Iraq's ambassador to Washington a leading apologist for Saddam Hussein before the Gulf war, was accepted as an immigrant apparently without the knowledge of cabinet ministers.

Recently a woman was deported to her Islamic nation where she had been severely whipped for exposing her face in public.

We don't want abuse but we don't want overreaction said, opposition Liberal Party member Tom Wappel.

Ataul Karim due in Phnom Penh

Cuellar announces 22-nation advance force for Cambodia

UNITED NATIONS, Nov 1: Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar announced on Friday that military observers from 22 nations, including all five powers on the Security Council, will make up a small advance force for Cambodia, reports Reuter.

The 268 observers, called the UN Advance Mission in Cambodia or UNAMIC, will include 50 military officers, a 40-member Australian communications group, 20 minesweeping experts from New Zealand and 150 civilians.

Its civilian chief, Ataul Karim, a former UN

Ambassador from Bangladesh, is expected to arrive in Phnom Penh on November 9, ahead of any forces, UN sources said.

In announcing the 22 nations participating in UNAMIC, the Secretary-General said nothing about French Brigadier-General Jean-Michel Lonon, who was supposed to command the advance force, estimated to cost 20 million dollars.

UN sources said his position would be confirmed when the senior military officer — expected to be an Australian General — is named for the full

UN operation.

Providing military officers for UNAMIC are the five powers on the Security Council — China, France, Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union — along with Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Germany, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Malaysia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Poland, Senegal, Tunisia and Uruguay.

The full UN operation, estimated to cost more than one billion dollars, is not expected to be underway for another four months.

Thousands march in Algiers for an Islamic state

ALGIEERS, Nov 2: Hundreds of thousands of Muslim fundamentalists marched through Algiers on Friday calling for an Islamic state instead of elections set for December 26, reports Reuter.

It was the biggest demonstration since fundamentalist riots prevented Algeria's first democratic national election being held in June.

Witnesses said 300,000 to 400,000 supporters of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), the main opposition party, took part.

They marched after Friday prayers in an orderly column nearly three km (two miles) long, demanding the release of leaders jailed after the June riots.

Imelda returns to Manila tomorrow, bears one-way travel document

MANILA, Nov 2: Imelda Marcos, the woman with 1,000 pairs of shoes, is set to return home Monday, nearly six years after an angry mob chased the larger-than-life Cinderella and her husband out of the Philippines, reports AFP.

President Corazon Aquino has mobilized a huge police cordon to ensure a safe homecoming for the New York-based 62-year-old former First Lady and one-time Beauty Queen, who arrived in Hawaii late Thursday on the last leg of her trip.

But despite the obvious interest stirred up by her travel plans, the woman the western press has dubbed the "Iron Butterfly" may find the landscape changed since the time when she wielded power second only to that of her husband.

She is returning here as a private citizen bearing a one-way travel document given her by Aquino who was installed in Ferdinand Marcos's place by a popular revolt in 1986.

Imelda Marcos says her first order of business is to give the remains of her husband a burial worthy of a past Head of State, two years after the dictator died in Hawaii in his



fourth year of exile.

As for Aquino, she wants Marcos home and in court to account for the alleged looting of the National Treasury during the Marcoses' 20 years in

power.

A Lower Court has issued arrest warrants for Imelda Marcos and her children for tax fraud, but they are expected to post bail. The widow faces more than 100 years in jail if convicted of all counts, but government lawyers concede it could take years before a conviction is obtained.

The proximity of the May 1992 Presidential election has added another dimension to the arrival, with supporters of each urging a "war of the widows" for the Presidency.

Some Filipinos shudder at the thought.

The gaudy style in which Mrs Marcos is going to re-enter the country, a style that is her label for her coarseness and lack of taste and dignity, resurrects the things against which Filipinos revolted in 1986," the Manila Chronicle newspaper wrote in an editorial Friday.

It's a different nation Marcos is returning to. It is a nation that aches to be led into a brighter future and reconstruct the economic devisa-

tion wrought by the Marcos regime and compounded by the Aquino government," it said.

Born into the poor side of a family of politicians in the central Philippines and not known for her intellectual prowess, she parlayed her best physical attributes into a glamour marriage with then Congressman Marcos and a rise from poverty.

She became a globe-trotting Ambassador, Governor of Metropolitan Manila, Minister for Human Settlements and a member of the National Assembly.

Along the way she built a reputation as a benefactor to the poor, doling out patronage, building houses and other grand edifices and keeping the streets much cleaner than any time during Aquino's rule.

But the Marcos widow may find it hard to live down the symbols of excess her family left behind when they fled the country typified by her 1,200 pairs of shoes and 6,000 dresses and furs now on vulgar display at Malacanang Presidential Palace.

Her son Ferdinand Marcos Jr returned to the Philippines on Thursday and declared that the family was ready to meet Aquino's terms and fly the former President's corpse directly to his northern flocos

Norte Home province for burial.

The corpse is banned from Manila on national security grounds. The ban on the Marcos heirs was only lifted in July, and the 33-year-old Marcos son said his two married sisters, who he said were somewhere in Europe, would return some time with their father's corpse.

The time for bitterness is past. It's been a long long time since 1986 and since my father died," he said.

But he accused the Aquino government of harbouring unfounded fears that the Marcos family would foment trouble.

He said his family was ready to help Aquino although they had yet to discuss any plans for the May 1992 elections.

A rebel military faction that had pledged loyalty to Ferdinand Marcos, their former Commander-in-Chief, is now engaged in peace talks with the Aquino government.

Armed Forces Chief General Lisandro Abadía told reporters the faction's leader, Brigadier General Jose Maria Zúñiga, might surrender in the next few days.

Meanwhile, a parade of Marcos allies was trooping to Honolulu to accompany the widow back home. But not all of them, as more than a few have crossed the fence to support Aquino.

BRIEFLY

Botha to visit USSR: South African Foreign Minister P. W. Botha said on Friday he would soon visit the Soviet Union, arch-foe of successive white-minority government, reports Reuter from Cape Town.

A spokesman for Botha said he would also visit the newly independent Baltic states, but declined to give further details. A government source said Botha would lead a small delegation on the first cabinet-level visit to the Soviet Union.

News of the visit followed the signing of aviation and fisheries agreement between the two countries, whose relations have been rapidly improving after decades of animosity.

They have no formal diplomatic ties, but they recently opened "Interest Sections" staffed by nationals and attached to the Austrian embassies in Moscow and Pretoria.

In Johannesburg, officials of the Soviet Aeroflot airline and state-owned South Africa Airways signed a cooperation agreement that could be a prelude to direct air links.

UK aid to Yugoslavia: Britain gave Yugoslavia 250,000 pounds (425,000 dollars) in emergency humanitarian aid Friday in the form of a donation to the International Red Cross, the government said, reports AFP from London.

The donation comes in addition to 275,000 blankets, worth one million pounds (1.7 million dollars), sent earlier, and brings total British aid to the war-torn country to more than 1.4 million pounds (2.4 million dollars).

20 killed in Seoul mishap: A chartered bus going to a wedding crashed through the railings of a bridge on a winding mountain road Saturday, killing 20 people and injuring 25, police said, reports AP from Seoul.

The accident occurred near Inje, 120 kilometres (75 miles) east of Seoul in Mt. Sorak National Park, an area crowded with visitors at the height of the autumn tourist season.

All the dead and injured were Koreans, police said. The bus was en route from a rural town in the eastern part of the country to Seoul for a wedding, police said. The driver was among the dead, they said.

Survivors were being treated at the Inje hospital, news reports said.

A 50-ton crane, six wrecking trucks, six ambulances and 150 people from the local police and a nearby Army unit were mobilised for the rescue operation, said the national news agency Yonhap.

Quake shakes Japan: An earthquake measuring 4.9 on the open-ended Richter Scale Saturday jolted Japan's ancient capitals of Kyoto and Nara, but there were no reports of damages or injuries, the meteorological agency said, reports AFP from Tokyo.

The quake, which struck at 8.53 am (2353 GMT Friday), registered three on the Japanese scale of seven in the two western Japanese cities.

An earthquake with intensity three on the Japanese scale causes building sway and objects to fall, according to the agency.

The epicenter was some 10 kilometres (6.25 miles) underground near Kyoto, the agency said.

Mujahideen kill three: Afghan guerrilla fighters killed three people in Kabul on Friday when they fired eight rockets at the capital, state-run Kabul radio said, reports Reuter from Islamabad.

The rockets, fired from southeast of the city, landed in residential areas, said the radio, monitored in Islamabad. Five people were injured.

The guerrillas are fighting to overthrow the Kabul government which controls the cities. Much of the countryside is under guerrilla control.