

Guyana defies western pressure for free poll

GEORGETOWN (Guyana), Nov 12 : Guyana President Desmond Hoyte is defying western pressure for free and open presidential and parliamentary elections and is going ahead with plans for a December poll without adopting Washington-backed proposals, reports Reuter.

"The elections will proceed," Hoyte declared on Sunday night at a mass rally of his ruling Peoples National Congress in the capital of this former British colony on the northeastern shoulder of South America.

"He has thrown down the gauntlet," one western diplomat here told Reuters on Monday, stressing that Washington and other Major western donors were insisting on free and fair elections.

Hoyte rejected proposals from former US President Jimmy Carter that he postpone elections to late February or March to clean up a "seriously flawed" electoral roll and set December 16 as election day.

Carter travelled here a year ago and persuaded Hoyte to yield to longstanding opposition demands for electoral reforms including counting votes at polling stations and setting up an electoral roll through house-to-house enumeration.

Hoyte, 62, whose party has been accused of running fraudulent elections since 1988, has invited Carter to officially observe and certify the fairness of the December elections.

Charles was to be blown up : Minister

50 world leaders escaped death in Zimbabwe

LONDON, Nov 12 : A Zimbabwe government minister says some 50 world leaders narrowly escaped death when South African-backed activities tried to blow up Britain's Prince Charles at Zimbabwe's 1980 independence celebrations, reports Reuter.

Justice Minister Emmerson Mnangagwa says in a British television documentary that bombs were planted under the podium at Harare's Rufaro Stadium and times to go off while Britain's heir to the throne was speaking.

The stadium was packed with heads of state who could have been killed, according to the makers of the programme the hidden hand, shown to the



media on Monday and due to be screened on Thursday.

Mnangagwa was the incoming Minister of Security so he was in a unique position to know this Nicholas Claxton, the film's Director, said in an interview on Monday.

Government leaders at the festivities marking the southern African state's independence from Britain included Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, Pakistan's President Ziaul Haq and Zambia's President Kenneth Kaunda.

The bombs designed to look like floodlights, were discovered 24 hours before Prince Charles made his speech.

More explosives found on

the road between the stadium and the airport were going to be used to attack people escaping from the stadium after the assassination, Claxton said.

Mnangagwa blamed the plot on Rhodesian Military Special Forces opposed to Zimbabwe's independence, who he said were working with South African military intelligence.

But the Minister would not say whether the attackers had been caught or punished.

They had worked out a plan to destabilise US, Mnangagwa said in the programme. It was a very, very serious threat.

Buckingham Palace officials declined to comment on the film.

Off the Record

Minister throws out VP Singh's luggage

LUCKNOW: The former Prime Minister, Mr VP Singh's room at the Gauriganj guest house in Amethi was allegedly broken open and his luggage thrown outside by a BJP minister.

The Janata Dal leader, Mr Reoti Raman Singh, alleged here today that Ms Sharda Chauhan, minister of state for planning, broke open the lock.

Mr Singh was not present at that time and his staff members and security men reportedly watched helplessly when the incident took place.

Talking to reporters, Mr Singh said that Ms Chauhan came to the guest house last night, broke open the lock and threw the luggage all around.

A visibly upset Janata Dal leader, Mr Reoti Raman Singh, accompanied by the party's national general secretary, Mr Wasim Ahmed, said that the incident reflected adversely on the BJP government.

The BJP government has not been extending even normal courtesy to a senior leader like Mr VP Singh," he said. He accused the BJP of heading towards fascism and throwing decency to the winds VPS RESOLVE. The JD leaders said when Mr VP Singh was informed about incident, he decided not to stay in any government guest house during his campaign in Amethi. The party leaders, however, refused to comment when asked if any FIR was lodged.

Demanding an apology from the Chief Minister, Mr Kalyan Singh, the leaders said it was clear that the BJP was using the state machinery to bully opposition leaders.

The JD leaders described the incident as a sign of the BJP's frustration due to the popular response to Mr VP Singh's UP visit.

Referring to the lathicharge on the activists of the National Front Left parties in Ayodhya on Tuesday, Mr Reoti Raman Singh said the unprovoked police action had showed the BJP government's growing intolerance towards opposition leaders.

A spokesman of the state government, however, said that he had no information about the incident. Ms Chauhan was not available for comment as she had gone to Amethi to campaign for her party's candidate.



I sacrificed my government to save the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya -VP Singh

Diplomatic offenders

WASHINGTON: Here is a list, taken from New York City records, of the dozen worst parking offenders among foreign consulates and missions in calendar year 1990, reports AP.

Following are the names of the country with number of outstanding tickets for the year, and the amount owed.

- 1 Soviet Union, 11,402, 364,386 dollars
- 2 Nigeria, 4,483, 147,937 dollars
- 3 Indonesia, 3,370, 111,210 dollars
- 4 Israel, 2,758, 91,014 dollars
- 5 Greece, 2,678, 88,374 dollars
- 6 Yugoslavia, 2,564, 84,612 dollars
- 7 Brazil, 1,893, 62,469 dollars
- 8 Bulgaria, 1,890, 62,370 dollars
- 9 France, 1,822, 60,126 dollars
- 10 Morocco, 1,594, 52,602 dollars
- 11 Turkey, 1,512, 49,896 dollars
- 12 Egypt, 1,437, 47,421 dollars

17 criminal charges against Imelda

MANILA: The Philippines filed 17 criminal charges against Imelda Marcos today in the first new legal action against the former First Lady since she returned from exile last week, the solicitor general said, reports Reuter.

The charges, filed by solicitor-general Francisco Chavez, accuse Marcos and her three children of illegally taking money out of the country in violation of central bank regulations.

Chavez told reporters he was also filing 12 counts against Marcos's son, Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr, and 15 counts each against daughters Irene and Imee.

Together, the family of ousted dictator Ferdinand Marcos are accused of illegally depositing 360 million dollars in 10 Swiss banks and two US banks in violation of Philippine currency laws.

The charges carry a penalty of five years in jail on each count and a fine of 20,000 pesos (740 dollars).

The government accuses P Marcos, widow of the late President, of helping to embezzle five billion dollars from the Philippines during her husband's 20-year-authoritarian rule. She has denied the Marcos took any money.

The 62-year-old former first lady was fingerprinted last week after surrendering to a judge. The government had ordered her arrest on seven tax fraud cases pending against her.

She posted bail of 175,000 pesos (6,480 dollars)

Pravda's banner an ad

MOSCOW: First Lenin's picture was banished. They out went the daily rallying call: "Workers of the World, Unite!"

Now the former Communist Party newspaper Pravda is running advertisements across the top of its front page, calling the move financially necessary but "professionally painful," reports AP.

"Stocks in the all-Russian Exchange Bank guarantee you success and are a symbol of your prosperity," reads Monday's banner, located where the newspaper used to comment on the main story of the day.

Pravda has carried regular advertising in its pages since before the August coup but never in such a prominent spot.

"But our current self-financing way of life has its own strict laws. And in order for Pravda to survive under these new conditions, we are most actively involved in commercial activities," it said. "This line (banner) is also an investment in our budget."

Pravda, once the mouthpiece of the Soviet Communist Party, was closed by Russian President Boris N. Yeltsin in August for allegedly supporting the hard-line coup.

It resumed publication a week later after registering with the Russian government as an independent paper, but without its customary portrait of Communist Party founder Vladimir I. Lenin, allegiance to the party's Central Committee, or tiny banner that read "Workers of the World, Unite!"

Editor said they had no choice but to print the coup conspirators' statements and decrees, but said their reporting on the coup was neutral. The paper reopened asking for contributions to stay afloat, saying it was left without any financial support.

BRIEFLY

17 killed in Brazil plane crash : A Brazilian domestic airliner fell in flames into a public square in the city of Recife on Monday, killing at least 17 people, including two on the ground, Brazilian television reported, says AP from Rio De Janeiro on Tuesday.

The Globo TV network said the Nordeste airline plane had just taken off from Recife bound for the tourist island of Fernando do Noronha, about 640 kilometers (400 miles) northeast from the coastal city.

There was no immediate word on the number of passengers aboard. The TV report said the twin-engine, Brazilian-made Bandeirantes plane was after when it began its plunge into the southern section of Recife, a city of 1.2 million residents about 2,240 kilometers (1,400 miles) north of Rio de Janeiro.

Sikh militants kill 9 pilgrims : Militants stopped three cars and shot dead nine persons in Amertisar district Monday night, while 22 persons including nine militants were killed in other incidents in Punjab since Monday night, reports PTI from Chandigarh Tuesday.

Police said that militants waylaid three cars coming from pilgrimage near village Mushal in Amertisar district Tuesday night.

The victims who were on a pilgrimage of historic Sikh shrines, were proceeding to Amertisar from Manikaran in Himachal Pradesh.

Body of British tourist found in Goa : Indian police have discovered the body of a British tourist murdered in his hotel room in the western Indian beach resort of Goa, the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported Tuesday, says AFP from New Delhi.

PTI identified the man as Eamon Peter Helly, 46, and said he had arrived from the Saudi Arabian capital of Riyadh on a two-week tour of India and checked into the hotel in Panaji, the Goan capital, on Thursday.

His body was found Sunday, hands and feet bound with handkerchiefs and with the mark of an injury on the neck, the news agency said, adding that police believed he had been killed two days earlier.

UN nuclear experts return to Iraq : United Nations experts returned to Iraq on Monday to discuss the destruction of Iraq's chemical and nuclear weapons with the Baghdad authorities, reports Reuter Tuesday from Baghdad.

A nuclear team will return 78 rods of enriched uranium to its source, the Soviet Union. Chemicals inspectors will discuss the disposal of up to 700 tonnes of mustard gas.

Dimitri Perricos, Head of the 18-member nuclear team, declined to reveal the date for the airlift of the enriched uranium. The two teams are working under the terms of UN Gulf War, Ceasefire Resolutions.

Arafat urges EC to play positive role : PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat called Monday on European states to play a constructive role in the Middle East peace process, reports Xinhua Tuesday from Tunis.

Arafat made the statement in a meeting with envoys of the 12-nation European Community to discuss results of the Madrid Peace Conference, future prospects of the Middle East peace process and latest developments on the Palestinian issue.

The PLO Chairman commented on the positive attitude of the Palestinians toward the peace process, the question of Jewish settlements, and that of Jerusalem, according to the Palestinian news agency Wafa.

US presence in Cambodia restored

PHNOM PENH (Cambodia), Nov 12 : US diplomats have returned to Cambodia's capital after a 16-year absence as part of an international effort to maintain a ceasefire in a devastating civil war and bring free elections, reports AP.

Cambodians are particularly hopeful of the arrival of American diplomats on Monday and UN peacekeeping troops will prevent the return to power of the murderous Khmer Rouge communist guerrillas.

The Khmer Rouge says it has abandoned the radical policies under which hundreds of thousands of Cambodians were killed during its reign of terror of transform society in the 1970s.

The treaty was signed in Paris on October 23 by the Vietnamese, installed government, the Khmer Rouge and two rebel groups supported by the United States. More than 150,000 soldiers of the four factions are waiting to be disarmed in what is expected to

be a tense run-up to UN-supervised general elections scheduled for 1993.

"We're about to embark upon the implementation of a plan that will lead to a new era in Cambodian history," said Charles Twining, an Indochina expert who heads the US diplomatic mission.

He said the Paris accord, which give the United Nations extensive involvement in Cambodian military and administrative affairs, "offers the most realistic way to bring peace."

Twining will work with the United Nations and Cambodia's Supreme National Council, a reconciliation body of government and guerrilla leaders who are expected to meet in the Cambodian capital later this month.

Prince Norodom Sihanouk, the former Cambodian head of state, is to return to Phnom Penh on Thursday from more than a decade of exile to lead the council.

Bangkok to open camp for Burmese student refugees

BANGKOK, Nov 12: The Thai government will open a camp to house about 1,700 Burmese students who have fled their country's military government, an official at the Ministry of Interior said Tuesday, reports AP.

Some of the students said they feared the move would lead to their deportation. Thailand considers them illegal immigrants, not refugees.

Iran keen to mediate in Indo-Pak conflict

TEHRAN, Nov 12 : Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani said Monday Iran is willing to help settle the 44-year-old rift between India and Pakistan, Tehran radio reported, says Xinhua.

Rafsanjani made the offer at a meeting with visiting Indian Foreign Minister Madhavsinh Solanki, saying that the Islamic Republic of Iran is prepared to employ its full means to try and resolve differences between India and Pakistan.

There exist a series of disputes between New Delhi and Islamabad since 1947 when the Asian sub-continent was divided into two independent states from British colonial rule, predominantly Hindu India and an Islamic State of Pakistan.

The current situation in the world required independent countries like India and Iran to increase cooperation Rafsanjani told Solanki.

Boutros-Ghali now front-runner for top UN job

NEW YORK (United Nations), Nov 12 : Egypt's Deputy Prime Minister, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, emerged as the front-runner for the post of UN Secretary-General Monday after a third straw poll by the UN Security Council, report AFP.

He was followed by Bernard Chidzero, Zimbabwe's Finance Minister, and Olusegun Obasanjo, former President of Nigeria, who's country currently holds the presidency of the Organisation of Africa Unity (OAU).

Backed by the non-aligned countries, the OAU has put forth six candidates to succeed UN Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar, who will leave the post at the end of the year.

In Monday's straw poll, Boutros-Ghali received 11 votes in favour, one vote against and three abstentions.

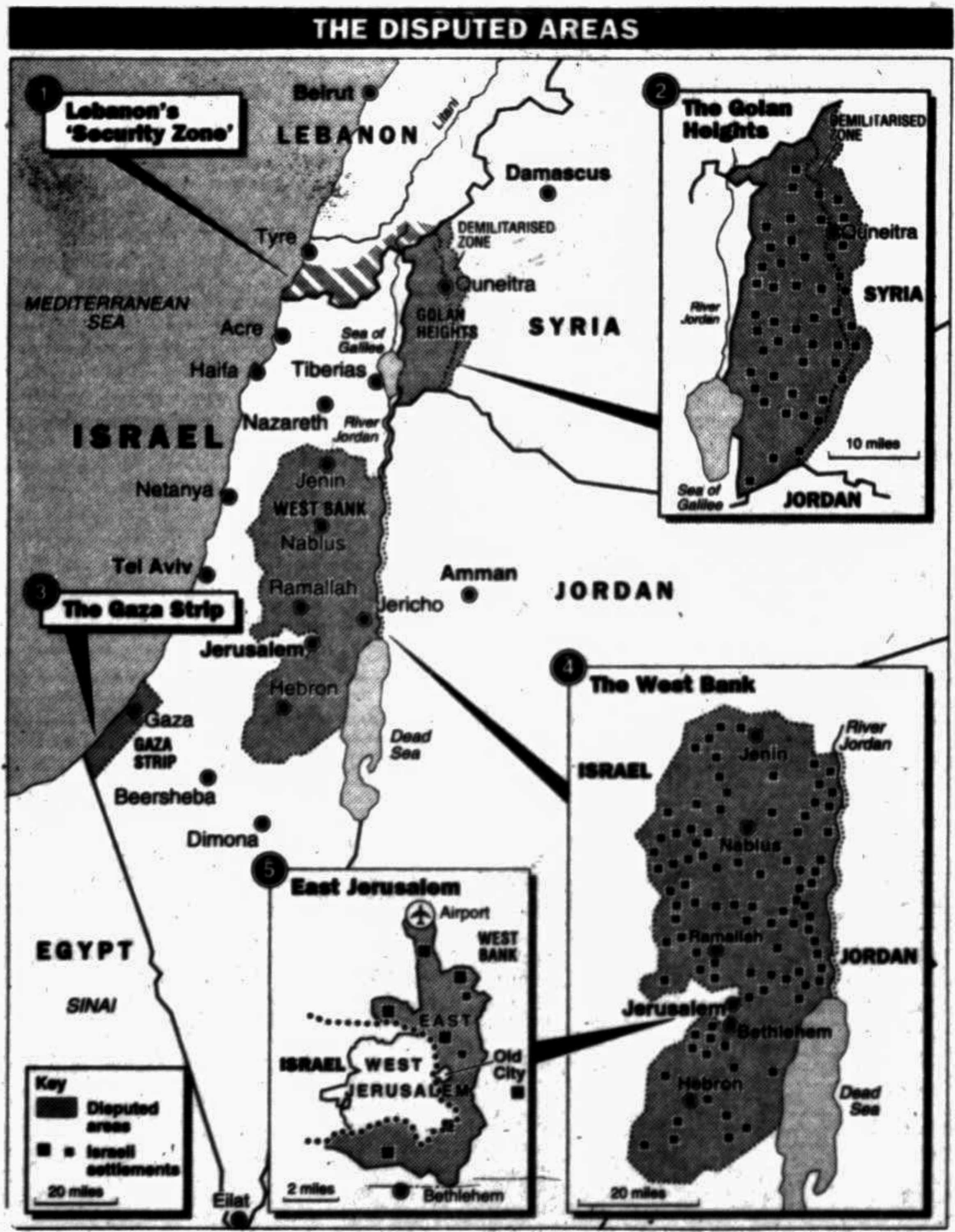
Chidzero received 10 votes in favour, two against and three abstentions. Obasanjo received nine votes in favour, four against and two abstentions.

The vote put all three candidates over the minimum nine Security Council votes needed to be elected, provided that none of the five permanent members use their veto to back their election.

Nevertheless, the negative votes show that each of their positions remain tenuous. Since the balloting is secret, it is not known whether any permanent members, the United States, the Soviet Union, China, Britain and France, have voted against them.

Two other African candidates received six favourable votes - James Jonah, a senior UN official, and Kenneth Dadzie, also a senior official of the world body, both received three negative votes.

Ashrawi rules out talks before an Israeli halt to settlements



CAIRO, Nov 12: A Palestinian leader yesterday ruled out the possibility of resuming peace talks before a halt to Israeli settlement while Israeli leaders aired some optimism on a quick renewal of Arab-Israeli bilateral talks, reports Xinhua.

Reports from Jerusalem quoted Hanan Ashrawi, spokeswoman and top adviser for the Palestinian delegation, told reporters, that talks cannot resume until Israel stops building settlements.

A freeze of settlements "is not a subject to be put on the agenda to be negotiated. It is a necessary prerequisite for the beginning the agenda," she said.

"Any illegal acts that negate the integrity of the (peace) process will have to cease before any work can be done on negotiations," she added.

But Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir was quoted as telling reporters yesterday that he believed peace talks "will be renewed soon."

Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy told Israeli parliament's Defense and Foreign Affairs Committee that "I believe we will reach an agreement and there will be a meeting" referring to the separate bilateral talks with Arabs adjourned following the first round of talks.

Israel and its Arab adversaries - namely Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Palestinians, disagreed over the location for subsequent negotiations.

Levy also said that the United States is trying to open another stage in the peace process, a conference on regional problems.

US human rights policies a garbage : China

BELJING, Nov 12 : China has issued a secret study document criticising US President George Bush by name and harshly attacking attempts to pressure Beijing on human rights, reports Reuter.

It also dismisses US human rights policy as "garbage".

"It is clear that the objective of US human rights foreign policy is to encourage the development of 'internal forces of opposition,'" said the document which was meant

for officials only but whose content was revealed to Reuters by Chinese sources.

Referring to the suppression of pro-democracy dissent in 1989, the document continued: "after we quelled the rebellion, the United States and other western countries called the rioters 'fighters for democracy and freedom' and their violent actions 'a human rights movement.'"

"Not only is this ridiculous and absurd, but it reveals what

kind of garbage their constantly repeated defence of 'human rights' really is."

Human rights is a key issue for US Secretary of State James Baker, who is scheduled on Friday to become the most senior US official to visit Beijing since the army crushed pro-democracy dissent in 1989 with heavy loss of life.

The October 25 document says Bush - who has been widely attacked in the United States for his policy of main-

taining ties with Beijing's hardliners - is determined to destroy China's communist leadership.

The Bush administration hopes the Baker visit will bring concessions from China, particularly on human rights, before the 1992 presidential election campaign when Bush's opponents are expected to use his China policy as a weapon.

The document traces what it says have been more than 40 years of attempts by the

United States to overthrow communism by "peaceful evolution," Beijing's term for the alleged western plot to steadily chip away at socialism until it collapses.

Entities "the struggle between peaceful evolution and anti-peaceful evolution is class struggle in the world arena", the 16-page document, marked "secret" on the cover, stands in contrast to China's publicly stated policy of trying to improve relations