

BRIEFLY

Two Azeris killed in mine blast: Two Ethnic Azeris were killed in Nagorny Karabakh when the truck they were riding in hit a land mine planted on a road in the village of Dolanlar, the Azerbaijan news agency Assa-Irada said Saturday, reports AFP from Moscow.

The report said a group of American militants armed with machine guns and grenade-launchers also attacked the village, wounding three inhabitants and setting two houses on fire.

The official Soviet news agency Tass also reported the incidents and said the attackers sprayed parts of Dolanlar with gunfire "in an attempt to force local residents to flee the area."

Gunmen storm bar in London: 2 killed: Two men were killed and four others injured when masked gunmen burst into a crowded bar in southeast London and opened fire, police said Sunday, reports Reuter from London.

Police, quoted by Britain's press association news agency, said the gunmen opened fire just before the pub's 11 pm (2200 GMT) closing time on Saturday.

The two men who died, aged 23 and 47, were among some 30 people in the bar at the time. Two others were in a critical condition.

Police said they did not know why the gunmen attacked the bar.

Eight killed in blast in India: At least eight policemen including one sub-inspector were killed when a landmine set by Naxalites exploded at Korodpali in Nizamabad district Saturday afternoon, according to reports received in Hyderabad, reports PTI.

The incident occurred when a police party was proceeding on investigating duty while the sub-inspector, one head constable and four constables were killed on the spot. Two other policemen succumbed to injuries later at the hospital, the reports said.

Ex-Egyptian Vice President dead: Former Egyptian Vice-President Ali Sabry died in Cairo Saturday of internal bleeding at the age of 71, reports Xinhua from Cairo.

Sabry will be buried after a military funeral in Cairo today, government sources said.

Sabry served as Egypt's Vice-President from 1965 to 1967 and from 1970 to 1971. He was arrested in May 1971 for allegedly leading a plot to topple the late President Anwar Sadat.

Sabry was sentenced to death by a military tribunal but Sadat commuted the verdict to life imprisonment. After spending 10 years in prison, Sadat ordered his release for health reasons.

Missing French officers found in Iraq: Two French non-commissioned officers who went missing in Kuwait on Tuesday have been located in Iraq, and were handed over to International Red Cross officials in Baghdad on Saturday, the French Defence Ministry said in Paris, reports AFP from Paris.

The Ministry said it so far had no information on the circumstances in which the two men, who had been seconded to the Kuwaiti air force as technicians, went missing or on how or where they were found.

It said the two chief sergeant Major Jean-Claude Laemie, 42, and sergeant Major Jean-Ives Sanchis, 37, were to be returned to Kuwait tomorrow by the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Venkataraman cancels visit to Chile: Indian President R Venkataraman has cancelled his proposed visit to Chile this month to help improve his country's economic crisis by saving the expenditure, English daily The Hindustan Times reported Saturday says Xinhua from New Delhi.

The cancellation of the proposed visit, at an estimated cost of 3.2 million US dollars was made despite that the journey had already been cleared by a special committee that handles high ranking official visits during a belt-tightening period for India's economy.

India to enter global arms bazar: Indian Defense Minister Shriy Pawar has said that New Delhi has set itself to enter global 'arms bazar' to earn foreign exchange, reports Xinhua from New Delhi.

Talking to reporters in Nagpur of the western state of Maharashtra on Thursday, Pawar said arms export this year could go upto 10 billion rupees (about 0.39 billion US dollars) from last year's figure of 720 million rupees, reported 'The Times of India' Saturday.

Yeltsin asks Bush to deal with him separately

WASHINGTON, Aug 4: Russian President Boris Yeltsin asked President George Bush during his recent visit to the Soviet Union to deal with him as the President of a separate country, US news and World Report says in its upcoming issue, reports AFP.

Yeltsin said he "wanted to work closely with the (Bush) administration on improving food distribution, converting defence plans to make consumer products, arranging management training for

Russian business people and obtaining technical assistance" to set up a market economy, the Newsweekly said.

The Russian President and sometime rival of Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev also "asked for a full-fledged treaty with (the United States) to maximize cooperation in those areas," according to the magazine.

But seeking to avoid undermining Gorbachev's authority, Bush reportedly said he would sign such a treaty only if it were permitted by the still unfinished (Soviet Federal) Union Pact.

Gorbachev announced Friday that his new union treaty would be ready for signing by the Soviet Republics August 20.

Speaking on Soviet Television, Gorbachev said the first republics to sign the treaty would be the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

They were to be followed by the other republics which took part in the drafting of the treaty, including Belarusia, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Tadzhikistan and Kirghizia, he said.

Israeli cabinet okays Shamir's decision on peace confce

JERUSALEM, Aug 4: Israel's government today overwhelmingly backed Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's conditional agreement to attend an October peace conference with Israel's Arab neighbours, reports Reuter.

Transport Minister Moshe Katzav told reporters after a four-hour meeting: "The government accepted with only three against."



WASHINGTON, Aug 4: The Sunday Times said the agents were Iraqis working for Israel's Mossad Intelligence Agency and were already in place before the beginning of the Gulf crisis last year.

The Mossad had between four and six agents in the army and close to the Iraqi government, the paper said. One of the agents was reportedly a senior official in the ruling Baath Party.

The Sunday Times said the agents were evacuated from Iraq after the war amidst the Kurdish refugees who fled to Turkey in March.

Reuters adds: Britain shipped more than eight tonnes of depleted uranium to Baghdad in the two years before the Gulf war, the Sunday Times reported.

It quoted a former chief in Iraq's nuclear industry as saying the material was used in President Saddam Hussein's programme to build a nuclear bomb.

The newspaper said the evidence gleaned from customs documents cast doubt on British government assurances that uranium exports to Iraq were minimal.

Depleted uranium after processing in complex and expensive reactors will produce small quantities of plutonium needed for bomb production.

The Sunday Times said there consignments totalling 8.9 tonnes of depleted uranium and other radioactive materials were exported on licences from the British Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) between 1988 and 1990.

The Sunday Times quoted a DTI official as saying eight tonnes of depleted uranium was a tiny amount, British nuclear fuels was said to have a stockpile of 40,000 tonnes of depleted uranium.

Hussein Shahristani, a former head of the Iraqi Atomic Energy Commission now in exile was quoted by the newspaper as saying the British shipments went to the Iraqi Nuclear Research Centre at Tuwaila 12 miles (20 km) south of Baghdad.

The intention was to store it, irradiate it in the reactor, then reprocess the irradiated material, Shahristani said.

Before the Gulf war, he added, Iraq was on course to build a nuclear bomb within two years.

Singapore announces early election

SINGAPORE, Aug 4: Ending weeks of speculation, Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong announced Sunday that Singapore's next election will be held before it is required by law in late 1993, reports AP.

Goh said it had been his intention to use government's full five-year term in office, but members of his cabinet and others urged that polling take place ahead of time.

His announcement was made during a "walkabout" in one of the election constituencies. These informal visits to talk to voters in their own neighbourhoods presages elections in the past.

Other signs of a quicker political tempo included a minor cabinet shuffle June 29 and the recent granting of a three-month bonus to government workers.

Goh also said his administration was studying the creation of a medical trust fund to help absorb health care costs.

Goh, 50, succeeded Lee Kuan Yew last November. Prime Minister for 31 years, the 67-year-old Lee remains a member of Goh's cabinet and is secretary-general of the ruling People's Action Party.

The PAP has governed Singapore since 1959 and holds 80 of the 81 elected seats in Parliament. To renew its mandate, the PAP for years has scheduled elections a year before they were required.

PDA workers observe 12-hr hunger strike

Sharif's govt trying to destroy PPP: Benazir

ISLAMABAD, Aug 4: Former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto staged a hunger strike Sunday to protest alleged attempts by the conservative Islamic government to destroy her populist party, reports AP.

On the eve of the 12-hour symbolic protest, one of Ms Bhutto's fiercest political opponents backed up what she has been saying for nearly a year — that last year's elections were rigged to keep her from returning to power.

Ms Bhutto sat cross-legged beneath a rain-soaked canopy across from Parliament as she began the protest against what she said were the arrests and torture of some 5,000 party supporters.

"Members of my party are being harassed, woken up at midnight and hauled to jail on false charges, tortured and dragged from one court to another," she said. "They are trying to destroy my party."

The government has denied Ms Bhutto's charge, insisting that those who have been arrested are terrorists, murderers and kidnappers.

Last month, the government forced a constitutional amendment through Parliament that gives police



judicial court specially set up to try her and members of her administration.

Three months after her dismissal, her left-leaning Pakistan People's Party was overwhelmingly defeated in national and provincial elections and relegated to a weak, largely ineffective opposition in Parliament.

Ms Bhutto has repeatedly claimed the elections were stolen through widespread vote rigging and fraud. Most international observers at the time rejected those charges.

But Naveed Malik, a former adviser to Ms Bhutto's successor, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, said he had coordinated two "election cells" set up to manipulate the results of the October 1990 to see that Ms Bhutto did not return to power.

At the time, Sharif was the chief minister of eastern Punjab, the country's wealthiest and most populous province, which dominates Parliament.

"Call me whatever you can, I, too, was involved in the rigging exercise," Malik told reporters, adding that he was prepared to face criminal charges.

sweeping powers to control soaring crime and creates special courts that bypassing the judicial system to try "terrorist" cases.

"This is worse than martial. This is civil martial law," she said.

Ms Bhutto contends the People's Party has been the target of a witch-hunt since President Ghulam Ishaq Khan abruptly dismissed her government on Aug 6, 1990, on charges of widespread corruption and nepotism, political incompetence and abuse of power.

The 38-year-old former premier faces eight charges of mismanagement before one-

11 Indian policemen burned to death in Kashmir

NEW DELHI, Aug 4: Eleven Indian Paramilitary policeman burned to death in Kashmir after their vehicle smashed into an electricity pole and caught fire, the Press Trust of India reported today, reports Reuter.

It quoted officials in Srinagar, Indian-ruled Kashmir's summer capital, as saying the driver lost control and hit the pole, bringing, high tension wires down on the vehicle on Saturday night.

Imelda wishes to be tried during Acquinno's term

MANILA, Aug 4, Exiled former Philippine first lady Imelda Marcos said in an interview televised today she wished to be tried and judged during President Corazon Acquinno's term because it was under her government that she was maligned, reports Reuter.

Marcos said she wanted to return to her homeland not to wage war against Acquinno but to help her to unite the country and solve its many problems.

"I will be by her (Acquinno's) side," Marcos said. "You can be sure we are going home not to fight but hopefully to bring peace, not to be at war but to start the healing process."

Warwick earns millions of dollars for AIDS victims

ATLANTA: Dianne Warwick said her Grammy-winning song, "That's What Friends Are For," has raised millions of dollars for AIDS programmes, reports AP.

The song she recorded in 1986 with Gladys Knight, Stevie Wonder and Elton John had an enormous impact, she said at a workshop in a housing project Friday. "And it's still selling," she said.

Although she's not planning another benefit recording, she told the workshop participants, "I want you to know that Dianne Warwick cares and Dianne Warwick does not care by herself. She has a multitude of friends."

The forum was held to teach residents about Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.

"This disease does not care who you are," she said. "It loves everybody, and it's the kind of love we don't need."

Israel infiltrated killers into Saddam's entourage during war

LONDON, Aug 4: Israel succeeded in infiltrating a team of killers into Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's entourage during the Gulf war, but they did not have an opportunity to kill him, the weekly Sunday Times reported, reports AFP.

Quoting US and Israeli intelligence sources the paper said a second team of Israeli agents in Iraq had gathered vital information on the Iraqi nuclear programme and sabotaged shipments of nuclear material.

The second team also provided Israel with information on movements of Iraqi troops and Scud missile launchers.

The Sunday Times said the agents were Iraqis working for Israel's Mossad Intelligence Agency and were already in place before the beginning of the Gulf crisis last year.

The Mossad had between four and six agents in the army and close to the Iraqi government, the paper said. One of the agents was reportedly a senior official in the ruling Baath Party.

The Sunday Times said the agents were evacuated from Iraq after the war amidst the Kurdish refugees who fled to Turkey in March.

Reuters adds: Britain shipped more than eight

tonnes of depleted uranium to Baghdad in the two years before the Gulf war, the Sunday Times reported.

It quoted a former chief in Iraq's nuclear industry as saying the material was used in President Saddam Hussein's programme to build a nuclear bomb.

The newspaper said the evidence gleaned from customs documents cast doubt on British government assurances that uranium exports to Iraq were minimal.

Depleted uranium after processing in complex and expensive reactors will produce small quantities of plutonium needed for bomb production.

The Sunday Times said there consignments totalling 8.9 tonnes of depleted uranium and other radioactive materials were exported on licences from the British Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) between 1988 and 1990.

The Sunday Times quoted a DTI official as saying eight tonnes of depleted uranium was a tiny amount, British nuclear fuels was said to have a stockpile of 40,000 tonnes of depleted uranium.

Hussein Shahristani, a former head of the Iraqi Atomic Energy Commission now in exile was quoted by the newspaper as saying the British shipments went to the Iraqi Nuclear Research Centre at Tuwaila 12 miles (20 km) south of Baghdad.

The intention was to store it, irradiate it in the reactor, then reprocess the irradiated material, Shahristani said.

Before the Gulf war, he added, Iraq was on course to build a nuclear bomb within two years.



SOWLEIBELEHAT, Kuwait: (Files) A Kuwaiti family honours a son killed by Iraqis during their occupation of the Emirate in a weekly homage here June 22. Kuwait's Prime Minister Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Safah said the country would not forget these families, in an anniversary address August 3.



SOWLEIBELEHAT, Kuwait: (Files) A Kuwaiti family honours a son killed by Iraqis during their occupation of the Emirate in a weekly homage here June 22. Kuwait's Prime Minister Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Safah said the country would not forget these families, in an anniversary address August 3.

3 Palestinians shot at in Gaza

ME issues will top the agenda of OIC FMs meet

JERUSALEM, Aug 4: Israeli soldiers dressed in civilian clothes shot and wound three Palestinians in occupied Gaza city after they tried to stop the Palestinians car, Arab sources charged here today, reports AFP.

But an Israeli military spokesman denied that the army was involved in the incident.

The incident occurred Friday when the Palestinian driver refused an order to stop, prompting the "special unit" members who were in a car with Gaza strip license plates to drive in pursuit, Palestinian sources said. A fire-fight followed two men — whom Israeli security services had been seeking were slightly wounded and then arrested.

ISTANBUL, Aug 4: The Palestine issue and the Arab-Israeli conflict will top the agenda of the Foreign Ministers' meeting of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) due to open here today, a high-ranking OIC officials has said, reports Xinhua.

In a written statement yesterday, Hamid Al-Gabid, OIC Secretary-General, said that the Jewish immigration, the Israeli settlement policy, and the Israeli occupation of Lebanese territory will also be high on the meeting's agenda.

He said that UN Security Council Resolution 425 calling for immediate withdrawal of Israeli troops from South Lebanon should be thoroughly implemented.

The OIC has called for an international peace conference on the Middle East issue to be attended by all concerned parties, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, said Al-Gabid.

He also said he hopes the peace conference will be held on the basis of international legitimacy and UN Security Council resolutions 242 and 338.

The OIC meeting, the first gathering of the 45-member Islamic organization since the end of the Gulf War in late February, will also discuss the situation in Cyprus.

Chatichai was summoned to return home

BANGKOK, Aug 4: Former Thai Prime Minister Chatichai Choonhavan said here Saturday he had returned from exile in Britain to defend himself against corruption charges by a military-appointed anti-graft committee, reports AFP.

The committee — appointed by the National Peace-Keeping Council (NPKC), the official name of the junta which toppled Chatichai's democratically elected government in a bloodless coup February 2 — has listed 24 former cabinet ministers and politicians as being "unusually rich".

The committee chairman, retired Lieutenant General Sittith Jitjaroj, said last Saturday that Chatichai was included on the list of suspects, and invited the former premier to return home to prove his innocence.

"I was obliged to return at an invitation extended by the Anti-Corruption Committee to defend my integrity against corruption charges. I must admit that the charge had taken me completely by surprise," the former premier, 71, said at his Bangkok residence.

Rosalynn Carter's gesture

ATLANTA: Former first lady Rosalynn Carter helped launch nationwide campaign to immunize all children against measles and other illnesses by the age of 2, reports AP.

Mrs. Carter and Betty Bumpers, the wife of democratic Sen. Dale Bumpers, opened their "Every Child By Two" campaign Friday and will begin a national tour next month. Next spring, they will focus on immunizing children along the poverty-stricken Mississippi Delta.

More than 27,000 cases of measles were reported in the nation last year and 89 people died in what health officials said was the largest outbreak in 20 years.

"It is a shameful fact that children in this country suffer from a disease that is so easy to prevent," Mrs. Carter said Friday.

The women will lobby for greater reimbursement for immunizations and less expensive shots, Mrs. Bumpers said.

The two teamed up on the same issue in the 1970s and again during former President Jimmy Carter's term. Mrs. Bumpers' Arkansas programme was adopted as a national model by the federal Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta.

Singapore announces early election

SINGAPORE, Aug 4: Ending weeks of speculation, Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong announced Sunday that Singapore's next election will be held before it is required by law in late 1993, reports AP.

Goh said it had been his intention to use government's full five-year term in office, but members of his cabinet and others urged that polling take place ahead of time.

His announcement was made during a "walkabout" in one of the election constituencies. These informal visits to talk to voters in their own neighbourhoods presages elections in the past.

Other signs of a quicker political tempo included a minor cabinet shuffle June 29 and the recent granting of a three-month bonus to government workers.

Goh also said his administration was studying the creation of a medical trust fund to help absorb health care costs.

Goh, 50, succeeded Lee Kuan Yew last November. Prime Minister for 31 years, the 67-year-old Lee remains a member of Goh's cabinet and is secretary-general of the ruling People's Action Party.

The PAP has governed Singapore since 1959 and holds 80 of the 81 elected seats in Parliament. To renew its mandate, the PAP for years has scheduled elections a year before they were required.

Off the Record

Thai 'godfathers' to be grilled

BANGKOK: Thai Army Commander-in-Chief Gen Suchinda Kraprayoon supports an Interior Ministry proposal to draft a bill to deal exclusively with people branded as "godfather" (leaders of underground societies), local press reported on Sunday, says Xinhua.

From the very start "godfathers" have been partly to blame for political disturbances, especially those who sought political influence, "the Bangkok Post" quoted his as saying on Saturday.

"It is our conviction that if we allow this (godfathers seeking political power) to go unchecked, undesirable things will happen to this country. To put it this way, if casino operators or contraband smugglers are made Ministers can the government be good?" he asked.

The National Peace-Keeping Council supports the Interior Ministry's proposed bill to deal with "godfathers" but, in the meantime, wants to ensure that "everything is done according to the law," Suchinda was reported to say.



An old trick to develop sexy drawl

CHICAGO: Kathleen Turner used an old trick to develop her deep sexy drawl: She put erasers in her mouth to make it bigger, reports AP.

"There's an old exercise, it sounds silly, but it works, to take pencil erasers, put them in your back teeth and you can feel now that stretches the whole back of your mouth," she said in a taped segment for the Oprah Winfrey Show.

The 37-year-old actress said she started the practice while in college.

"I was very fervent then," she said. "I wanted more resonance."

Warwick earns millions of dollars for AIDS victims

ATLANTA: Dianne Warwick said her Grammy-winning song, "That's What Friends Are For," has raised millions of dollars for AIDS programmes, reports AP.

The song she recorded in 1986 with Gladys Knight, Stevie Wonder and Elton John had an enormous impact, she said at a workshop in a housing project Friday. "And it's still selling," she said.

Although she's not planning another benefit recording, she told the workshop participants, "I want you to know that Dianne Warwick cares and Dianne Warwick does not care by herself. She has a multitude of friends."

The forum was held to teach residents about Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.

"This disease does not care who you are," she said. "It loves everybody, and it's the kind of love we don't need."

Travolta's queries

COLUMBIA (SC): The town of Camden had an unexpected visitor in a time of crisis last week when actor John Travolta stopped by to ask about his godchild and his assistant, reports AP.

Ron Zupanzic, who works for Travolta, and his 1-year-old son, Travolta's godson, were on the Silver Star passenger train that crashed Wednesday near Camden, about 30 miles (50 kilometers) northeast of Columbia. Seven people were killed and at least 87 injured.

According to USA Today, Travolta was flying his Lear jet about 80 miles (130 kilometers) from Camden en route to Boston when the pilot heard on the radio of the wreck.

The star of the movies "Grease" and "Saturday Night Fever" walked through the front door of Camden High School on Wednesday, where uninjured passengers were brought after the crash.

"I recognized him and took him immediately to a classroom to get him away from the crowd," Police Sgt. Esther Price said. "He was very upset, very emotional. He came up to us and he had his hand over his face. It looked like he had been crying."

The Zupanzics were not hurt.

Rosalynn Carter's gesture

ATLANTA: Former first lady Rosalynn Carter helped launch nationwide campaign to immunize all children against measles and other illnesses by the age of 2, reports AP.

Mrs. Carter and Betty Bumpers, the wife of democratic Sen. Dale Bumpers, opened their "Every Child By Two" campaign Friday and will begin a national tour next month. Next spring, they will focus on immunizing children along the poverty-stricken Mississippi Delta.

More than 27,000 cases of measles were reported in the nation last year and 89 people died in what health officials said was the largest outbreak in 20 years.

"It is a shameful fact that children in this country suffer from a disease that is so easy to prevent," Mrs. Carter said Friday.

The women will lobby for greater reimbursement for immunizations and less expensive shots, Mrs. Bumpers said.

The two teamed up on the same issue in the 1970s and again during former President Jimmy Carter's term. Mrs. Bumpers' Arkansas programme was adopted as a national model by the federal Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta.

Chatichai was summoned to return home

BANGKOK, Aug 4: Former Thai Prime Minister Chatichai Choonhavan said here Saturday he had returned from exile in Britain to defend himself against corruption charges by a military-appointed anti-graft committee, reports AFP.

The committee — appointed by the National Peace-Keeping Council (NPKC), the official name of the junta which toppled Chatichai's democratically elected government in a bloodless coup February 2 — has listed 24 former cabinet ministers and politicians as being "unusually rich".

The committee chairman, retired Lieutenant General Sittith Jitjaroj, said last Saturday that Chatichai was included on the list of suspects, and invited the former premier to return home to prove his innocence.

"I was obliged to return at an invitation extended by the Anti-Corruption Committee to defend my integrity against corruption charges. I must admit that the charge had taken me completely by surprise," the former premier, 71, said at his Bangkok residence.

Rosalynn Carter's gesture

ATLANTA: Former first lady Rosalynn Carter helped launch nationwide campaign to immunize all children against measles and other illnesses by the age of 2, reports AP.

Mrs. Carter and Betty Bumpers, the wife of democratic Sen. Dale Bumpers, opened their "Every Child By Two" campaign Friday and will begin a national tour next month. Next spring, they will focus on immunizing children along the poverty-stricken Mississippi Delta.

More than 27,000 cases of measles were reported in the nation last year and 89 people died in what health officials said was the largest outbreak in 20 years.

"It is a shameful fact that children in this country suffer from a disease that is so easy to prevent," Mrs. Carter said Friday.

The women will lobby for greater reimbursement for immunizations and less expensive shots, Mrs. Bumpers said.

The two teamed up on the same issue in the 1970s and again during former President Jimmy Carter's term. Mrs. Bumpers' Arkansas programme was adopted as a national model by the federal Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta.

Singapore announces early election

SINGAPORE, Aug 4: Ending weeks of speculation, Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong announced Sunday that Singapore's next election will be held before it is required by law in late 1993, reports AP.

Goh said it had been his intention to use government's full five-year term in office, but members of his cabinet and others urged that polling take place ahead of time.

His announcement was made during a "walkabout" in one of the election constituencies. These informal visits to talk to voters in their own neighbourhoods presages elections in the past.

Other signs of a quicker political tempo included a minor cabinet shuffle June 29 and the recent granting of a three-month bonus to government workers.

Goh also said his administration was studying the creation of a medical trust fund to help absorb health care costs.

Goh, 50, succeeded Lee Kuan Yew last November. Prime Minister for 31 years, the 67-year-old Lee remains a member of Goh's cabinet and is secretary-general of the ruling People's Action Party.

The PAP has governed Singapore since 1959 and holds 80 of the 81 elected seats in Parliament. To renew its mandate, the PAP for years has scheduled elections a year before they were required.

Jyoti given 460 pages of Tagore's manuscripts

CALCUTTA, Aug 4: Some 460 pages of Rabindranath Tagore's rare manuscripts were handed over here Saturday to the West Bengal Chief Minister, Mr Jyoti Basu by Mr LM Singhvi, the Indian High Commissioner in the United Kingdom, reports PTI.

Tagore's manuscripts were put on bid by the world famous auctioneer, Christie's last month in London, and from where it was acquired and brought back to India by Mr

Singhvi.

Speaking at the briefed function held at "Nandan", the state government's film centre, Mr Jyoti Basu said that as soon as he was informed about the auction of Tagore's manuscripts by Mr Singhvi he immediately told him to get those priceless literature at any cost because it is our national treasure.

Mr Singhvi, while detailing emotionally on his endeavour to get these

literary gems, said he was alerted by a small advertisement in a British newspaper about the auction of several hundred items by Christie's and the Tagore's manuscripts occupied only a line in small print referred to as Lot No 371.

"I immediately enquired about the authenticity, condition and possible price of the manuscripts and then contacted the Prime Minister Mr PV Narasimha Rao, and

Mr Jyoti Basu and after getting the go ahead signal I went into the process of acquiring them," Mr Singhvi said.

Since there were a number of bidders including some Japanese, Americans, and even a British company there was every possibility that the price would shoot up to an unaffordable level for India, he said.

He then went into the process of explaining the cultural value of manuscripts for

India to different bidders and dissuading them from bidding finally I struck a deal with the British company the understanding was that if the price goes beyond India's limit the company will acquire it and make a gift to India."

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister, Mr PV Narasimha Rao, has told the Bishwa Bharati University that he will act according to the advice of the Law Ministry on the proposal of

extending the copy right period of Tagore works beyond December 31, 1991.

The assurance had been given to a university delegation which met him early this week in New Delhi.

The delegation also met the Vice-President, Dr Sankar Dayal Sharma, Human Resource Development Minister, Mr Arjun Singh and Leader of the Opposition, Mr L K Advani besides some left front parliamentarians.

Other signs of a quicker political tempo included a minor cabinet shuffle June 29 and the recent granting of a three-month bonus to government workers.

Goh also said his administration was studying the creation of a medical trust fund to help absorb health care costs.

Goh, 50, succeeded Lee Kuan Yew last November. Prime Minister for 31 years, the 67-year-old Lee remains a member of Goh's cabinet and is secretary-general of the ruling People's Action Party.

The PAP has governed Singapore since 1959 and holds 80 of the 81 elected seats in Parliament. To renew its mandate, the PAP for years has scheduled elections a year before they were required.