

# Coalition govt in Phnom Penh in a week

PHNOM PENH, Nov 23 : The Phnom Penh government will form a coalition government with Funcinpec, the resistance party led by the son of prince Norodom Sihanouk, the Prince announce today, reports AFP.

The Cambodian People's Party (CPP) of Prime Minister Hun Sen and Funcinpec — the party led by Prince Norodom Ranariddh — will form the new government within a week, Prince Sihanouk said.

"Moreover, they have also decided that during the election campaign and for the elections in the provinces they will share common lists, he said.

Elections are scheduled under UN supervision for 1993.

The decision to merge the government was made jointly by Prince Ranariddh and Hun Sen, Prince Sihanouk said.

"They made a pact, my two children," he said, adding, "Sihanouk had nothing to do with it."

The Prince has referred to Hun Sen as his second son since he returned from exile November 14.

"They are adults, I am not behind it," he said, speaking at a meeting with French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas.

Funcinpec and the CPP had already announced a political alliance that was formalised on Thursday.

The formation of the coalition government would most likely involve a cabinet reshuffle to include some members of Funcinpec, but Prince Sihanouk did not address his question directly.

He attacked press reports that moves to ally Funcinpec and the Phnom Penh government were aimed at alienating the Khmer Rouge or the party of Son Sann, Cambodia's former Prime Minister.

"It's aimed against nobody," the Prince said.

The implications for the interim Supreme National Council (SNC) were not immediately clear.

The four factions sit together on the 12-member SNC, a body formed under a UN peace plan to represent Cambodia's sovereignty while it is under UN supervision.

The peace plan gave the Phnom Penh government six representatives and the three resistance factions — that of Son Sann, the Khmer Rouge and Funcinpec — two representatives each.

Prince Sihanouk left his leadership of Funcinpec in August to become the neutral chairman of the SNC.

The Prince said his "position as a neutral President has been called into question."

In recent days he has affirmed that he takes no sides as head of the SNC, despite his constant praise of the Phnom Penh government and announcement of support for the Hun Sen-Ranariddh alliance.

On Thursday he declared himself head of state with the support of all sides.

# Israelis, Palestinians greet Washington invitation with reservation

JERUSALEM, Nov 23 : Israelis and Palestinians both greeted with reservation a US invitation to Middle East peace talks in Washington next month, but analysts said neither was in a position to turn it down, reports Reuter.

Asked what would happen if any of the parties refused to attend, US State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler said: "Obviously it would be an unfortunate choice."

"It would obviously be very disappointing, not only to the co-sponsors (of the talks, the United States and the Soviet Union) but I think to many countries and peoples around the world."

The invitations to the talks on December 4 were issued, but not announced, just before Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir met US President George Bush in Washington on Friday.

Shamir, who had tried to persuade the United States to postpone a fresh round of peace talks, emerged from the meeting to say the issue remained unresolved.

"In the end, we did not reach an agreement and the assumption is that the issue will be discussed further," he said at a briefing for Israeli reporters.

Shamir wanted to follow the Madrid peace conference in early November with further bilateral talks in the Middle East with Israel's Arab neighbours. The Arab delegations rejected this.

For the Palestinians, Washington is a preferred venue, but spokeswoman Hanan Ashrawi said they would seek clarification before replying to the invitation.

"There are several problems. The first is that there is no US-PLO dialogue at present... and we do have a visa

problem for the Palestinian leadership," she told reporters.

Several members of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation said this week the group's dialogue with the United States should resume as a precondition for holding the talks in Washington.

But Ashrawi said the Palestinian response would not be conditioned on this or any other issue. The PLO is not officially a party to the talks as Israel regards it as a terrorist organisation.

Both Israelis and Palestinians regarded the US move as consistent with Washington's strategy hitherto to get Israel and the Arabs to the bargaining table.

"The Americans establish a fact and then say to each of the sides, 'I dare you not to show up'," said an Israeli source who asked not to be identified.

Middle East analysts said Israel would come under heavy international pressure unless it accepted the invitation, while a negative response would also affect its already strained relations with the United States.

The head of the Israeli government press office, Yossi Ben-Aharon, told Reuters Israel would consider the invitation and give its response soon.

Shamir had hoped to secure support for American loan guarantees to Israel during his four-day visit to the United States. The issue did not come up in his talks with Bush.

"I intended to raise other issues, including the one you mentioned (loan guarantees), but there was simply not enough time to raise them," he told reporters. "I hope other opportunities will arise during which those subjects can be discussed."

# Off the Record



VIENNA : AIDS-positive Canadian Bill Mole (R) and American Ron Reichert pose in front of the Vienna Parliament on their 'Race Against Time' which leading them over 40,000 kms through 35 countries. — AFP photo

## The Times to change looks

LONDON : The Times, Britain's oldest national daily, said on Friday it will change its typeface, abandoning a 60-year-old script that has been adopted by newspapers around the globe, reports Reuter.

Designers from Britain and Iceland put their heads together for more than a year to come up with "Times Millennium" — a new family of 14 print faces and some 5,000 redrawn characters which will appear on Monday.

"The new type looks cleaner and clearer, our hope is that The Times will be easier to read," said editor Simon Jenkins.

"It is a subtle yet definite evolution of a great work of industrial design. Once again The Times is the forerunner of newspaper typography," he said.

The old typeface — "Times New Roman" — was ideal for hot metal printing. Designed for the Times nearly 60 years ago, it became the most widely used Latin typeface in the world.

The newspaper celebrated its 200th anniversary in 1985.

The last big revolution in its appearance was in 1966 when it began to devote its front page solely to news instead of dense columns of private advertisements. Since 1981 The Times has been owned by Media Tycoon Rupert Murdoch.

## Britons lay communism to rest

LONDON : Britain's Communist Party, born three years after the 1917 Russian Revolution, was laid to rest on Friday, reports Reuter and AP.

Delegates voted 135 to 72, with three abstentions, to abandon the Marxist-Leninist constitution which has regulated the Communist Party of Great Britain since its creation.

"The era of Communist parties is at an end," party leader Nina Temple said.

"Our own party can not be revived by nostalgia, discredited ideologies and rosy views of history."

A new party will arise out of the ashes and delegates will vote on Saturday on whether to call it the democratic left.

The delegates met in a labour union building near the 19th century house where the exiled Karl Marx wrote Das Kapital, propounding the principles of communism.

Last week, a former party official acknowledged publicly for the first time that the KGB has made secret payments of up to 100,000 pounds (£179,000) a year to the British party from 1958 to 1979.

## 'Iron Lady' fires double broadside

LONDON : Margaret Thatcher marked the first anniversary of her downfall as British Prime Minister by firing a double broadside over her chosen successor's policy towards European unity and the fighting in Yugoslavia, reports Reuter.

In a hard-hitting tirade certain to delight Britain's opposition parties, "Iron Lady" Thatcher called John Major "my Prime Minister" and criticised him bitterly for refusing to hold a national referendum on European monetary union.

"Parliamentary supremacy means the supremacy of the voice of the people. It is the voice of the people. If you deny that to be heard, I think it is arrogant and I think it is wrong," she told Independent Television News (ITN) on Friday.

Her interview, a year to the day since she was ousted as premier in a Conservative Party revolt, reopened divisions over Europe which the party had hoped to put to rest and appeared certain to embarrass Major, the man she backed to succeed her.

"Her remarks — were unexpectedly ferocious and will fuel public perceptions of a party at its own throat," the Independent newspaper said.

Thatcher whipped up a storm in parliament earlier this week when she called for a referendum if Britain eventually agreed to join a single currency to be debated at a key European Community summit next month on treaties on political and monetary union.

Major rejected the call, saying he did not accept the need for a referendum either after the summit or when the single currency issue was likely to be finally decided in 1996.



## Old stamp's new record

LONDON : A dull, unassuming stamp with a smudgy postmark fetched a record 33,000 pounds sterling (£9,300 dollars) for a 20th century British stamp at a London auction on Thursday, Sotheby's auction house said, reports Reuter.

The lilac-coloured stamp, printed with a prop of King Edward VII, was issued for use solely by the tax authorities on May 14, 1904, but withdrawn the same day, only 13 were known to exist.

The world record for a single stamp was set in March when a 19th century penny black stamp was bought for 1.4 million pounds (£2.5 million dollars).



BAKU (Azerbaijan) : An old woman weeps as she enters with other relatives the accident place where a MI-8 helicopter crashed last Wednesday. According to preliminary data the helicopter was shot down. — AFP photo

# Azerbaijan vows action against Armenia for downing copter

MOSCOW, Nov 23 : Azerbaijan, accusing Armenia of shooting down an unarmed helicopter, threatened action against its neighbouring Soviet republic as fresh tensions gripped the fast-disintegrating country's southern rim, reports Reuter.

Azerbaijani President Ayaz Mutalibov vowed to take measures against Armenia after the helicopter crash on Wednesday, in which 20 people died.

"We have the firmest intentions. I think our side will take all measures because things have gone too far, every day more blood is being shed," he told Russian Television on Friday in the republic's capital, Baku.

Armenian leader Levon Ter-Petrosyan said the agenda for an emergency session of the Azerbaijani Parliament next week, to discuss imposing Martial Law in the republic and cutting all links with Armenia, was in effect a declaration of war.

A new outbreak of fighting also threatened to break out in the trouble Georgian region of South Ossetia, which opposes Georgia's bid for independence.

And in a further sign of the collapse of central Soviet power, the Russian Parliament voted on Friday to take control of the Soviet State Bank (Gosbank) and the Soviet Bank for Foreign Economic Affairs (Vneshekonbank).

Hundreds of thousands of people gathered in Baku for the funerals of those killed when the helicopter crashed in the disputed enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh, scene of prolonged guerrilla war between Armenian and Azerbaijani militants.

Azerbaijani officials say the helicopter was shot down, but Armenia says the crash was caused by bad weather.

"The first information handed over by the Azeri side proved that it was an accident," said Ter-Petrosyan, quoted by the independent Snark news agency.

"Some time later certain forces must have realised that this helicopter crash could be used for other purposes, for stepping up anti-Armenian hysteria."

# Haitian team in Colombia for crisis talks with Aristide

ARTAGENA (Colombia), Nov 23 : A delegation of Haitian lawmakers arrived Friday for talks with deposed President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, and one warned of civil war if Aristide returns, reports AP.

Another talked of the suffering caused by the embargo imposed by the 34-member Organisation of American States on the Caribbean island nation of 6.4 million shortly after Aristide was ousted in a bloody military coup on September 30.

The goal is to find a democratic solution to the crisis and "return President Aristide to office within a constitutional framework", Augusto Ramirez, Colombia's OAS delegate who organized the talks, said Friday.

# Fresh fighting between Iraq, Kurdish rebels

LONDON, Nov 23 : Kurdish rebels in northern Iraq reported fresh fighting with Iraqi troops on Friday, reports Reuter.

A statement issued in London by the Iraqi Kurdistan front said Kurdish Peshmerga fighters repulsed an attack by two Iraqi army brigades on the village of Sefiya, near the regional capital Irbil, at six am local time.

"The army withdrew having lost one armoured car and three soldiers were taken prisoner. One company of the army changed sides and joined our forces," the statement said.

The statement was read by a spokesman for the Kurdish Democratic Party.

# US Senate okays \$291b defence budget

WASHINGTON, Nov 23 : The Senate Friday voted 79-15 in favour of a 291-billion-dollar US defence budget for 1992, which provides for the development of "Star Wars" programmes but apparently dooms the future development of the stealth B-2 Bomber, reports AFP.

The bill, approved by the House of Representatives in a 329-82 vote Monday, is expected to be signed into law by President George Bush.

The legislation outlines defence programmes for fiscal 1992, which began October 1. A separate bill actually providing the money has cleared the House of Representatives and is awaiting Senate endorsement.

The defence bill also ends Navy and Air Force bans on women flying combat aircraft. President George Bush is to make a final recommendation on December 15, 1992, based on findings of a commission specially set up to look into the issue.

# Pakistan won't accept Indian hegemony, says Ishaq

ISLAMABAD, Nov 23 : Pakistan President Ghulam Ishaq Khan has said Pakistan would neither accept Indian hegemony nor move an inch from its principled stand on the nuclear question in the overall context of the South Asia region, reports Xinhua.

Talking to newsmen Friday evening after inaugurating a seminar here, the President said the viewpoint of Pakistan had been conveyed to the US government through US Undersecretary of State for International Security R. Bartholomew who recently visited Pakistan.

Pakistan would not accept any discrimination and its stand was based on principles and was well-known to the whole world, the President said, hoping the US would not extend discriminatory treatment to Pakistan on any issue.

Bartholomew is currently in New Delhi on a mission to persuade India either to sign nuclear non-proliferation treaty or to agree to a regional approach towards denuclearisation of South Asia.

The President indicated that Pakistan's position on denuclearisation of South Asia would be firm after the results of US-India talks are known, hoping for better results and positive outcome of the US-India talks.

# BJP to march against Kashmir's special status

NEW DELHI, Nov 23 : India's pro-Hindu Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) demanded on Friday the abolition of special laws in Jammu and Kashmir, where Kashmiri Muslim insurgents have been fighting for independence or accession to Pakistan, reports Reuter.

The main cause of separatism and secessionist in Kashmir is the obnoxious "Temporary" Article 370 of the Indian Constitution which gives special status to Jammu and Kashmir," BJP President Murli Manhar Joshi told a news conference.

The party plans an Ekata Yatra (or unity march) across India. Joshi said he would host the national flag in Srinagar, Kashmir's summer capital and currently the centre of Muslim insurgency, on January 26, India's Republic Day.

Kashmir special laws were framed as an inducement to the Muslim-majority state to join predominantly Hindu India after the sub-continent was partitioned into Pakistan and India, the BJP said.

# Yeltsin in Stuttgart

STUTTGART (Germany), Nov 23 : Russian President Boris Yeltsin met with German state officials in Stuttgart on Saturday, the last day of his visit to Germany, reports AP.

# Mountain of problems await new UN chief

UNITED NATIONS, Nov 23 : Egypt's Boutros Boutros Ghali will inherit a mountain of problems in January when he moves from the banks of the Nile to New York's East River as the new UN Secretary-General, reports Reuter.

The Security Council chose the scholarly 69-year-old diplomat on Thursday to succeed Javier Perez de Cuellar of Peru, who steps down on December 31 after two five-year terms at the helm of the organisation.

Ghali, a Coptic Christian from a Muslim country, was appointed Egypt's Deputy Prime Minister earlier this year after 14 years as Minister of State for Foreign Affairs.

His endorsement shortly by the 166-nation UN General Assembly is a foregone conclusion.

One of his first tasks will be to whip into shape an organisation chronically short of cash, long on bureaucracy and saddled with mounting worldwide responsibilities.

The end of the Cold War has lifted the threat of a nuclear holocaust and given the United Nations a chance to function as its founders intended.

But it also means picking up many of the pieces left over from the old order, as in Cambodia and Afghanistan, and dealing with problems spawned by newly-surfaced rivalries, as in Yugoslavia.

Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and its aftermath has also left the world body a mound of unfinished business that could take years to complete.

This includes preventing Baghdad from again acquiring weapons of mass destruction, overseeing the payment of war reparations and dealing with a continuing refugee problem.

A plan to end decades of bloodshed in Cambodia will soon involve the United Nations in one of the biggest peace-keeping operations in its history — virtually administering a country wracked by war and genocide and shepherding it through free elections.

Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar, now in Italy, telephoned his successor, Boutros Ghali, to offer congratulations and to discuss plans for the transition, a UN spokeswoman said on Friday.

The Secretary-General warmly welcomed the decision of the Security Council and expressed to Dr Ghali his full support and cooperation in the weeks to come, the UN spokeswoman said.

Israeli leaders expressed concern on Friday at the election of Egyptian Deputy Prime Minister Boutros Boutros Ghali as UN Secretary-General.

Israelis are concerned Ghali may use his position with the world body, now more influential than in the past, to force Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories.

The United States asserted on Friday that it was supportive of UN Dr Ghali throughout the selection process.

"We are extremely pleased that the United Nations Security Council will recommend Boutros Ghali to be the next Secretary-General of the United Nations. US State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler said.

Tutwiler said US Secretary of State James Baker knows Ghali well and sent him a message on Thursday offering congratulations and suggesting they meet as soon as possible.

# BRIEFLY

**Iran frees last Iraqi POWs :** Iran on Friday released 421 Iraqi prisoners from the 1980-1988 war between the two countries, saying they were the last group of Iraqi captives who wanted to return home, reports AFP from Tehran.

State-run television said the prisoners were handed over to Iraqi authorities at the border in the presence of a UN representative.

They were the last Iraqi prisoners to have said they wanted to be repatriated rather than freed in Iran, the television said.

In a dispute over the prisoners, Baghdad has said 30,000 POWs were still being held in Iran and denied Tehran's charges that 5,000 Iranian prisoners were left in Iraq.

Out of around 100,000 prisoners captured during the war — 70,000 Iraqis and 30,000 Iranians — around 80,000 POWs were released last year after Iraq's President Saddam Hussein accepted Iran's terms for peace settlement.

**Tanker blast toll rises to 62:** Police Saturday were investigating the cause of an explosion of an overturned tanker that killed 62 people, many of them villagers who rushed to the accident to scavenge spilled fuel, reports AP from Bombay.

Dozens more people were seriously burned in the accident Friday, said a police spokesman who cannot be identified under briefing rules.

Minutes after the tanker overturned Friday, spilling its contents, villagers rushed to the road with aluminium pots to collect the liquid that they thought was kerosene, police said.

Poor people in India often gather at accident sites to scoop up any goods that have spilled.

The explosion may have been caused by a lit cigarette, the spokesman said. A huge traffic jam had piled up on the highway behind the accident near Medwan, about 80 kilometers (50 miles) north of Bombay on the highway to Ahmedabad.

News reports said five slum colonies near the blast were reduced to ashes, and several cars were destroyed.

**10 die in Yemen quake :** Ten people were killed and 39 were injured when an earthquake measuring four on the Richter Scale hit the Al-Udayn region of central Yemen Friday, National Television said, reports AFP from Sanaa.

Relief teams were dispatched to help survivors, the report said.

In December 1982, an earthquake killed 2,800 people in the Dhamar region in the centre of what was then north Yemen.

**10 killed in Pak bus mishap :** Ten people were killed in Pakistan when a bus carrying a marriage party smashed into a stationary vehicle, the officials APP news agency said, reports Reuter from Islamabad.

At least 12 people were injured in the accident near Shorkot in Punjab province on Friday, the agency added.

In the northern town of Gilgit, five people died when a bus fell into a ravine.

**Crimea to hold referendum:** The Crimean parliament laid the groundwork Friday for secession from the Ukraine when lawmakers approved a measure enabling the Crimea to hold a referendum on its political future, reports AP from Simferopol.

The Crimea is an autonomous republic of 2.5 million people that juts from the southern Ukraine in the Black Sea.

Its parliament, which is dominated by former Communist Party members, voted 153-3, with 2 abstentions, to hold a referendum that would decide whether the Crimea should stay under Ukrainian jurisdiction, reunite with Russia or become independent. No date for the vote was set.

**Editor jailed in Peru:** A court has sentenced the editor of a pro-guerrilla newspaper to five years in prison for promoting terrorism, reports AP from Lima, Peru.

The sentence was the first of its kind since a 1988 decree outlawed pro-guerrilla propaganda in the news media.

Janet Talavera, acting editor of the biweekly El Diario, was found guilty late Thursday. In addition to the prison sentence, Ms Talavera was also fined \$2,000.

The editor, Luis Arce Borja, is wanted on the same charges. He left Peru for exile in Belgium in late 1988 and now acts as official spokesman in Europe for Abimel Guzman, the Shining Path's founder and leader.

**Indian embassies in Soviet republics :** India will establish full embassies in three Soviet republics outside Russia, a senior Foreign Ministry official said Saturday, reports AP from New Delhi.

Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao has invited Russian federation President Boris Yeltsin and the leaders of the Turkmen, Kazakh and Kirgiz republics for official visits to India, said Foreign Secretary Muchkund Dubey.

The decision to build direct relations with the republics followed a five-day visit last week by Foreign Minister Madhavsinh Solanki to Moscow.