

# NAM FMs meet begins today

LARNACA, Cyprus, Feb 2: Non-aligned foreign ministers meet in the Cypriot resort of Larnaca this week to chart a new role for their movement in a post-cold war world dominated by one superpower, reports Reuters.

The movement was founded in the 1950s at the height of the cold war between the United States and the Soviet Union as a grouping of mainly Third World countries not aligned to either superpower.

In the first such meeting since the Soviet Union collapsed, the foreign ministers meeting on Monday and Tuesday desperately need to carve out a new role for the movement, diplomats said.

"Let us not forget that 102 countries are members," Andreas Mavromatis, Cyprus's permanent representative to the United Nations, said in Nicosia last week. "So you can see how many billion people we are talking about."

Some 20 foreign ministers, including those from founder members Egypt and India and 150 delegates from 46 coun-

tries are expected in Larnaca, an official Cypriot statement said.

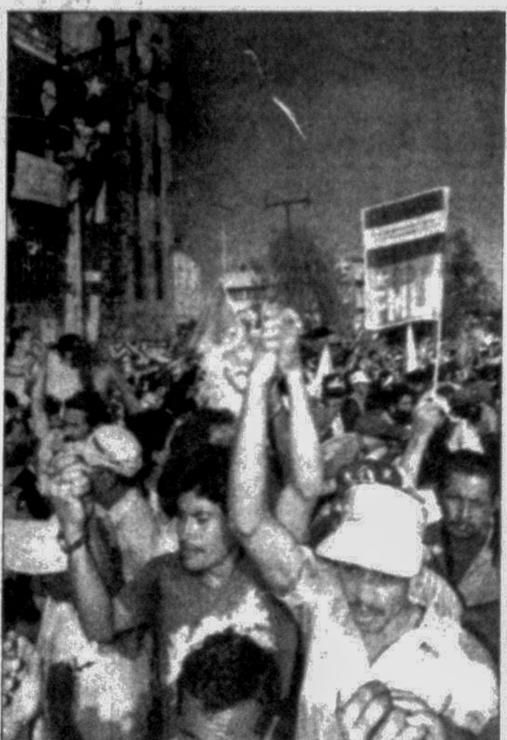
The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) failed to play an active part during the Gulf War and the break-up of the Soviet Union. It lacks strong leadership because of the civil war in Yugoslavia, the present chairman.

"Yugoslavia's chairmanship in my opinion lasted a few months, and then the internal disintegration of the country began, as a result of which it (NAM) did not have leadership", Mavromatis, a delegate at the talks in Larnaca, said.

"That is why it remained an observer in front of the developments".

Yugoslavia's top delegate in Larnaca will be assistant federal secretary of foreign affairs, Novak Pribicevic.

Yugoslavia hopes to play an active part in the NAM and insists the nation will continue to exist as an international identity until a peaceful solution is reached, a diplomat said.



SAN SALVADOR: Fabrundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) guerrillas and their supporters march in the central plaza February 1 celebrating the end of 12 years of civil war. The UN brokered ceasefire went into effect Saturday. — AFP photo

# Sino-Indian border talks by Feb likely

NEW YORK, Feb 2: Indian Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao and Chinese Prime Minister Li Peng met here yesterday and agreed to give political directives at the higher level, if necessary, to resolve the boundary dispute when the joint working group meets, towards February-end or early March in New Delhi, reports PTI.

The two prime ministers agreed that peace and tranquillity on the line of actual control should be maintained, a spokesman for Rao told journalists.

Rao and Li shared the assessment that there were similarities of views between China and India on issues discussed Friday at the Security Council meeting, the spokesman said.

He said the meeting lasted about half an hour. The two prime ministers exchanged views on bilateral relations.

Li told Rao that his visit to New Delhi in December was assessed in very positive terms in China. Rao said it was seen similarly in New Delhi. Both sides agreed that high-level talks between the two countries should continue.

Xinhua reports from United Nations: A joint work team on Sino-Indian borders will soon hold meetings in New Delhi and frontier personnel of both sides have started to meet regularly in order to guarantee

peace and tranquillity on the borders. Indian President Ramaswami Venkataraman will visit China in the first half of this year on invitation.

Present at the meeting were state councillor and Foreign Minister Qian Qichen and Vice Foreign Minister Liu Huaqing.

The talks proceeded with a friendly atmosphere.

# Republicans deserting Bush?

MANCHESTER, Feb 2: A new poll released on Saturday shows Republicans steadily deserting President George Bush in New Hampshire though not now willing to say they will vote for his right-wing challenger, Pat Buchanan, reports Reuters.

The poll shows Bush's support slipping over the past few days to 52 per cent among new Hampshire Republican voters from a high of 61 per cent on January 25.

At the same time, the proportion of undecided Republican voters rose to 29 per cent from 23 per cent, while Buchanan's support edged up slightly to 19 per cent from 17 per cent.

# 746 to contest Punjab polls

NEW DELHI, Feb 2: Some 746 people have registered to run in elections in Punjab scheduled for February 19 under the shadow of a boycott by all major Sikh political parties, officials said quoting an incomplete count Saturday, reports AFP.

Some 105 politicians have filed nominations for the northern Indian state's 13 federal seats while others are in the running for the 117 seat provincial legislature, they said.

A majority of the candidates are backed by India's centre, right and left political parties, but some are unattached independents.

PTI said the figure was incomplete as officials in state capital of Chandigarh had not received full details of nominations from Amritsar, a stronghold of the Sikh militants.

# Sally Mugabe buried

HARARE, Feb 2: About 100,000 people attended a grand burial yesterday at the national heroes' acre for Sally Mugabe, wife of Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe, reports Xinhua.

Sally Mugabe, who died on Monday after years of sufferings from a kidney illness, was the first woman to be buried at the national shrine for her contributions to the liberation struggle of the country and the cause of children's welfare.

It is unclear also whether the vast majority of Pakistan based parties including the Muslim conference which wants Kashmir's accession to Pakistan will accept the JKLF umbrella for the March.

The parties have supported the move because rejecting it could damage their following among the Kashmiri population, which overwhelmingly wants to see the end of the status quo, analysts said.

# Kashmiri political parties plan to cross truce line

ISLAMABAD, Feb 2: At least 17 Kashmiri political parties expressed support for a militant group's plan to cross the ceasefire line dividing the northern state between India and Pakistan, a JKLF spokesman yesterday said, reports AFP.

The Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), which claims links with militants waging a two-year old separatist campaign in the Indian controlled Kashmir, in January vowed its members would dismantle the line to highlight the Muslim cause.

The parties reached 'consensus' on the issue in a meeting here as no genuine Kashmiri has ever accepted the line, delineating the state's division since 1748, the JKLF spokesman said.

He said the participants at the meeting called it a right decision in the right direction which must be upheld at all costs.

The JKLF has fixed February 11 for crossing the border. The date coincides the eighth anniversary of the death of the freedom movement's founder Maqbool Ditta, who was hanged in New Delhi in 1784 for alleged treason.

An undisclosed number of activists plan to cross the line at the Chakoti Post, in defiance of an official ban on such an action.

Indian and Pakistan have fought two of their three wars over Kashmir, and troops guard on the border still.

**Haryana CM's APS shot dead**

CHANDIGARH, Feb 2: Militants Saturday shot dead M L Verma, Additional Principal Secretary to the Haryana Chief Minister, Bhajan Lal, his wife, his two sons, his gunman and the driver near his home village Lalkari Kalan, Ambala, district of Haryana, reports PTI.

Three militants, including an area commander of the Khalistan Liberation Force, Baldev Singh Batt, alias Lakhbir Singh Batt were among the six persons killed in Punjab since Friday night.

The Punjab militants ambushed Verma's car near his village and fired indiscriminately with their automatic weapons killing Verma (41), his wife Preeti Verma (38), their two sons Gaurav (12), and Saurav (10), gunman Rajveer and the driver Rajinder.

# Tigers kill 7 Lankan soldiers

Tamil Tiger guerrillas ambushed an army patrol in north-eastern Sri Lanka, killing seven soldiers and drawing heavy fire from security forces, a military spokesman said Sunday, reports AFP from Colombo.

A "heavy concentration" of gunmen from the dominant Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) ambushed the troops near their forward defence lines in Mannar district Saturday triggering a heavy firefight, the spokesman said.

"We lost seven soldiers and our men saw the terrorists carrying away their dead and wounded," he said, adding air-force planes and heavy artillery were used to neutralise the attack.

# Dozens die in Azerbaijan clash

Dozens of people have been killed in one of the worst outbreaks of fighting in an age-old territorial dispute between Azerbaijan and Armenia, reports from both sides said, Reuters reports from Azerbaijan.

Gunmen from the warring communities have battled in the snowy mountain enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh for over a week with automatic weapons.

Rockets and artillery shells have rained down on villages of both sides, killing women and children.

An Azerbaijan Interior Ministry spokesman said four Azeris and dozens of Armenians had been killed in the past few days. "My be 60 killed, may be 70, we don't know precisely," he said.

An Azeri News Agency put the figure at 100.

But a military leader for the enclaves Armenian majority put the death toll at some 30 Azeris and four Armenians.

# Rally in support of independence

More than 10,000 people demonstrated Saturday in the ancient capital of Montenegro, Cetinje, to back calls for the republic to declare independence and seek international recognition, Tangjug News Agency said, AFP reports from Belgrade.

Ten opposition parties organized the rally in the small southern republic where the government, an ally of Serbia, is opposed to independence.

Montenegro is ruled by former communists, now known as socialists.

Demonstrators criticised the "ambiguous" wording of a referendum on independence, drafted by the local parliament.

# Iran to celebrate Revolution

Iran launched anniversary celebrations for its Islamic Revolution on Saturday with Ahmad Khomeini echoing his father's attacks on the "arrogance" of the United States, Reuters reports from Nicosia.

Thousands of people marched to Behesht-e-Zahra cemetery south of Tehran for ceremonies at the tomb of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the official news agency IRNA reported.

Khomeini's return from exile in France on February 1, 1979, is commemorated as the start of a "ten day dawn" that toppled the Iranian monarchy. The stern fundamentalist scholar dominated the nation's life until his death in 1989.

Ahmad Khomeini told them the "new world order" sought by the United States meant American Domination.

All Moslems should oppose it and Iranians could do so best by following Khomeini's successor, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, he said.

# Pindi denies link with Israel

ISLAMABAD, Feb 2: Pakistan has denied any communication had been exchanged with Israel about forging relations and said it will have no diplomatic ties with that country, reports Xinhua.

A spokesman of Foreign Office was quoted by official news agency APP as saying on Saturday, "there is no change in Pakistan's position towards Israel. We are not considering any proposal to establish diplomatic ties with Tel Aviv. Islamabad continues to support the Palestinians and their cause."

The spokesman's statement came in the wake of a statement by Pakistan Ambassador to Washington Syed Abida Hussain which appeared in local press on Saturday and indicated such ties were possible.

The spokesman dismissed the report that Islamabad and Tel Aviv have been exchanging 'communications' about forging relations as "baseless and misleading".

Meanwhile, responding to the statement of Abida Hussain, former Prime Minister and opposition leader Benazir Bhutto said Saturday evening at Islamabad Airport that unless and until the issue of Palestine is resolved and Israel vacates the occupied territories, any kind of rela-

tions, direct or indirect, between Islamabad and Tel Aviv would be against the interest of the nation, the Muslim world and peace in the Middle East.

She warned any individual move in this regard by Pakistan can harm its relations with the Arab world.

She proposed a joint stand of Pakistan and the Arab world on relations with Israel.

# Pakistan to set up ties with Kazakhstan

ISLAMABAD, Feb 2: Pakistan and Kazakhstan, a central Asian republic, have decided to establish diplomatic relations immediately and agreed to sign five agreements for expansion of trade, economic, cultural and technical cooperation, reports Xinhua.

This was reached between Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev on Saturday during their talks at Davos, Switzerland, where they went in connection with a world economic forum meeting, official news agency APP reported.

CAMP DAVID, Feb 2: US President George Bush and Russian President Boris Yeltsin on Saturday agreed to an exchange of summits this year in talks they said began a new, friendly era in US-Russian relations, reports Reuters.

In a three-hour mini-summit at the president's retreat near Washington, Bush and Yeltsin pledged to work to further cut their countries' nuclear stockpiles but made no specific agreements.

Bush was non-committal on Yeltsin's proposal to develop a joint missile defence programme, saying it was worth talking about in more detail.

"Russia and the United States are charting a new relationship and it's based on trust, based on a commitment

to economic and political freedom. It's based on a strong hope for true partnership", Bush said at a news conference with Yeltsin in a helicopter hanger at Camp David.

Said Yeltsin: "From now on, we do not consider ourselves to be potential enemies, as it had been previously in our military doctrine, this is the historic value of this meeting."

It was the first substantive talks between Bush and Yeltsin since the Russian leader replaced Mikhail Gorbachev on the death of the Soviet Union. At times senior US officials have expressed scepticism about him but Bush said he was convinced Yeltsin was committed to democratic reform.

Yeltsin exuded power and confidence and the two lead-

ers appeared to have gotten along well, calling each other "George" and "Boris".

"In the future there will be full frankness, full openness, full honesty in our relationship," said Yeltsin. "And we, both of us, value that very, very much."

Yeltsin spoke bluntly of the dangers of the economic collapse of his country. He praised the United States for its planned February 10 airlift of humanitarian aid but said global cooperation is needed to help a democratic Russia survive.

"I didn't come here just to stretch out my hand and ask for help," he said. "We're calling for cooperation from the whole world, because if Russia goes under, that means there

will be a cold war, and the cold war could turn into a hot war."

"There could again be an arms race. Again, this would be the same regime that we have just recently rid ourselves of. We cannot allow this to happen," he said.

Bush said Yeltsin would come to Washington in the first half of this year for a summit and US officials said it was likely between April and July.

Bush himself will then go to Moscow by the end of the year. No date was given, but Bush will be campaigning for re-election until the November 3 polls.

Bush saluted Yeltsin's proposals to cut nuclear missiles and for joint development of a missile defence programme.

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But he said "We reached no decisions on these matters. We reached no conclusions. We felt it was worth discussing in much more detail."

He said more detailed talks on arms control would be held in Moscow when Secretary of State James Baker goes there later this month.

Yeltsin said he and Bush talked about reducing strategic and tactical nuclear arsenals down to 2,500 warheads for either side, as well as ensuring that nuclear weapons from the former Soviet Union and the scientists who made them do not go to renegade nations.

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to about 60 per cent of current levels and for the first time expressed a willingness to reduce US submarine missiles.

Yeltsin countered with calls for substantially deeper cuts in nuclear missiles. However, he does not control all the former Soviet missiles, which are spread among other newly independent states as well.

The two leaders distributed a six-point declaration that laid the groundwork for future US-Russian relations.

It said, "That we will work to remove any remnants of cold war hostility, including taking steps to reduce our strategic arsenal."

Yeltsin later flew by helicopter to Washington to meet some members of Congress.



President Bush points to a pair of Texas cowboy boots he gave to Russian President Boris Yeltsin (L) on his 61st birthday February 1 while the US Ambassador to Russia Robert Strauss (R) looks on. The boots are decorated with metal plates representing the maps and flags of the US and Russia. — AFP photo

# Bush presents Yeltsin with cowboy boots

CAMP DAVID, Maryland, Feb 2: Russian President Boris Yeltsin celebrated his 61st birthday yesterday and his new friend, President George Bush, gave him a special pair of Texas cowboy boots to mark the occasion, reports AFP.

The Russian President began a summit meeting here with Bush by blowing out the single candle atop a birthday cake served after breakfast at the presidential retreat in the hills of Western Maryland.

Bush presented Yeltsin with cowboy boots decorated with metal plates representing the maps and flags of the United States and Russia. They were made by Bush's personal shoemaker, Rocky Carroll of Houston, Texas.

But Yeltsin said 'the best present' was just meeting with Bush and working to improve the ties between their countries.

# Off the Record

## Award Winner charged with nudity

KEY BISCAJNE, Florida: Award-winning playwright Edward Albee was charged with indecent exposure after two police officers said they spotted him sitting naked on a beach frequented by nude sunbathers, reports AP.

Albee, 63, was sitting alone on the secluded, narrow beach, which is surrounded by mangrove woods and technically off-limits to the public, according to the January 19 report by Metro-Dade Police.

Albee, who won a Tony Award for "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" and two Pulitzer Prizes for other plays, was charged with exposure of sexual organs, a misdemeanor punishable by up to a year in jail and \$1,000 dollar, police said.

He was released after promising to appear in court. Sgt James Lockard said Friday. His appearance hasn't been scheduled, a court clerk said.



TIRANA: 18-year-old Valbona Selimllari holds a bouquet after she was elected 'Miss Albania' January 31. It was the first time a beauty contest held in Albania. — AFP photo

## Silva climbs 45730 steps in 10 hours

ATLANTA: When Steve Silva weighed 427 pounds (193 kilos), his doctor warned him about the health risks of being overweight. So Silva slimmed down and toned up...and set a world record for stair climbing, reports AP.

Silva, 44, now weighs 200 pounds (91 kilos). He climbed 45,730 steps in 10 hours Tuesday at the Westin Peachtree Plaza hotel, breaking the record for a 10-hour stair climb of 41,750 steps.

Guinness Book of Records officials required Silva to take the elevator from the 72nd floor back to his ninth-floor starting point so that he climbed only upward.

## It was just great pleasure for Mrs Yeltsin

NEW YORK: While her husband made his debut at the United Nations, Naina Yeltsin took in Broadway, with house seats at the quintessential American musical "The Will Rogers Follies," reports AP.

The Russian president's wife looked a bit bewildered at the start of the show Friday night. It features long-legged showgirls in bodysuits flecked with cow spots, a few bare breasts, a dog act and a lot of lariat.

An interpreter sat behind her, translating every line, lyric and joke.

Keith Carradine, who stars in the Tony Award-winning show as "America's best-loved humorist," may or may not have endeared himself to Mrs Yeltsin when he told a few jokes involving Russians.

"The Russians don't have income tax," he said. "Of course, until recently they didn't have any income either."

Mrs Yeltsin laughed out loud when Carradine stumbled twice during a lariat trick. She went onstage after the show.

"It was just delightful," she said. "I loved the music and the costumes."

Carradine gave her roses and a cowboy hat.

## World's fastest window cleaner

SAN ANTONIO: Keith Witt wiped away the world window washing record, leaving three panes squeaky clean in just 10.13 seconds, reports AP.

He was the fastest of 60 contestants in the International Window Cleaning Association's speed-cleaning contest, which ended Friday at a San Antonio hotel. There were two events: a speed race to clean three house-size windows and a medley race to clean nine windows.

He said he was hoping for a time of 9.25 seconds.

"I knew I could do better than that, but I'm satisfied. It's a world's record," Witt said.

# New era in US-Russian relations begins

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