Excise minister of Orissa resigns

BHUBANESWAR, May 9: Prasanna Kumar Acharya, Orissa's Minister for Excise today resigned from the council of ministers owing "moral responsibility" for the un precedented liquur tragedy at Cuttack, according to official sources, reports PTI.

The sources said that Acharya met the Chief Minister, Biju Patnaik, this morning and tendered his resignation.

The Chief Minister, however, had refused to accept the resignation, the sources said.

AFP adds: At least 113 people, mostly slum-dwellers, have died after consuming spurtous liquor laced with deadly methyl alcohol in the eastern Indian state of Orissa. newspapers reported today.

Almost 110 people died in Cuttack city and three others in neighbouring Bhubaneswar since late Thursday in the worst liquor tragedy in coastal Orissa, the Indian Express and other dailies said.

The Patriot newspaper said Cuttack's main hospital had virtually turned into a morgue. Najibullah will be put on trial ISLAMABAD, May 9: Afghan cided to make Islamic legislations, he said, adding that no President designate Burhanudin Rabbani has said that law or any part of the state the deposed President Najibuconstitution would be made llah would be questioned for against the injunctions of the

his past deeds and would be

put on trial before an Islamic

court to be set up soon,

Post, a local newspaper, Satur-

their past since they had been

granted general amnesty by

Islamic court would deal with

those who have been kidnap

ping the men, women and

children and torturing them

during last 14 years and also

those disturbing the lives of

peace and challenging the au-

thority of the new Islamic gov-

His agovernment had de-

Rabbani said that the

the new administration.

reports Xinhua.

of the last prophet. He advised the women to observe the Islamic hijab (veil) According to The Frontier but warned that no one had the right to touch any woman day, Rabbani denied the in case she was not observing former colleagues of Najibullah would be tried by any court for

Holy Quran and the traditions

On the role of women in Afghanistan, he said. Women are free to accept all kinds of legal and legitimate jobs. They can also run business of their choice but it must be in accordance with morality.

AP adds: Fresh rifts have appeared among members of the Islamic interim govern ment as a ceasefire with a the people, destroying the renegade rebel leader who has promised to destroy the city was to expire Saturday.

The interim government of former rebels remains divided

by the personal rivalries and ambitions that kept them from forming a united front



Najibullah

throughout the 14-year war against the Soviet-installed government.

The three-day ceasefire agreement between the gov-

ernment and rebel leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar halted Hekmatyar's rocket attacks while the leaders tried to work out their differences and bring Hekmatyar's Hezb-e-Islami group into the government.

Negotiators said earlier this week that the talks had not been progressing rapidly and expressed doubts that any permanent settlement could be reached.

Hekmatyar has threatened to destroy, the ofty unless interim President Sibghatullah Mojaddedi is removed, elections are held quickly and militiamen from northern Afghanistan are sent home.

Before the ceasefire was reached, his forces bombarded this city of 1.5 million with rockets, killing at least 73 people and wounding nearly 400 in two days.

In a brief statement Friday, Abdul Rasool Sayyaf criticised Motaddedt for including some

army generals and senior security officers in his administration who had once served under Natibullah.

The generals and security officers switched sides this year and helped topple Soviet backed President Najibullah.

Sayyaf is the leader of the Islamic Unity Party, a small but ultra-orthodox rebel group that was largely funded by Saudi Arabta and other wealthy Arabs. He wants to establish a strict theocratic state in Afghanistan.

The army generals were included at the request of Defense Minister Ahmed Shah Masood, the rebel commander whose string of military victories last month hastened the former regime's demise.

"All members of the government should be Muslims, especially security and armed forces," said Sayyaf's spokesman. Walf Wullah Saleem.

The religion of the generals and officers in question was

not immediately known. Asked if Sayyaf would pull out of the interim government if the generals remained, Saleem said: "We will not leave the government. We are making a statement to let the gov-

ernment know these people are not acceptable to us." "If they refuse to adhere, we will respond with further actions," he said, without elabo-

Other differences have also appeared since the rebels took power following Najibullah's

Mojaddedi suggested last week that the interim government's term should be extended from the original two months to two years, but that idea was immediately rejected by the other leaders.

Mojaddedi is scheduled to hand over power to Burha nuddin Rabbani, the leader of the powerful Jamiat-e-Islami Party, in about six weeks.

Two soldiers shot dead in Quetta

QUETTA, May 9: Gunmen killed two paramilitary soldiers in curiew-bound Quetta, scene of ethnic and political tensions between Pashtuns and Baluchs near the Afghan border, military authorities said, reports

The soldiers were killed yesterday while they were conducting a routine patrol to enforce a round-the-clock curfew, the authorities said, adding that the curfew would be relaxed between 8.00 am and 11.00 am (0300 and 0600 GMT) Saturday

A civilian who tried to flee paramilitary officers seeking to detain him for violating the curfew was wounded when they opened fire on him, and he was hospitalised, they said.

Several other people were detained for curfew violations, police said.

The city, the capital of Baluchistan province bordering Afghanistan, remained tense Saturday in the Pashtundominated northern areas and the Baluch-dominated south, residents said.

Cannes Film Festival begins: The 45th Cannes Film Festival opened in Cannes, a coastal city in

southern France, Xinhua reports from Paris.

A total of 21 films from 13 countries will compete for the golden palm, the highest prize of the festival. These include six from the United States, three from France, two from Britain and Russia, and one each from Italy, Spain, New Zealand, Argentina, Chile, Senegal and other countries.

The result of the festival will be announced on May 18.

Over 200 held in Algerian riot: one person was killed, eight injured and more than 200 arrested in unrest Friday before and after weekly prayers in Muslim fundamentalists strongholds, according to police and the state-run media, AP reports from Algiers.

Police reported one death and 209 arrests in the western city of Tlemcen before the prayer session, but gave no details. The state-run APS news agency said police used tear gas to disperse fundamentalists gathered for an anti-government

protests. In Algiers, the state radio said six people were wounded by police gunfire as officers pursued Muslim fugitives. Many activities of the banned Islamic Salvation Front, the main fundamentalist party, are wanted by the police and have gone underground.

The radio said three people were arrested after weekly prayers at Algiers' Omar Ibn Abdel Aziz Mosque, but gave no details.

221 more freed in Myanmar: Myanmar's military government Friday freed another 221 prisoners convicted of criminal offenses under an amnesty announced two days earlier, official Radio Rangoon reported,

AFP says from Bangkok. It said those freed had previously helped the military per-

form national defence services. The broadcast, monitored in Bangkok, gave no other de-

The radio reported the release of 259 prisoners Wednesday when it announced the amnesty.

Sunday is mother's day in US:

President Bush on Friday issued a proclamation in honour of Mother's Day "in grateful recognition of the contribution that mothers everywhere make to their families and to the nation," AP reports from Los Angeles.

Mother's day is Sunday.

"I urge all Americans to express their love and respect for their mothers on this day, to reflect on the importance of motherhood to our families and our nation, and to ask for God's blessing upon each," Bush said.

He directed federal agencies to fly the US flag on federal buildings.

One shot dead in Nagaland: Separatist tribal rebels shot dead four policemen in India's northeastern Nagaland state on Friday, police said, Reuter reports from India.

They said about a dozen Naga rebels attacked a market in Mokukchung district, 200 KM (125 miles) from the state capital Kohima, and shot the policemen. It was the first major rebel attacked since Delhi brought

Nagaland under direct rule last month after the state government dissolved its parliament to hold fresh elections. Tribal separatists are fighting for an independent Naga-

land. Civil liberates groups have accused Indian troops of human rights violations in Nagaland, a charge India denies.

14 killed in Punjab violence: Fourteen persons, including five militants, were killed and seven suspected militants arrested in Punjab since Friday

night, police said, PII reports from Chandigarh. A couple, Bhola Singh and Gurdev Kaur, were shot dead in village Dhilwan in Sangrur district.

The wife of the village Chowkidar, Bhagwan Kaur, and one Kala Singh were kidnapped from their houses in village Attar Singhwala in the same district and shot dead.

In a similar incident in the district militants abducted Gurmail Singh and woman, Mukhtiar Kaur, from their houses in village Mehalkalan and gunned them down.

Tajik president still in hiding They were dispersed by

Fresh rift in Afghan govt as ceasefire expires

MOSCOW, May 9: Tajik President Rakhmon Nabiyev Friday promised in a radio broadcast to work with the opposition, but he remained in hiding as opposition demonstrators sought to arrest him. reports AFP.

Nabtyev, who was last seen in public Thursday, said he still opposed using force against the people and wanted to create a secular and democratic republic in his central Asian republic.

interfax news agency said demonstrators headed for the Interior Ministry and the National Security Committee to look for Nabiyev shortly af ter the broadcast. Polls a judgement of Cory's tenure

MANILA, May 9: In the

largest election in Philippine

history, voters will be passing

judgement on President Cor-

azon Aguino even though the

woman once hailed as a savi-

our of democracy will not be

may choose a candidate closely

allied with the late President

Ferdinand Marcos, who was

ousted in the 1986 'people

power revolution" that in-

The seven presidential asp-

frants include Marcos wi-dow,

Imelda, and businessman

Eduardo 'Danding Con-juan-

gco, Mrs Aquino's estranged

cousin but one of Marcos' chief

Mrs Marcos is given little

allies during his 20 -year rule

chance despite an ardent fol-

lowing. But polls show Coju-

stalled Mrs Aquino in office.

Polls show voters Monday

on the ballot, reports AP.

special Interior Ministry forces firing shots into the air from armoured vehicles. Reuter adds: The United

States said on Friday it was hopeful of forging good relations with the new government of the former Soviet Central Asian Republic of Tajikistan. "We are hopeful that we can

continue good relations with the new government on the basis of the five principles enunciated by Secretary of State James Baker... which Tajikistan pledged to implement," said State Department Spokeswoman Margaret Tut-

angeo gaining strength and

choice, former Defence Sec-

retary Fidel Ramos, House

Speaker Ramon Mitra and

former judge Miriam Defensor

Laurel and Sen. Jovto Salonga

new Congress and more than

17,000 other positions from

more than 87,700 candidates.

It is the first time so many

electoral positions have been

If such a complicated elec-

tion proceeds without serious

violence or fraud, it will be a

tribute to the democratic sys-

tem which Mrs Aquino re

established and defended aga

decided in a single balloting.

Vice President Salvador

Voters must also choose a

other candidates.

are faring poorly.

Santiago.

locked in tight race with three

They are Mrs Aquino's

The five principles are peaceful self-determination, respect for existing borders. adherence to democracy, re spect for human rights and the rights of minorities and respect for international agree-

Tutwiler said US diplomats in Tajikistan had been in touch both with the government and opposition. Washington regret ted the loss of life in the unrest that swept the country this week but was encouraged it was not worse.

Tajik President Rakhmon Nabiyev's conservative gov ernment collapsed on Thurs day in unrest that killed between 25 and 30 people.

inst seven coup attempts and

Muslim and Marxist insur-

But the winner in the pres-

idential contest will probably

lack a convincing mandate to

govern. There is no runoff and

with seven candidates, the

Commission on Elections es

timates the winner will prob-

ably take no more than 25 per

confused as the legacy Mrs

Aquino will leave behind when

she turns over power to her

Marcos or Cojuangco would be

a clear rebuke to Mrs Aquino.

Both candidates fled the coun-

try aboard the same plane

which took the ousted presi-

dent into exile in Hawaii in

A victory by either Mrs

successor June 30.

The outcome could be as

gencies.

Nabtyev, who was elected in November and apparently still considers himself president, offered his condolences to the victims of the violence, which erupted on Tuesday after several weeks of anti-government demonstrations.

He told local television on Friday he was prepared to work with opposition leaders to form a coalition govern-

Nabtyev's message was recorded at the former head quarters of the KGB security police where he has been hid ing for the past two days, protected by loyal paramilitary po-

Shah's brother arrested for possessing drug

LOS ANGELES, May 9: The brother of the late Shah of Iran was arrested on Friday at his two million dollars Beverly hills mansion on charges of possessing optum for sale and for personal use, authorities said, reports Reuter.

US drug enforcement administration spokesman Ralph Lockridge said Mamoud Reza Pahlavi, whom he identified as the brother of the late Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, was taken into custody during a raid on his home by police and drug agents.

Pahlavi, 65, was being held at a jail in Santa Monica while awaiting arrangement.

dance floor "She was laughting almost non stop. She was ecstatic Newspapers said that after the divorce of Anne and captain Mark Phillips two weeks ago. Queen Elizabeth had given her blessing to a love

Reuter

vear-old

which her only daughter had to keep secret for six years.

Newspapers splashed

bachelor

pictures of Anne. 41

tripping a Scottish reel at the

royal Caledonian ball with 37

commander Tim Laurence,

her former equerry. "Anne

gets her man, said today's

headline. Anne was "Starry

eyed," the Sun reported "So

in love" gushed the Daily

present at Friday's night

charity ball Laurence.

whirled Anne round the

According to one guest

McLean crowned as

Off the Record

'Starry-eyed Anne

gets her man'

handsome navy frigate commander just two weeks after get-

ting a divorce. British tabloids reported yesterday, says

LONDON: Princess Aprile has danced the night away with a

Miss Universe

BANGKOK: Miss Namibia , 19-year-old model Michelle, McLean, was crowned Miss Universe here Saturday in a glittering pageant overshadowed by huge anti-government demonstrations on the streets of Bangkok

Miss Colombia, 21-year-old student Paola Turbya, was runner-up and in third place was Miss India, 20-year-old model Madhushri Sapre.

McLean, a brunette, takes home cash and prizes worth over 250,000 dollars. She was crowned by the outgoing Miss Universe, Lupita Jones of Mexico.

Meeting the press afterwards, she immediately fended off question on the political unrest in Thailand an on why a white woman was representing the mainly -black African nation of

Magical love brings unholy end for bishop

DUBLIN: An American woman revealed Friday that she had a baby by Eamon Casey, the Irish Roman Catholic bishop of Galway, 65, who resigned Thursday citing, 'personal reasons,' reports AFP.

Annie Murphy, 44, living in ridgefield connecticut, told Irish radio that she fell in 'magical' love with the bishop' the moment I laid eyes on him when they met in Ireland 20 years ago. They'er child, Peter, is now 17.

The affair has come at an embarrassing moment for the Catholic church in Ireland, which is seeking to uphold con-

servative morality in the Irish republic. It is in particular trying to maintain a total ban on abortion in Ireland, where debate is raging in the wake of a Supreme Court decision on the case of a 14-year-old pregnant rape

victim, making abortion legal in limited cases. To have fried,

NEW DELHI: A monkey fell Friday into a huge frying pot and splashed hot oil, injuring seven people at a community Kitchen in a holy Hindu town, a news agency reported. The sprightly monkey jumped out of the pot and fled, United News of India said, reports AP.

becomes fried

It said several monkeys tried to steal 'puris' or fried bread being made in the vessel in an open ground. One of them fell while being shooed by the cooks, splashing oil on five women and two men.

The men sustained 15 per cent burns and the women were given first aid, UNI said.

8 Palestinians go on trial in Athens

ATHENS, May 9: Eight Palestinians went on trial in Athens on Friday on murder charges arising from a bomb biast last year intended for the British consulate in the Greek port of Patras, reports Reuter.

The 12-kg (25-LB) somb wrecked the offices of a private Courier Company in April 1991, killing four employees. two customers and a Palestinian believed by police to have been carrying the device.

Police said the intended target was the British consulate nearby. After failing to plant the time-bomb there, the man apparently tried to dismantle it and blew himself up.

The eight, all students at Greek Universities, face life imprisonment if convicted of murder.

Shusha falls to Armenian forces MOSCOW, May 9: Armenian ncy, also based in Armenia

forces early today took control of the town of Shusha, the last Azeri stronghold in the disputed enclave of Nagorny Karabakh, an Azeri official said, reports Reuter,

"The town of Shusha changed hands several times during the night, but finally, in the face of over whelming force, Azeris had to relinquish control" Farkhad Mekhtiyev. adviser to the Press Secretary of the President of Azerbaijan, told Reuters by telephone from the Azeri capital Aku. The Nagorny-Karabakh Def-

ence Council had said Shusha, the scene of fierce street fighting on Friday, was being used as the base for rocket attacks on Stepanakert, capital of the mountainous district. The pro-Armenia news

agency said 10 Armenian figh-

ters were killed on Friday and

early today. Snark news age

said Shusha fell to Armenian self-defence forces at 3 a m. More than 1,500 people have been killed in the past

four years in the region, populated largely by Armenians but administered by Azerbaijan since 1923. Mekhtiyev said Armenian

forces also launched an attack on the Azeri town of Lachin. located in narrow corridor of Azerbaijan separating Nagorny-Karabakh from Armenia. The key to the future of the town would be whether the

Azeri leadership could organise a strong defence of the region, he said. "We have enough forces, but the internal situation in Azer-

baijan is complicated at the moment. If we can get or ganised and fortify the region then we could hold out for

AZERBAIJAN: Two Azeri fighters inspect the remains of a destroyed house in the small town of Fizuli, Nagorny - Karabakh on May 7. - AFP/UNB photo

NATO may offer military expertise to CSCE in Oslo meet military expertise and give NATO a valuable new monitors sent by the European Community to

BRUSSELS, May 9: NATO could decide within the next few weeks to take on a new peacekeeping role in Europe, offering its military expertise and perhaps even troops for operations beyond its borders, an alliance official said on

Friday, reports Reuter. The official, who asked not to be identified, told reporters a decision could be taken at a meeting of North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) Foreign Ministers in Oslo on June 4.

and the threat of new conflicts breaking out in an increasingly fragmented post cold war Europe have given impetus to the idea, which would marked a major change in NATO policy. But the question of whether the Western alliance should widen its role beyond the defence

details have yet to be worked out. discussed in Oslo, perhaps with some decision

there," the official said. He made clear that NATO could get involved with supplies, transport and troops only for peace-keeping operations. No nation has suggested the alliance should become involved in fighting to keep the peace outside its borders.

There is no intention of the alliance serving as Eur-ope's policeman," the official said. The Netherlands, backed by the United States, Britain and several other allies has sug-

gested putting NATO assets at the disposal of

some time" he said.

the 52-nation Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). The CSCE, a forum for discussing security issues which links all European nations, the United States and Canada, has no armed forces

The fighting in Yugoslavia, Nagorno-Karabakh of its own and no power to enforce decisions. NATO, set up in 1949 to face a Soviet threat that has now collapsed, has the benefit of an integrated military structure - and is also trying to disarm critics who say it no longer has a mafor role to play.

Alliance ambassadors have been discussing of its 16-member is highly sensitive and key the idea in recent days behind closed doors. The official said there was no agreement yet to go "It is my understanding that (this) will be ahead with the idea, but added: "At this stage, nobody completely excludes some kind of involvement. A decision in Oslo would be neatly timed for a

summit of CSCE member states scheduled for Helsinki one month later. The Dutch and others really want to push this through, so that we can give the CSCE some

mission - and it could all be sanctioned at the Yugoslavia have already been killed. Helsinki summit," said one alliance diplomat.

of NATO, argues that the alliance must agree to was clearly the strongest opponent of the plan. drop current limitations that prevent it from operating outside its territory. once enemies -including Hungary, Czecho-slo-

vakia and Poland - also want NATO to play a big-

ger role. They are disappointed that the alliance missions. has refused to offer them membership or security guarantees. been hard-pressed to mount costly peace-keep- "blue helmets"

ing operations in Yugoslavia and Cambodia. Dutch Foreign Minister Hans Van Den Broek has said such operations rarely require more than 15,000 troops, which would not undermine NATO's main mission, the defence of its members.

committing troops, even as peace-keepers, to far-flung countries under the NATO flag. Several is no consensus at the moment.

France has said it does not oppose the idea The United States, anxious to maintain its in- in principle, but NATO diplomats said Paris had fluence in Europe through continued leadership so many detailed objections to the idea that it

Paris, which would prefer to develop European institutions and does not want to see Many Eastern European nations that were NATO's role extended, has suggested that the alliance's founding treaty might have to be renegotiated to allow such peace-keeping

France would prefer to give the CSCE a stronger legal framework, including a formal Washington and its supporters say NATO "security treaty" among its members. Germany could, in this way, take some of the financial backs this and would like to see the CSCE have burden from the United Nations, which has its own peace-keeping forces, like the UN's

> France is also concerned that such a role for NATO could undermine plans to create a more independent European defence role under the auspices of the Western European Union (WEU).

"There are expectations that NATO should be doing more," the officials said. "But we need the But some allies are nervous at the idea of consensus of all 16 nations. There is a need to take into account everybody's concerns ... there

Koreas' nuclear inspection by mid-June

SEOUL, May 9: Rivals South and North Korea have agreed in principle to conduct their first mutual nuclear inspections by mid-June, the prime minister's office said Saturday, reports AP.

An aide to Prime Minister Chung Won-shik confirmed reports that the agreement for inspections was reached during talks between the prime ministers of North and South Korea which ended Friday.

Nuclear matters have been the most divisive issue between the two longtime rivals. South Korea fears North Korea is developing nuclear weapons, although North Korea has denied it.

"South and North Korea have agreed in principle to conduct mutual nuclear inspections in mid-June.