

**Move to achieve non-racial democracy in South Africa**

JOHANNESBURG, Aug 22: Senior negotiators from the South African government and African National Congress met on Friday in a bid to revive talks on achieving non-racial democracy, an ANC spokesman said, reports Reuter.

Spokeswoman Gill Marcus said ANC Secretary General Cyril Ramaphosa and Constitutional Development Minister Ruel F Meyer met at a secret venue.

"I can give no details of the outcome, but there might be a statement later," she said.

Identical statement issued by both sides earlier said the talks would focus on identifying steps to address issues raised in an exchange of memoranda in June and July.

**Israel to offer autonomy for Palestinians**

JERUSALEM, Aug 22: Israel will offer the Palestinians a timetable for autonomy when Middle East peace talks resume Monday Washington amid hopes that real progress can be made in the negotiations, reports AFP.

Peace negotiators will for the first time discuss issues of substance rather than those of procedure, which had been the focus of the previous five rounds of direct talks begun in Madrid last October.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin who has revitalised the peace process since taking power last month, wants an autonomy accord with the Palestinians within nine months to a year.

His predecessor, Yitzhak

Shamir, reportedly said he would stall the peace talks for 10 years to settle 500,000 Jews in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

To prepare for elections to an autonomous Palestinian council, the Israeli delegation will suggest establishing a special Israeli-Palestinian committee, sources close to the prime minister's office said.

The Jewish state wants a 50-member "administrative council" to manage autonomy while the Palestinians want a legislative council of 180 deputies to pass laws.

Palestinian peace talks spokeswoman Hanan Ashrawi said they sought national leg-

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islative elections in the occupied territories for "Palestinian interim self-government".

In presenting his plan to US President George Bush, Rabin offered December 1 as the deadline for an accord with the Palestinians on election procedures and February 1 for determining the scope of Palestinian autonomy.

Israel will offer the creation of joint committees to study areas such as police, health, taxes, and education that would come under the authority of the "elected administrative council".

But it will refuse to negotiate such matters as defence, security, borders, foreign policy, water, land and Jewish

settlements.

Ashrawi wants "the elected national Palestinian authority" to have legislative, executive and judicial powers as well as procedures for transferring power from the occupying authority to the Palestinian body.

Israel will avoid discussions on the final status of the occupied territories. "They will be no negotiations on the issues of sovereignty during the first three years of autonomy," a top Foreign Ministry official told AFP.

On Syria, Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres announced that his country wants to open "serious negotiations" with Damascus on the basis on UN Resolutions 242

and 338 which stipulate an exchange of land for peace.

This marks another change from the previous Shamir government which said it had fully applied the resolutions by withdrawing from the Sinai, which represented 80 per cent of the territory seized in the 1967 Middle East war.

Shamir backed the English version of Resolution 242 that preferred to a withdrawal "from territories," in contrast to the French version which called for a withdrawal "from the territories".

During his campaign for the June 23 election, Rabin said he was ready to abandon part of the Golan Heights to have peace with Syria.

While opposing a total withdrawal from the strategic plateau looking over northern Israel, the new premier has said Israel did not have stick to "every square centimeter".

The Golan where 15,000 Israelis live in 33 settlements, was conquered by Israel in 1967 and annexed in 1981.

Arab sides decided to go to Washington despite their anger over President George Bush's decision to grant 10 billion dollar in loan guarantees to Israel without insisting on a total freeze in settlements. Rabin has so far, ordered a partial freeze on building in the occupied territories.

Unlike the previous rounds, the latest talks will run for a full month.

**21 Sikh rebels killed in clash**

CHANDIOARH, Aug 22: Twentyone militants, including three top ones, were killed and 14 others arrested with arms and ammunition in Punjab since last night, police said, reports PTI.

An area commander of the KCF, Baldev Singh, and two other militants were killed in an encounter near Patti in Tarn Taran district. One AK-47 rifle, two magazines, two other weapons and some explosives were recovered from the spot.

Jagtar Singh, Lt Gen of the KLF, and Gurdip Singh were killed in an encounter near village Jagtan in Jagraon district. One AK-47 rifle with two magazines and some other arms and ammunition were recovered from the spot.

**BRIEFLY**

**Thatcher to visit S. Korea:** Former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher will visit South Korea from September 2 to 5 at the joint invitation of the Korea University and the Dong-A Ilbo (daily), the Yonhap News Agency reports, Xinhua says from Beijing.

During her stay, she will deliver two speeches, one on the 21st century, and the other on the prospects for the Asian economy.

**3 Canadian plane to supply aid:** Canada Friday announced it would provide three military aircraft to ensure the urgent delivery of humanitarian aid to the people of Somalia, reports AFP from Ottawa.

Prime Minister Brian Mulroney's office said a team of national defence experts has been dispatched to the region to finalize plans for the airlift operation.

Mulroney's office recalled that Canada had recently announced five million dollars (4.2 million US) in food aid for Somalia, plus two million dollars (1.68 million US) to the international committee of the Red Cross, and other smaller aid packages.

Since January, Ottawa has provided about 17 million dollars (14.3 million US) in emergency aid to Somalia.

**US marshal shot dead:** A US marshal was shot to death Friday while trying to arrest a fugitive white supremacist holed up in a remote mountaintop cabin, a sheriff's deputy said, AP reports from Naples.

Marshals and police evacuated about 30 residents from the area near Ruby Ridge, about 40 miles (65 kilometers) south of the Canadian border, said sheriff's Deputy Lonnie Ekstrom.

Authorities say the ridge is where Randy Weaver, 44, has lived in self-imposed exile since February 1991, when he failed to appear for trial on a federal weapons charge.

Federal agents said in March that Weaver had ties to the white supremacist organization Aryan Nations.

He was indicted in Boise in December 1990 on federal firearms charges for allegedly selling sawed-off shotguns to an undercover agent.

He was arrested by Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms agents, but authorities said he returned to his mountaintop cabin the following month after a federal magistrate released him on his own recognizance.

**Blasts leave 17 dead in Ukraine:** A series of explosions caused by a gas buildup ripped through a coal mine in eastern Ukraine on Friday, killing 17 people, officials said, Reuter reports from Kiev.

Alexander Priludsky, duty officer at the Skochinsky mine near Donetsk included two miners and 15 rescue workers.

"Everyone has been counted for, though not all the bodies have been brought to the surface," he said by telephone.

Local journalists had earlier quoted the director of the mine, Vladislav Sheplenko, as saying that 23 people had been taken to hospital following the accident and many were in a serious condition.

**Poison, disease kill 64 in Bihar:** At least 64 people have died of suspected viral encephalitis and from liquor poisoning in the last five days in the northern state of Bihar, the Press Trust of India (PTI) news agency reported on Friday, says Reuter from New Delhi.

The PTI said 38 people had died of encephalitis, a brain inflammation, and 26 from liquor poisoning in Patna, the state capital.

The news agency quoted doctors as saying that nearly 100 others were struggling for life, affected by the twin tragedy. It did not give details.

**'Sandinistas plot to wipe out Contras'**

MANAGUA, Aug 22: Human rights workers and former Contra commanders say radical groups backed by the Sandinista-run police force and army are assassinating Contra leaders to wipe out political opposition, reports AP.

"The Sandinistas are simply cutting off the head of the resistance," said Mateo Guerrero, executive director of the Nicaraguan Association for Human Rights. "No one is being punished. The law does not exist."

Contra rebels, who fought a nine-year guerilla war until the Sandinista government was voted out in 1990, reportedly have begun rearming out of fear.

Some also have taken up arms again out of frustration that land reform and other promises by President Violeta Chamorro remain unfulfilled.

They say the only way to stop the killings is to remove the military and police from Sandinista control, but concede this would be hard for Chamorro to do.

The Sandinistas are still by far the biggest single political party and retain tremendous disruptive potential through their control of key labour unions as well as the armed forces.

Since M. Chamorro defeated Sandinista leader Daniel Ortega in February 1990 presidential elections, about 120 former leaders of the US-



OHIO: Democratic Presidential nominee Bill Clinton (L) and his wife Hillary walk with running mate Al Gore (2nd R) and wife Tipper on Friday before boarding their campaign bus. Clinton and Gore are starting a three-day bus tour from Cleveland, OHIO to Buffalo, New York. — AFP/UNB photo

**Republicans are desperate to hold onto White House: Clinton**

DETROIT, Aug 22: Democratic presidential candidate Bill Clinton lashed out at President George Bush on Friday, calling him a "fear-monger," and "untrustworthy" and accusing Republicans of lying to keep the power, prestige and perks of the presidency, reports Reuter.

"These people are desperate to hold on to the White House," Clinton told reporters after speaking to the Economic Club of Detroit in an address that echoed similar themes but in far less stark language.

"They cannot imagine what life would be like if they did have Camp David and they didn't have all the dinners at the White House, if they didn't have all the perks and powers of the presidency," Clinton said.

"The national crowd thinks it belongs to them" he said. "They will say or do anything to hold on to it."

Referring to Bush, Clinton said: "He's personally untrustworthy. Who could trust him? He promised 15 million jobs and he's 14 million short."

"He's a great fear-monger," Clinton said. "That's what they're good at, that's what they know to do — all that stuff — we're Americans, if you're not with us you're not an American — all that kind of stuff, that's what they're good at."

In his speech Clinton dismissed Bush's call for an

across-the-board tax cut as "fool's gold" and summed up Bush's speech accepting the Republican nomination for president as the musing of a desperate candidate "who will keep only one promise — to do whatever it takes" to be re-elected.

Invoking one of the most memorable lines by Ronald Reagan when he sought the presidency in 1980, Clinton said Bush had offered little new and would not keep any promises anyway.

"In the words of the man who started it all, there they go again," Clinton said.

In a speech that ran well over an hour, Clinton often departed from his prepared remarks to leave his comments with minute detail that seemed to leave the crowd, which had given him a standing ovation when he arrived, somewhat restless.

But his rebuttal to Bush — who belittled him on Thursday as a man who would propose "Elvis economics" — had the audience applauding often.

"Last night we heard a desperate candidate for president promise another short-term capital gains tax cut for the rich, the 'fool's gold' of an across-the-board tax cut in the face of a 4 billion dollar deficit, and a balanced budget amendment with no serious proposal to balance the budget," Clinton said.

"Those promises are false, and will betray us," he said.

"We need desperately a president who will take responsibility for getting this country moving again," he said.

"A president who will leave behind the failed Republican experiment of trickle-down economics on the one hand and the old Democratic theory of tax and spend and regulation on the other."

Clinton said he was "appalled" by the distortion of his record by Bush even as the president denied any culpability for the state of the US economy.

"Last night, George Bush took credit for every victory around the world.

US coast guard officials in Florida reported the incident in July.

Zamora said in this letter the four men were released by the US authorities even though arms were found aboard their boat. He added the group's leader was a US citizen, Tony Bryant.

The Cuban ambassador also complained that the US coast guard entered Cuban waters without permission from the Cuban authorities, who were only informed of the rescue two hours after it occurred.

There can be no doubt that the US government, as demonstrated by its action in this case and in previous cases, has violated the most elemental norms of international law, Zamora said in his letter.

Prensa Latina said 'Comandos L' was the same elite group which sent an earlier raiding party to Cuba last December.

**ROK FM will talk diplomatic ties with China**

SEOUL, Aug 22: South Korea formally announced today its Foreign Minister will discuss diplomatic relations with China during an August 23-25 visit to Beijing, reports Reuter.

Yonhap said the Seoul government would send a private mission to Taipei in an effort to maintain the best possible private-level ties with Taipei.

South Korea is one of 30 nations, while 136 have diplomatic relations with Beijing under its "one-China" policy.

South Korea and China fought on opposite sides during the 1950-1953 Korean war, and Seoul has traditionally maintained close ties with the anti-communist government in Taipei.

But against the backdrop of usurping two-way trade, Seoul and Beijing have been taking preparatory steps to full relations since last year.

**Off the Record**

**Homosexual lifestyle wrong**

GULFPORT: Vice President Dan Quayle defended his convention swipe at alternative lifestyles Friday, saying that a "so-called gay marriage" is not the same as marriage between heterosexuals, reports AP.

Quayle made the comments in Houston before flying to Gulfport to join President Bush in a week of intensive post-convention campaigning across the South.

The vice president was a big hit in the AstroDome Thursday night with an acceptance speech smiting his critics and declaring his resolve to keep pitching family values and other conservative causes.

He said there is "a cultural divide" between the two parties, and suggested that the Democrats believe "every so-called lifestyle alternative" is morally equivalent.

In an interview with the ABC television network, Quayle denied his remark was gay bashing.

But Quayle said he does believe homosexual lifestyles are wrong. "That is not gay bashing," he said. Most Americans "think that lifestyle is wrong. That's not saying people don't have the right to make that choice."

"A so-called gay marriage and ... a heterosexual marriage," he said, "are not the same and they should not be treated as the same."

**A romantic Deputy Speaker**

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysian police have questioned the former Deputy Speaker of Parliament for his alleged involvement in a pornographic videotape, state-radio on Saturday quoted a senior police officer as saying, reports Reuter.

D P Vijandran, accused by the opposition of videotaping himself having sex with women, was quizzed by the serious crime branch in the capital Kuala Lumpur on Friday, Criminal Investigation Department Director Mohamed Zaman Khan said.

An opposition leader, Karpal Singh, stunned parliament last month by handing to the house a videotape he said featured Vijandran, the former secretary-general of the Malaysian Indian Congress, a component party of the ruling national coalition.

Singh accused Vijandran of videotaping himself performing unnatural sex acts with various women, adding that the recordings were done without their knowledge.

Singh said 11 videotapes and 2,000 photographs were stolen from Vijandran's house in 1988 but police had destroyed the tapes recovered from burglars.

**'Bad Day at Black Rock' dead**

LOS ANGELES: John Sturges, director of such popular action pictures as "Gunfight at the OK Corral," "The Magnificent Seven" and "The Great Escape," has died. He was 82, reports AP.

Sturges, who died Tuesday, was nominated for an Academy Award for his direction of 1955's "Bad Day at Black Rock".

Other credits include "The Eagle Has Landed," "The Old Man and the Sea," "Thunderbolt," "The Man Who Dared," "Shadowed" and "Ice Station Zebra."

**Tourists stage sit-in in Tibet**

HONG KONG, Aug 22: Stranded on the roof of the world, 250 angry western tourists staged a second day of protests at government offices in Tibet on Saturday, demanding they be allowed to leave, tour leaders said, reports Reuter.

"It's really terrible. We're completely struck here," said Pascale Panaux, head of a Belgian tour group, speaking by telephone from the regional capital Lhasa.

Problems began on Friday when tourists from seven major tour companies were told that despite holding confirmed tickets they could not fly to neighbouring Nepal — China's state airline CAAC had overbooked 500 passengers on a 130-seat plane.

The next flight to Kathmandu with some seats available was to be in a week's time. Local official suggested the tourists take the four-day bus trip to Nepal, involving a 10-hour walk at the border along a trail strewn with landslides in the middle of the rainy season. The tourists, mostly elderly, declined.

"We have lawyers and doctors with patients waiting. They will sue us enormously," complained Panaux. She said the groups were likely to miss their connecting flights back to Europe.

The tourists — mainly from Belgium, France, Germany, Italy and Spain — took their anger to the office of Tibet's governor and staged a sit-in. Tour leaders who joined the protest said police came but there were no incidents. The governor was out.

Staging the first known demonstration by foreigners in the Chinese-ruled region, the tourists then occupied the Tibet Tourism Bureau and lay down on the floor of CAAC's office.

"Fat Italian ladies were sitting on the desk of the director of tourism," said one westerner.

Communist China began opening Tibet to the outside world in the early 1980s. Contact with the Himalayan land was largely broken off when the authorities imposed martial law to quell pro-independence demonstrations in 1989.

**Former CIA agent held in Sweden**

STOCKHOLM, Aug 22: Former CIA agent Edward Lee Howard, the first known US agent to defect to the Soviets, is suspected of preparing espionage activities against Sweden, the national news agency TT reported Friday, says AP.

Howard, 40, was arrested on a Stockholm street Thursday and is likely to be expelled sometime in the next two weeks.

**Topless Fergie makes royal mood thunderous**

LONDON, Aug 22: Queen Elizabeth II's bare-breasted daughter-in-law was on view at newstands across the nation Friday, with the latest photo snaps of the Duchess of York frolicking with an American businessman, reports AP.

"Queen Victoria wouldn't like it," said Labour Party legislator Clive Soley.

He was one of the few who seemed to see a light side to the Daily Mirror's publication of poolside pictures of the duchess's French Riviera vacation last week with Texas businessman John Bryan and her daughters, princesses Beatrice and Eugenie.

The 32-year-old duchess, the former Sarah Ferguson, had gone to the royal estate in Balmoral, Scotland with much of the royal family, including estranged husband Prince Andrew from whom she separated in March.

Newspapers carried a photo of a grim-faced queen riding horseback on the estate and speculated about her frame of mind.

That was about all they could do as the family did their best to ignore the troops of journalists outside.

Although the queen has issued only a 12-word statement objecting to publication of the photos, today newspaper divined that the mood at the royal breakfast table was "thunderous".

An opinion poll taken for the Saturday edition of the Times found that 53 per cent of those asked thought publication of the pictures was wrong and 42 per cent approved. The MORI poll of 1,061 people had a margin of error of plus or minus 3 per cent.

But there were still millions of readers eager to spend their 27 pence (53 cents) on the Mirror, which said Thursday that its normal run of 3.6 million papers sold out before 9 am. Editor Richard Stott said a half-million more copies were printed.

The tabloids, never slow to adopt a high moral tone, were in full cry.

"Strip her of the Title" shouted the Sun, the only

London-based paper to publish a photo that revealed the duchess's breast. "Fergie's Final Boob," it said on page one.

Page three was devoted as always to a bare-breasted young woman of no particular fame, and then there were two more pages of the beleaguered duchess and Bryan.

"Kick Her Out" "Don't Let Her Have a Penny More" said The Star which apparently did not have any of the sensational snaps but put a fully clothed duchess on page one. Anyway, they had another bare-breasted unknown on page three. The Mirror, the first to run the photos on Thursday despite Bryan's attempt to win a court injunction, ran seven more pages of pictures Friday.

The duchess was wearing both parts of her bathing suit in most of them.

The left-leaning Guardian noticed a contradictory public attitude to the royals and said: "The junk salivates over royal hijinks even as it condemns them."

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John Bryan: The Master of the Game