

BRIEFLY

Guzman's trial begins: Amid tight security and under a blanket of secrecy, the trial of Shining Path guerrilla leader Abimael Guzman began Monday, reports AP from Lima.

The leader of the Maoist guerrilla group, whose 12 year in insurgency has claimed 25,000 lives, is being tried by a panel of military judges whose identities will be concealed by a one-way mirrored window.

President Alberto Fujimori has said the trial, being held at a secret location, will last 10 days and that sentencing will be on Oct 27. Guzman faces life in prison if convicted.

The 57-year-old former university professor, accused of terrorism, organizing armed groups and violating the public order, was arrested Sept 12 at a safehouse in a middle-class Lima neighbourhood.

Peacekeeper killed in Lebanon: Iranian-backed militia killed a UN peacekeeper in a raid on an Israeli-allied militia position in south Lebanon on Tuesday, security sources said, reports AP from Lebanon.

The victim belonged to the Irish battalion of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon. He was killed in a firefight as the guerrillas were withdrawing from the battleground at a checkpoint near the village of Jmaimeh, north of Israel's self-proclaimed security zone, the sources said.

Lebanese police and sources inside the security zone said seven other people were killed and seven wounded in pre-dawn assault by Shi'ite Muslim guerrillas, which touched off a four-hour battle.

Filipino Muslim youth held: A Muslim youth has been arrested for alleged involvement in the killing of a Protestant minister who was shot while broadcasting a religious programme, police said Tuesday, AP reports from Philippines.

Police said they were preparing criminal charges against Abdel Bashid Jakiri, 22, a student of Islamic studies at a Muslim religious school, who was arrested Monday.

A witness identified Jakiri as the gunman who barred him from entering radio station DXAS last Monday minutes before the assassination of the Rev. Gregorio Hapalla, police said.

"I don't know anything about that," Jakiri told reporters. Police said they still were looking for two other people in the case.

Centre to screen AIDS in India: India's first anonymous centre to screen patients for the virus which leads to AIDS has opened in this port city, where the disease is assuming the proportions of an epidemic, officials said Monday, reports AFP from Bombay.

The centre, which will also test patients for other sexually transmitted diseases as well as Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), was inaugurated Sunday by Robert Bath, territorial commander of the Salvation Army, Australia.

The Indian Health Organisation (IHO), which operates the centre, said the identity of people wanting to know if they suffer from Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus (HIV) would be protected.

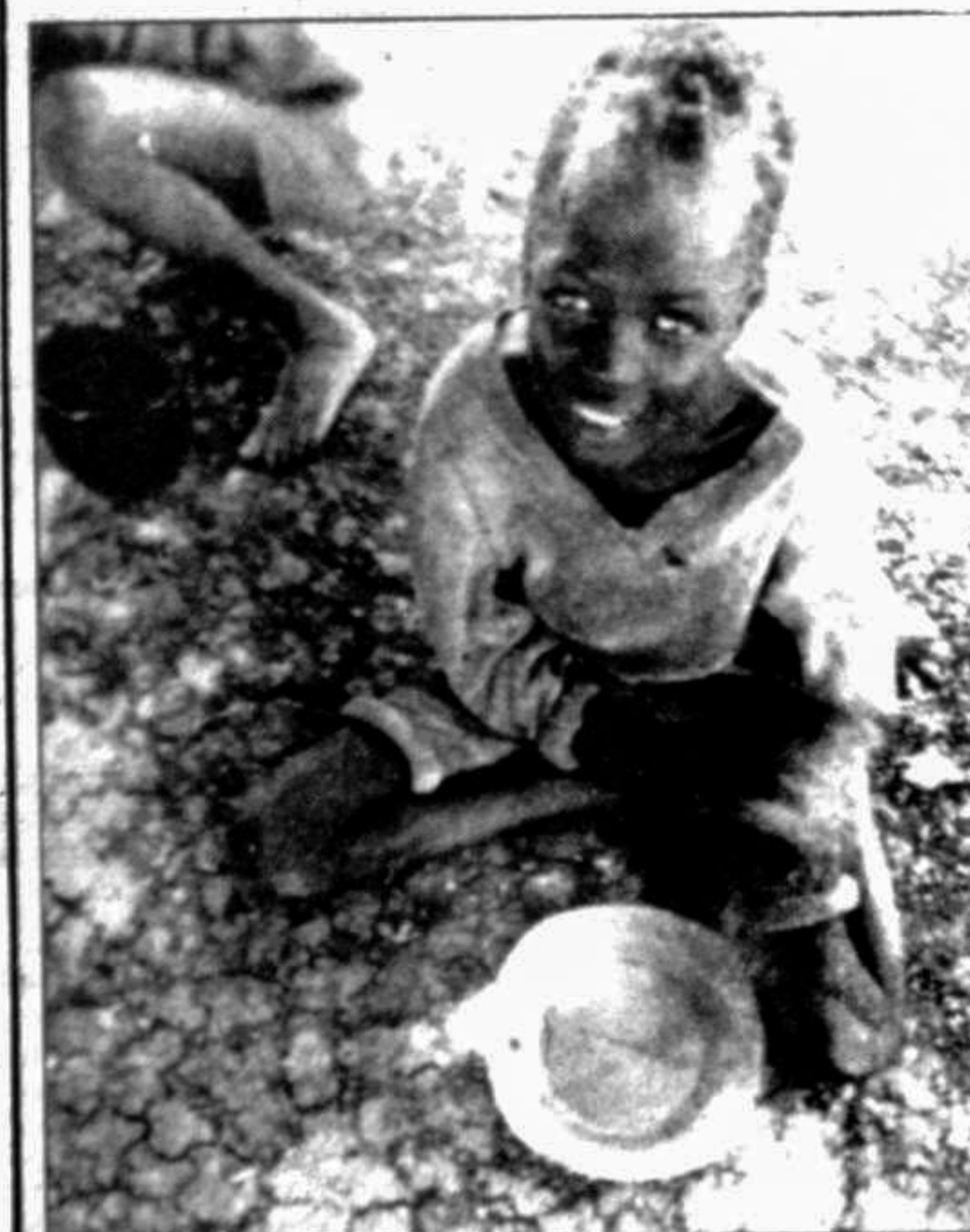
The reports will be handed over to individual patients to maintain anonymity, said an official of IHO, which seeks to promote awareness of AIDS.

US copter fired on: A US Drug Enforcement Agency helicopter was fired on and an American crewman injured as it flew a mission, according to a news report Monday, says AP from Guatemala.

The US embassy said it would have no immediate comment on the shooting attack reported by the daily newspaper Prensa Libre.

In Mexico City, the newspaper Excelsior said two people died in the incident, Felipe Pineda, a Guatemalan provincial official told Prensa Libre the helicopter was flying 30 miles (50 kilometres) southeast of the capital Sunday when it was struck by several shots near the town of Caobanal.

He said the Guatemalan pilot, Carlos Castanaza, made an emergency landing after his co-pilot, an American identified as Terry Sayddave, 62, was injured. The DEA has played a key role in helping Guatemalan police interdict drug shipments. The police seized \$100 million in cocaine in the first half of 1992 alone.



NAZIR, Sudan: A child awaits to get food September 25 at the K Maina United Nations feeding centre of Nazir, southern Sudan. The first relief barge to reach Nazir since December, brought a month's food to this remote rebel held settlements, deep in the undeveloped south. — AFP/ UNB photo

Iran, UAE talk disputed Gulf islands

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates, Sept 29: Iran and the United Arab Emirates held talks Monday on a dispute over three Gulf islands that has undetermined Iran's warming relations with conservative Arab states in the Gulf, reports AP.

Neither side would comment on the outcome, and diplomatic sources said there appeared to be a deadlock.

The sources said Iran apparently wanted to discuss one island, Abu Musa at the mouth of the Gulf, which the emirates wanted to discuss sovereignty over the Greater and Lesser Tunbs.

Thai Prime Minister to seek royal approval for cabinet

BANGKOK, Sept 29: New Prime Minister Chuan Leedpat flew south Tuesday seeking royal approval for a Cabinet line-up set after a week of bickering that raised concern about the stability of his pro-democracy coalition, reports AP.

Chuan flew to Narathiwat province to see constitutional monarch King Bhumibol Adulyadej, whose endorsement is a formality. The meeting is expected in the evening.

Jockeying for the defence ministry post by a Democrat Party official and an internal rift in the New Aspiration Party over the economic portfolios threatened to delay the formation of the government. The problems were resolved Monday and the Cabinet line-up decided.

The stock market's main index, depressed in previous days by the political bickering, rose slightly in opening trading in anticipation of the Cabinet formation. Traders said investors also were encouraged that three top bankers would be given Cabinet posts. Chuan was appointed the nation's 20th

prime minister last Wednesday, after his Democrat Party led a narrow victory over pro-military parties in the September 13 parliamentary election.

The election was the first since the pro-democracy parties sided with the people in May's huge street demonstrations that forced out an army-backed prime minister. Security forces killed more than 40 people.

Chuan's five-party coalition holds 207 of the 360 seats in the House of Representatives, where it faces a formidable opposition of parties that backed the soldiers in May.

The government is expected to carry on Thailand's traditional Western-leaning economic and foreign policies.

The new foreign minister is expected to be Prasong Soonsiri, 65, a former air force officer who as secretary-general of the National Security Council in the 1980s unyieldingly opposed Vietnam's military occupation of Cambodia. He studied at America's University

Foreign tourists warned to leave valley within 3 days Arab veterans of Afghan war join Kashmir militants

ISLAMABAD, Sept 29: Some Arab veterans of the Afghan war have joined Muslim militants fighting Indian rule in Kashmir, Kashmiri militant sources in Pakistan said on Monday, reports Reuter.

They said a few Afghan and Pakistani volunteers were also helping militants in a "Jihad" (holy war) against India, which rules two-thirds of Kashmir. The remaining part is controlled by Pakistan, a Muslim country.

"They may be less than 100 or even less than 50," an official of the Hezb-ul-Mujahideen group said of the number of foreign fighters in Kashmir.

Pakistan's "Dawn" newspaper carried a report on Monday quoting some fighters as saying 300 to 400 Arab guerrillas had sneaked into Indian Kashmir in support of Hezb-ul-Mujahideen, and that 200 Afghans went there last year.

"The figure is greatly exaggerated," Hezb official Masood told Reuters by telephone from the Pakistan-ruled Azad (free) Kashmir capital of Muzaffarabad.

"We cannot deny their presence but they are not many. There is a risk in taking them there," he said.

Sources in the rival Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) said they had information of a few foreign volunteers.

Kashmiri sources have said in recent weeks that thousands of radical Arabs who helped Islamic guerrillas to victory in the Afghan war were looking for a new front in Kashmir.

Masood said the Kashmir border between Pakistan and India was more difficult to cross than the Afghan border, adding that the militants had to keep Pakistan's standpoint in view.

Hezb-ul-Mujahideen seeks to unite all Kashmir with Pakistan. JKLF wants the state to be independent.

Amanullah has voiced fears that the presence of fundamentalist Arabs could aggravate ideological rifts among Kashmiri militants that have often led to clashes between JKLF and Hezb fighters.

A Srinagar report adds: A leading Kashmiri militant group on Monday warned foreign tourists to leave the troubled Kashmir valley within the next three days or else they would "come to harm".

A spokesman for the Hezb-ul-Mujahideen said: "A large number of Israeli intelligence officials are masquerading as tourists".

He alleged that Mossad, the Israeli intelligence agency, had helped Indian authorities plan and execute an ongoing sweep against militants called "Operation Tiger".

At least 10 people were killed, including eight militants, since Sunday night in Indian-ruled Kashmir, said an official spokesman in Srinagar.

The eight militants were killed in a gun battle with Indian security forces in Kupwara district near the border with Pakistan.

More than 8,500 people have been killed in the valley since January 1990 when an anti-India agitation burst into a full-blown insurgency.

The Hezb spokesman asserted that the Mossad agents had come to Kashmir on fake American and European passports.

He said Hezb has also warned hoteliers and taxi drivers to refuse service to foreign tourists after the deadline expires on Wednesday, "failing which not only the tourists but also the hoteliers and houseboat owners would come to harm".



DALLAS, Texas: Texas billionaire Ross Perot (R) Talks with TV talk show host Larry King September 28 during an appearance on the CNN programme "Larry King Live". Perot said he would decide by the end of the week whether he would enter the US presidential campaign. —AFP/UNB photo

Pak newsmen boycott NA session

ISLAMABAD, Sept 29: Reporters boycotted a session of the Pakistani parliament here Monday to protest the filing of a sedition case by the government against the editor of a local newspaper, reports AFP. Parliamentary sources said the newsmen walked out of the press gallery after the assembly began proceedings.

Sedition is punishable with life imprisonment under Pakistani law.

Malcha Lodhi, the editor of Islamabad's English daily "The News" and the country's only woman newspaper editor, has been summoned by a special court which has the fixed first hearing of the case next week.

The case relates to a poem published by the newspaper on September 7, which allegedly incites disaffection against the government and invites the military to take over.

'West wants to keep 3rd World poor'

UNITED NATIONS, Sept 29: Cuba mounted a frontal attack on the United States on Monday, saying the end of the cold war had made the West more arrogant than ever, reports Reuter.

In a speech to the General Assembly, Foreign Minister Ricardo Alarcon de Quesada said the West, and Washington in particular, aimed at keeping the Third World in poverty.

"Underdevelopment and poverty would be permanently reserved for the peoples of the South, which constitute three-fourths of human kind and they would continue to be providers of wealth for the affluent minorities of the North," he said.

In a veiled reference to Russia, he said, "certain turncoats may kneel before the de-

ceptive golden calf, but to understand the failure of capitalism as a social project, it is not necessary to read Karl Marx, but only to take a stroll through the inner cities of New York or Los Angeles."

Alarcon, Cuba's former sharp-tongued UN ambassador, said the North American dream might "dazzle some weak minds."

But for African-Americans, Latinos, indigenous Americans and Asians, the dream is a "bitter, sad and perpetual nightmare," he added.

"On what moral grounds can profoundly unjust societies... present themselves as a universal archetype?" he asked. "In terms of human solidarity they have nothing to teach us but, on the contrary, have much to learn from us."

Turning to the US economic blockade of Havana, Alarcon said Washington was intensifying its embargo at a time Cuba was suffering because of the disintegration of the Soviet Union, which accounted for 80 per cent of its trade.

This meant a loss of 70 per cent of Cuba's purchasing power which fell from 8.1 billion dollar in 1989 to 2.2 billion dollar this year, he said.

But he vowed Cuba would not collapse, saying "those who think that Cuba can be brought to its knees are mistaken."

To warm applause, Alarcon said the Security Council, dominated by big powers, needed to eliminate its "anachronistic" veto privilege, its secret activities and its attempt to broaden its powers.

"It must not be tolerated that those who so frequently define the ideas of democracy use the Council... to carry out a virtual coup d'etat in the United Nations," he said.

He said that those who exulted over the failure of socialism in eastern Europe should understand that capitalism had been the predominant system in the world for centuries.

It crushed the Third World with racism and discrimination and the "backwardness and poverty still affecting them."

If the cold war was over, the asked, why has the United States continued to develop "its military superiority as was recently announced by the tenant of the White House."

"Against whom will the empire now direct its weapons?"

Somali diplomats in Uganda run out of money

KAMPALA, Sept 29: Somali diplomats in Uganda have appealed to the Ugandan government to look after them and their families because they have not received any money from their strife-torn country in three years.

The head of the Somali chancery in Kampala, Abdulkadir Hashi Nur, told AFP on Monday that the eight diplomats and their families who are still living in the Somali chancery had completely run out of money.

"We have neither food nor electricity and water," Abdulkadir said, adding that for the past three years they had received no salaries.

Iraq will return 200 tanks to Kuwait

BAGHDAD, Sept 29: Iraq is to return 200 tanks as well as Hawk anti-aircraft missiles and artillery pieces to Kuwait starting in early October, a UN official said here Monday.

Hans Glittenberg told AFP the transfer of weaponry seized during the Iraqi occupation of neighbouring Kuwait would be carried out at the Safwan border post after transportation by road.

Most of the tanks are British-built Vickers and Chieftains, said the official in charge of the return of seized Kuwaiti property.

"Half was reported by the

Iraqis to be in decent condition. The rest is more or less damaged," he said, adding that Baghdad said it has not used the tanks because they were not the same as those of the Iraqi army.

Together with the undisclosed number of Hawk missiles and artillery pieces, Glittenberg said the transfer would be "the biggest operation for us in volume" since the Gulf war that drove Iraq out of Kuwait in February 1991.

"We have excellent cooperation for both parties," he said.

Foreign diplomats urged to return to Kabul

NICOSIA, Cyprus, Sept 29: The interim president of Afghanistan urged all foreign diplomats to return to his country, the Iranian news agency said, reports AP.

The Islamic Republic News Agency said President Burhanuddin Rabbani, who was talking in a meeting with foreign ambassadors in Tehran, said the government in Afghanistan is now passing through a transitional period and needs time in order to guarantee security at home.

It said Rabbani blamed the current difficulties on "thirst for power" by some parties, which he did not name.

Off the Record

Michael, Michael, we love you

BUCHAREST, Romania: Michael Jackson was greeted by thousands of screaming fans as he arrived Monday for what is billed as the biggest performance ever by a Western pop star in this formerly Communist country, reports AP.

The US superstar takes his "Dangerous" world tour October 1 to Bucharest's 62,000-seat National Stadium, which once hosted Communist military parades under dictator Nicolae Ceausescu.

During his four-day stay, Jackson, 34, is also to meet President Ion Iliescu and visit orphanages. Promoters say all concert proceeds are to benefit Romania's 100,000-odd orphans.

Jackson, wearing sunglasses, a black felt hat and tight pants, arrived at Otopeni Airport accompanied by an entourage of some 20 people.

Some 3,000 fans thronged the VIP gate and strained to get past the heavy police guard for a glimpse of the reclusive star. "Michael, Michael, we love you," they chanted, waving posters of the star.

He waved to them and slipped out of the airport in a bulletproof black Mercedes limousine.

Concert tickets cost the equivalent of \$17, about a quarter of the average monthly salary here. But they sold out within a few weeks.

The US-based Home Box Office cable TV station has acquired the broadcasting rights for the concert, reportedly paying an unprecedented \$20 million.



Granpa molested them

PITTSBURGH: Three children who were sexually abused by their grandfather were awarded nearly \$7 million in a civil suit filed by their mother, reports AP.

The amount is the most ever awarded by a Pennsylvania jury in a personal injury case, according to lawyer Dennis Mulvihill, who represented the children and their mother.

None of the parties were identified to protect the anonymity of the children, two girls and a boy, who are now 19, 13 and 11 years old.

The grandfather is serving a 50- to 100-year jail sentence for a 1989 conviction on criminal charges in the case.

A jury on Friday held him and his wife, who is not the children's biological grandmother, liable for the sexual abuse. Jurors awarded about \$12 million dollar to each child.

The grandfather sexually assaulted the children in his home from 1986 until July 1988, according to testimony presented at the trial.

Attorneys for the grandfather and his wife did not immediately return a telephone call Monday afternoon.

'Never lose cultural diversity'

Rome: Arriving on a two-day visit, Prince Charles said that whatever the pace of European unity, Europeans must maintain their "cultural diversity," reports AP.

The prince came to inaugurate a pair of art exhibits and visit the British School at Rome. He began a short speech in the school's honour in Italian, but switched to English after he seemed to have difficulty reading the Italian text.

Charles told the 80 guests that regardless of the speed "with which the political and economic integration of the European Community develops — or doesn't develop — we must never lose sight of our individuality and cultural diversity."

He was given a private tour of an exhibit at the school of pencil drawings by British artist James Hakewell, who visited Italy in the early 19th century.

Charles planned to travel to Bologna Tuesday.



LUCCA, Italy: Newly elected Miss Transsexual Valentine, 28, poses after winning the first ever Italian transsexual beauty competition. Thirty-two transsexuals participated in the competition. — AFP/ UNB photo

Turkey ready to help relief operation for Iraqi Kurds

UNITED NATIONS, Sept 29: Turkey's Foreign Minister said Monday that his country is ready to help an emergency cross-border winter relief operation for Iraqi Kurds if it becomes necessary, reports AP.

Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammed al-Sahaf met Thursday with the UN undersecretary for humanitarian affairs, Jan Eliasson and indicated Iraq has no objections to the winter aid programme for the Kurds.

But al-Sahaf told Eliasson that the programme for the Kurds could go ahead only if the United Nations ships aid to the entire country, not just the northern Kurdish zone.

Aspiration Party leader Chavalit Yongchaiyudh, 60. Chavalit made some of the strongest comments against the army-backed prime minister during the May demonstrations. He has made widely known that he wants to be prime minister.

The finance minister is expected to be Tarrin Nimmanhaemin, 46, president of the Siam Commercial Bank. He studied at America's Harvard University and Stanford. Bangkok Bank Executive Chairman Amnuay Viravan and Thai Military Bank President Supachai Panichpakdi are tipped to be deputy prime ministers.

Chavalit brought Amnuay into the Cabinet and had attempted to bring in another well-known, non-partisan economist. But a faction of his New Aspiration Party blocked the move so that the faction could take more Cabinet posts.

The commerce minister is to be Uthai Pimchaichon, 54, leader of administration.

of Colorado.

Surin Pitsuwan, tipped to be a deputy foreign minister, has said Chuan wants to establish Thailand as a regional economic and telecommunications center. High on the agenda, Surin said, is improving relations with Middle Eastern countries. Relations have been on hold since the unresolved murders of three Saudi diplomats in Bangkok two years ago.

Expected to be named defence minister is Gen Vijiit Sookmark, 59, the deputy armed forces chief of staff who studied at America's West Point military academy.

Vijiit is not a member of any party. The coalition parties had agreed the crucial post would go to an outsider. The secretary-general of Chuan's Democrat Party caused a stir by lobbying for the job before withdrawing under strong pressure, including from Chuan.

Heading the powerful Interior Minister, which oversees security and local administrations, is former army chief and New