

Feinstein, Boxer make history



Barbara Boxer

LOS ANGELES, Nov 4: Democrats Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer made Senate history Tuesday to become the first two women ever to serve in the US senate from the same state at the same time, reports AP.

Feinstein, a former San Francisco mayor, defeated Republican incumbent Sen. John Seymour an appointee.

Boxer won a closer race over conservative commentator Bruce Herschensohn whose campaign caught fire near the end, but the women enough to win.

The two women had campaigned as a "team for change" in the "year of the women."

"Washington, ready or not, here we come" Feinstein said, in declaring her and Boxer's victories. She compared the two to the television series about two female police officers, "Cagney and Lacey."

Feinstein will only serve for two years, because she is taking the seat abandoned by Pete Wilson when he became California governor. The law only allowed Seymour, who was appointed to replace Wilson, to serve until this year's general election.

Boxer will serve a full six-year term.

Mixed reaction about polls result

NEW DELHI, Nov 4: Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao on Wednesday congratulated president-elect Bill Clinton, saying he was keen to work with the new administration in infusing a "new dynamism" in relations with the US, reports AP.

India and the United States "share the goals of promoting the ideals of democracy, an equitable multilateral trading system and a more secure world," Rao said in a message to Clinton.

"Emphasizing that although the US was India's largest trading partner and the biggest foreign investor, only a fraction of the enormous potential for bilateral economic collaboration has been realized," Rao said.

"I look forward to working with you in imparting fresh impulse and a new dynamism to the longstanding friendship between our two countries," he said.

AFP from London says: Two British newspapers early Wednesday hailed the Democrat leader Bill Clinton as the future president of the United States, as election results were just starting to come in.

"It's President Clinton," the Guardian newspaper said, allocating half the front page to a giant picture of Clinton with his arms raised in true presidential style.

The tabloid Today newspaper headlined: "America hails President Bill," with the paper reporting that "only the remote chance of the biggest election upset in US' political history stood between Clinton and the White House."

Both papers reported that

Clinton was on the brink of a sweeping victory over President George Bush with early exit polls showing the Democrat leading by between 9 and 11 points in a record turnout of voters.

Another report from Canberra adds: Australia hopes victory for Bill Clinton will lead to a breakthrough in the stalled Uruguay Round of GATT trade talks and for a revival of the US economy, Prime Minister Paul Keating said Wednesday.

Keating pre-empted the declaration of the election result by telling Parliament

Clinton appeared headed for a great victory.

"We can all identify with his campaign statement that America's first foreign priority and first domestic priority are the same that is reviving the American economy," Keating told Parliament.

Keating said he hoped a big Clinton victory would strengthen the US position in the GATT negotiations.

Australia was encouraged by Clinton's moderate and internationalist foreign policy stance and his affirmation of support for the multilateral trading system, Keating

added. Manila report says: Filipino political reporters gasped in disbelief as they watched President Bush concede defeat. They weren't surprised at the outcome but at the fact that the whole thing was over in a matter of hours.

What the Americans completed in about five hours, Filipinos took weeks to finish.

"Who won the (American) election?" asked messenger Constancio Eugenio. "Very fast, over the same day. Here it takes a year."

The Philippines sees its political system as modelled after

the United States, its former colonial master. But the model is more like a caricature, and the Philippines has devised what may be the world's slowest, clumsiest and most corruption-prone electoral system.

Another report says: Bill Clinton's victory is likely to leave Arabs and Israelis biting their nails to see how he will move in the year-old Middle East peace talks.

Clinton has supported George Bush's agreement to give Israel \$10 billion in loan guarantees to resettle Soviet Jews over the next five years. But, unlike Bush, he has not linked this to a halt in building Jewish settlements in the occupied territories.

Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin cabled warm congratulations to Clinton on his sweeping victory on Wednesday, a government spokesman announced.

"I am convinced that the special relationship between the two peoples and the two countries will be as strong as before," Rabin said.

The premier's spokesman said Rabin's cable also offered sincere thanks to the election loser, President George Bush.

Meanwhile, European Parliament Socialists endorsed the election of Bill Clinton on Wednesday and said it would invite the president-elect to visit parliament when he takes office.

Socialist leader Jean-Pierre Cot, whose party holds 179 of the 518 seats in the European Community's legislature, said in a statement that Clinton's policies resemble those of European socialists.



President-elect Bill Clinton and Vice President-elect Al Gore wave to a crowd of supporters as they celebrate the victory. — Star TV photo

Iraqis celebrate Bush defeat, Kuwaitis heartbroken

BAGHDAD, Nov 4: Iraqis danced in the streets and bought sheep for feasts Wednesday after President Bush, the man who humiliated their army during the Gulf War, lost his re-election bid, reports AP.

Kuwaitis, who revere Bush for launching the Gulf War to force Iraqi troops from their emirate, were heartbroken.

In Baghdad, groups of Iraqi men danced holding newspapers and chanting: "Bush out, but Saddam lives forever."

Women flashed victory stings from balconies and tossed confetti.

"We will pool money and buy a good, big sheep," said Salm Nasir, 35, who trades in

old clothes in one of the city markets. UN-imposed sanctions have forced prices beyond the reach of many Iraqis.

There was no immediate government reaction. State-run radio ran the election result as the fifth item in its morning news programmes, without making any comment.

Babel, the newspaper edited by President Saddam Hussein's son Uday, carried a brief report.

There was no sign of large-scale celebrations, but people gathered at several places shouted "mabrook" — congratulations — to passersby.

"Our wounds have finally healed," said Zaurier Halim, a

soldier in the Iraqi army.

On Tuesday, the government-run newspaper Al-Jumhuriya said Bush is on his way to the dustbin of history, cursed by Iraqi children... whose milk and dreams he burnt.

Many Iraqis are bitter toward President Bush for organising the coalition that dealt Saddam a crushing defeat in the Gulf War.

They also resent his insistence that UN-backed economic sanctions remain in place as long as Saddam is in power.

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BRIEFLY

66 hurt in Japan's train mishap

Two trains collided head-on in southern Japan late on Tuesday, destroying the front car of both two-car trains and injuring 66 people, police said, reports Reuter.

A police spokesman said all those injured in the collision, on the Shimabara Railway, were taken to hospitals in the nearby city of Ishayama, in the southern island of Kyushu.

Some passengers were trapped for more than an hour in the cars with no light, surrounded by smashed window panes and seats torn apart on the floor.

Newspapers quoted passengers as saying they saw a train driver running through the front car just before the collision, telling them to get away.

Newspapers quoted one train driver as saying he was driving at about 45 kph (28mph) on a single-track stretch of line when he saw headlights approaching. "I blew the horn and hit the brakes but it was too late," he said.

Police said they would investigate the cause of the accident on Wednesday. News-papers said one of the trains had missed a signal and should have been waiting for the other to pass at a station.

Iraq grants visas for UNICEF men

Iraq has granted several new visas for UNICEF personnel and people working for humanitarian organisations and is to deliver 93 visas for UN guards in the north of the country, the UN's Department of Humanitarian Affairs said here Tuesday, reports AFP from Geneva.

It also reported several incidents. One involved a convoy of vehicles of non-governmental organisations that was shot on between Dohuk and Zhako. A member of a non-governmental organisation was wounded, the department said.

A foreigner working for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was wounded by shrapnel in Dohuk earlier this month.

34 die in Indonesian bus plunge

An inter-city bus plunged into a ravine, killing at least 34 people and injuring seven others in Southeast Sulawesi, the newspaper Suara Pembaruan reported Wednesday, AP says from Jakarta.

The bus was on its way from Sinjai to Ujung Pandang when it crashed Tuesday in the village of Lancibung in the sub-district of Sinjai Selatan, the paper said. Ujung Pandang, 1,380 kilometers (862 miles) northeast of Jakarta, is the provincial capital of Southeast Sulawesi.

Iraq slates Iran, Turkey, Syria

Iraq accused Turkey, Iran and Syria — which plan to discuss northern Iraq later this month — of wanting to carry out what it called a US plot against it, reports AFP from Baghdad.

The official Babel newspaper quoted Ath-Thawras, Managing Editor as saying that Turkey, Iran and Syria — described as sick agents of handicapped Americans and Zionists — want to carry out an American plot against Iraq.

The Editor, Sabah Yassine, said Baghdad will succeed in defeating plans aimed at partitioning it, according to Babel, which is run by Saddam Hussein's oldest son Uday.

The meeting is scheduled for November 14. Saudi Arabia has also been invited, but Turkish Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel said it is not certain yet whether Riyadh will participate.

UK has no plan to tax Queen

LONDON, Nov 4: The British Government has no immediate plans to try to tax the Queen, regardless of her immense fortune, Chancellor of the exchequer Norman Lamont said here, reports AFP.

Asked by a member of the opposition Labour Party whether to government planned to "extend taxation of income to members of the royal family who are currently excluded," Lamont in a written reply in the House of Commons Tuesday said: "I have no plans to do so."

Labour MPs who are leading a campaign to make the Queen pay taxes protested at Lamont's response and urged the Queen to take the initiative and offer to pay.

"It is a deplorable answer, particularly bearing in mind the fact that the Queen is one of the richest people in the world," said Dennis Canavan, MP for Falkirk. "Many other members of the royal family are living off tax payers' money," he said adding: "The grave economic situation in the country should be recognised by the royal family and despite the Chancellor's negative response, it is up to them

now to express a willingness to make a contribution through the tax system."

Another MP commented: "This aggravates the situation of the monarchy and could in the long run put it in jeopardy."

The Queen's private fortune is a secret but published estimates range from \$89 million to \$12 billion.

In addition, the Queen and seven other members of her family receive an annual hand-out from the government to help pay for expenses incurred during official duties. This year, the handout totaled 9.79 million pounds (\$15.17 million).

In addition, taxpayers pay an additional annual sum of more than \$80 million for upkeep of royal places, guarding the royals and other expenses.

Labor party legislator Dennis Canavan said Lamont's ruling was deplorable and another Laborite lawmaker, Alan Williams, said: "The palace (Buckingham Palace) and the government make a serious error of judgement if they think people will tolerate this unquantified privilege indefinitely."

"Royal Fortune" by Philip Hall, a book published in



Queen Elizabeth II

UNITA rebels want talks with govt

LISBON, Nov 4: Jonas Savimbi leader of the Angolan opposition force UNITA, is willing to travel to Luanda for talks with President Jose Eduardo Dos Santos, a UNITA military commander told Angolan state television late on Tuesday, reports Reuter.

More than 1,200 people have been reported killed during four days of fierce fighting between the MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) government forces and UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola).

The fighting died down in most of the country on Monday after the United Nations secured a ceasefire on Tuesday.

Portuguese government sources confirmed reports from Luanda that there had

been contacts between the MPLA and Savimbi.

Xinhua adds: Several senior UNITA officials were killed in the three running days of fighting till Monday with government forces, Angolan police sources have disclosed.

Among the dead are Salupeto Pena, chief representative of the UNITA to the Joint Politico-Military Commission, (JPMC), UNITA Vice President Jeremias Chitunda, and Secretary for Foreign Affairs Abel Chivukuvuku.

Meanwhile, eight UNITA generals and some other senior military officers were captured in the fighting which concentrated largely in the capital city Luanda, the Angolan national press agency reported Wednesday.

Off the Record

Trip against will

SEOUL, Nov 4: A Buckingham Palace spokesman said Wednesday this week's Korea tour by Prince Charles and Princess Diana was a success, and he decried the London tabloids for focusing on alleged marital rifts, reports AP.

"We're not going to dignify speculation from the British media by a comment," said Dickie Arbiter, the palace spokesman for the royal couple. "It's business as usual as far as we're concerned."

The 43-year-old heir to the British throne and his wife Diana, 31, were on the third day of a four-day tour of Korea, the first by British royalty.

It is the lengthiest public exposure of their marriage since a book describing it as a loveless sham was released last summer. London's tabloids have seized on the trip to scrutinize the relationship.

Several London newspapers claimed Tuesday the princess was making the trip against her will. They also reported it may be their last together.

Arbiter said the palace will hold a regularly scheduled meeting in early December to discuss the royal couple's schedule for 1993 and speculation on future trips was nonsense.

He said the Korean visit, which has included meetings with President Roh Tae-woo and other government and business leaders, has been a success as demonstrated by a glittering state banquet on Tuesday night.

Pool reporters at the banquet said the princess did not once look at her husband in the first 30 minutes, including his dinner speech. She stood beside him in a reception line and was seated with only the president between them.

"From our point of view the tour is positive," said Arbiter. "From the Korean point of view, the tour is positive," he said.

Korean newspapers and television have made no mention of the alleged marital problems. Stories about the royal visit are mostly on inside pages and television newscasts mention it as one of their last stories.

Animal testing for cosmetics banned

BRUSSELS: European Community governments agreed Tuesday to ban animal testing for cosmetics and their ingredients, EC officials said, reports AP.

The ban agreed to by health and consumer affairs ministers of the 12 EC states would take effect January 1, 1998. A two-year extension of the deadline would be given for products for which alternative testing had not yet been found.

"This is the first clear sign that there is going to be a ban," said EC Commissioner Karel Van Miert, explaining that the EC has no such legislation already on its books.

But critics said the move hurt one industry unfairly and bowed to animal rights lobbies without getting at the real problem of animal testing.

The agreement's impact on future trade with nations that do not ban such testing was unclear.

"Our agreement is to keep the pressure on to find these validated tests," said Britain's minister for consumer affairs, Baroness Denton of Wakefield.

But she gave no details as to incentives for companies to find the alternatives by 1998. Under the agreement, companies win an extension on the deadline if they have not found a way to test a product without using animals.

"No one can be assured there will be alternative methods for all the substances by that date," Van Miert said.

But he said the move was not a symbolic gesture caving in to animal rights lobbyists.

"The date has a very real significance," he said. "It puts heavy pressure" on cosmetics industries, which he said lobbied heavily against setting a date for the ban.

First multi-party elections in Kenya Dec 7

NAIROBI, Nov 4: President Daniel Arap Moi has set December 7 as the date for Kenya's first multi-party elections for 26 years, reports Reuter.

Moi, who inherited office from Kenya's first president, Jomo Kenyatta, 13 years ago, was a reluctant convert to multi-party democracy, lifting the ban on opposition groups last December under pressure from western aid donors and internal unrest.

But with three squabbling rivals dividing the opposition on tribal lines analysts say he is the likely winner.

The date was announced on Tuesday evening by the chairman of the electoral commission, Justice Z R Chesoni. But the choice was Moi's. He had for weeks teased opponents by calling it his "secret weapon."

Panic barely survives the second no-confidence vote

BELGRADE, Nov 4: Premier Milan Panic barely survived the second no-confidence vote in two months on Tuesday, fending off archrival Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic to oust him, reports AP.

The victory could strengthen Panic, who has pushed for concessions to the international community, against Serb nationalists as early general elections approach December 20.

Panic, a Serb-born California millionaire, won the vote in the upper house of Parliament 18-17 a day after being roundly defeated in the lower house of the federal Parliament.

A majority of 21 votes would have been necessary to oust him. Whereas the lower chamber is dominated by Milosevic's Socialists and allied nationalists, the Chamber of Republics is divided equally between deputies from Serbia and Mon-

tenegro, the only republics remaining in Yugoslavia. Montenegro supports Panic, who was appointed premier in July.

He has gained broad support from Yugoslavs tired of warfare in former Yugoslav republics, where rebel Serbs have received support from Belgrade.

The international community sees Milosevic as stoking aggression by ethnic Serbs in neighbouring Bosnia and earlier in Croatia.

Panic's survival is certain to further aggravate a power struggle between Milosevic, Panic and his ally, Yugoslav President Dobrica Cosic.

Milosevic sees Panic's rising support as a possible challenge to his authority ahead of the elections.

Vuk Draskovic, the leader of the Serbian Renewal Movement, the largest opposition party, said that Milosevic's goal

in getting rid of Panic would be to avoid free elections.

"Milosevic is avoiding free elections like an ugly woman avoids a mirror," he said. "He is like a criminal who flees from justice."

Panic has pushed Milosevic's Socialists — the renamed Communist Party — and their nationalist allies for concessions to lift economic sanctions imposed by the United Nations to punish Yugoslavia for its role in Bosnia's war.

Milosevic's Socialists accused Panic of betraying Serbia's cause by advocating peace with rival Croats, ethnic Albanians and Bosnian Muslims.

"Democracy is working," Panic told The Associated Press, saying he was not worried about the outcome of the vote. He said if he had lost, the democratization of Yugoslavia would be jeopardized.

Deputy Premier Oskar

Kovac said Panic's government will continue with its peaceful policies despite the no-confidence vote and the harsh criticism.

The December elections are to be held both on the federal level and in Serbia. While the federal president and premier are appointed by Parliament, the Serbian president is elected by direct vote.

In an apparent bid to retain the Socialist grip on power, the Serbian Parliament on Tuesday rejected opposition demands for changes in the election law which they perceive as favouring the Socialists. It also rejected demands that the head of Belgrade TV, a close Milosevic associate, be replaced by a joint commission to ensure objective campaign coverage.

The opposition boycotted the last Serbian elections in December 1990 and federal

election last May, enabling an easy victory for Milosevic's Socialists.

It was not clear whether the opposition would take part in December.

But the Serbian Parliament on Tuesday also voted to raise the number of signatures needed to nominate a presidential candidate from 100 to 10,000. Except for Draskovic, there are few widely known figures among the opposition.

In addition to the political rivalries Tuesday's no-confidence vote could also lead to a further rift between Serbia and Montenegro.

All Montenegro deputies voted for Panic, while the Serb deputies against him. Some Serb deputies have warned Montenegro that they will have to bear all the future "negative consequences" of Panic's rule.

Some Montenegro depu-

ties have indicated they would seek the republic's secession from new Yugoslavia if Panic were ousted.

"This was a simple choice between war and peace. We chose peace," said Montenegro deputy Milan Gajević.

The Citizens Chamber of the Parliament, dominated by the Socialists and the allied ultranationalist Radicals, voted 93-24 on Monday against Panic.

Milosevic's deputies accused Panic of being a foreign spy working under orders from the US State Department.

They denounced him for his pledge to recognize the borders of the former Yugoslav republics that have gained independence and for his efforts to negotiate with rebel ethnic Albanians in Serbia's restive southern province of Kosovo where they make up about 90 per cent of the population.

Japan urged to stop plutonium shipment

JAKARTA, Nov 4: At least 80 students from Jakarta, West Java and East Java protested Wednesday in front of the Japanese Embassy against Tokyo's plans to ship a ton of deadly plutonium from France, reports AP.

"We urge Japan to stop its shipment as it will endanger human life," said a member of the Anti-Nuclear Youth of Indonesia.

A ship carrying plutonium to be used as fuel in a fast-breeder nuclear reactor, is expected to leave soon from France to Japan by a route which Tokyo has kept secret.

Several nations, including Argentina, South Africa, Chile, Malaysia and several South Pacific nations have expressed fears about having the ship Akatsuki Maru pass nearby.