

Reagan era coalition collapses after defeat

Republicans face leadership crisis

WASHINGTON, Nov 5: Their party badly damaged in Tuesday's US general election, Republican leaders are wasting no time in pulling out the long knives, reports Reuter.

Rival factions are already maneuvering for control over party doctrine and who will lead them to the next presidential election.

President George Bush, in defeat, has left his party leaderless, divided and with a serious image problem, weakening future Republican prospects even before the post-mortems have been completed on this year's voting.

"A very important part of what happened yesterday was the collapse of the Republican coalition that gave us the Reagan era," Stanley Greenberg, President-elect Clinton's pollster, said in Little Rock on Wednesday.

With Bush gone, the mantle of party leadership might be assumed to fall on Dan Quayle, but the vice president's public relations problems are well known and he will have lost of rivals.

Even after his 1992 image remake, a substantial majority of voters view him unfavourably. Though well liked by conservatives, he would go into 1996 with the odds stacked against him, and numerous other aggressive Republicans are waiting in the wings, eager to challenge him.

"I'm not sure where that leadership mantle will go. There will be a lot of competition for it," Republican Senator Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania predicted in Philadelphia on Wednesday.

"In the Republican party there is going to be a real period of transition," said Specter, who won re-election on Tuesday.

Among those in line for a party role and perhaps for a try for the presidency four years from now are acerbic conservative commentator and Bush primary challenger Pat Buchanan, retiring Minnesota representative Vin Weber, Bush

Housing Secretary Jack Kemp and Bush Defence Secretary Dick Cheney.

Others include Texas Senator Phil Gramm, Massachusetts Governor William Weld, Senate Republican leader Bob Dole of Kansas, former Bush drug czar William Bennett, and religious broadcaster and former presidential candidate Pat Robertson.

Pakistan welcomes Bush defeat

KARACHI, Nov 5: Pakistan's Minister for Religious Affairs welcomed the election defeat of US President George Bush on Wednesday as punishment for his anti-Islamic foreign policies, the official APP news agency said, reports Reuter.

Bush played an anti-Islamic role in the Middle East, in Kashmir and in Bosnia, and used the liberation of Kuwait for the destruction of Iraq, APP quoted Minister for Religious Affairs Maulana Abdul Sattar Khan Niazi as saying.

"We are happy that nature has punished him by depriving him of the seat of power in today's unipolar world," the minister said.

His "war crimes" in Iraq had created hatred against Bush in the Islamic world, he said.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said Pakistan hoped to try to narrow its differences with the United States after Clinton takes over.

"We have tried to narrow down the differences before, we will now try again," Sharif told reporters in this southern city when asked for his reaction to Clinton's election win.

Ties between the two countries have been strained since US economic and military aid was cut off in October 1990 when President George

Bush failed to sign a certificate assuring congress that Pakistan did not possess nuclear weapons.

Pakistan has always denied that widely held belief it has nuclear weapons or is developing them.

Opposition leader Benazir Bhutto sent a message of congratulation to Clinton, whom she met on a visit to little rock Arkansas last year.

"As leader of the Democratic opposition of Pakistan, I want to extend to you our warmest and sincerest congratulations on your landslide victory as President of the United States of America."

The competition has already begun.

Kemp was in New Hampshire, the state that votes first in presidential primary years, on election day.

Weber is said to be a possible choice for Republican national committee chairman, he said last week on John McLaughlin's "one on one" show that "it is an intriguing possibility that I couldn't rule out."

Gramm has openly eyed higher office, but was given bad marks for a plodding speech at the Republican national convention last summer in Houston.

The youthful-looking Weld also took a high profile at the party's convention, and came off better in the eyes of analysts. He combines a conservative view on economic issues with a pro-abortion rights stance, an issue that sharply divides his party.

Abortion policy could turn out to be a major obstacle to party unity.

The party fought over the issue tooth and nail last spring and summer as it drafted its platform, and the fight likely contributed to Bush's defeat as moderate women were found in exit polling to have deserted the party in droves to vote for the Democrat on Tuesday.

Women voted insignificantly larger numbers than did men, and a disproportionate numbers of them voted for Clinton than for Bush, the exit polls found. But conservatives will battle any effort to weaken the party's strong anti-abortion stand.

4 CIS states agree to halt Tajik war

ALMA-ATA (Kazakhstan), Nov 5: Four Commonwealth states on Wednesday agreed on ways to halt the virtual civil war raging through the central Asian republic of Tajikistan, reports Reuter.

The leaders of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan were joined by Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev at peace talks in the Kazakh capital Alma-Ata.

"We settled one important question — what should be done through joint efforts to end the bloodshed," Kazak-

istan's President Nursultan Nazarbayev told reporters after the meeting.

Hundreds have been killed and thousands have fled their homes as fighting rages between supporters and opponents of ousted President Rakhmon Nabiev.

Nazarbayev said the four leaders agreed it was necessary to convene a session of the Tajik parliament by November 20 to restore legitimacy to the Republic's leadership.

The leaders also proposed creating a state council embracing representatives of rival parties, movements and regions of the impoverished country, which borders Afghanistan and China.

They said Russian troops deployed in Tajikistan could serve as a basis for peace-keeping forces, act as a stabilising factor and protect strategic objects.

The leaders issued a joint statement warning the conflict could spread. "We consider that escalation of the conflict

is fraught with danger for central Asia, Kazakhstan and Russia," Nazarbayev said.

Russian troops have stepped in to maintain a curfew in the Tajik capital Dushanbe after fierce fighting in recent weeks.

Tajikistan was represented by Acting President Akbarsho Iskandarov, who replaced Nabiev when a coalition of militant Democrats and Muslims came to power in September after a wave of unrest.



LONDON: Picture taken from TV shows British Prime Minister John Major speaking during the Maastricht debate at the House of Commons on Wednesday. Story on page 1. —AFP/UNB photo

British-UK exercise called off

HONG KONG, Nov 5: Britain has called off a planned military exercise in Hong Kong based on an imaginary invasion of the territory by China because it does not want to antagonise Beijing, Radio Hong Kong reported Thursday, reports AP.

Major Paddy Hartigan, a spokesman for British forces in Hong Kong, said exercises originally scheduled for next week, which would not involve combat troops, have only been rescheduled for a later date. The government-owned radio said the British Defence Ministry called off the exercise on the advice of Hong Kong Gov Chris Patten.

Patten is the commander-in-chief of British forces in the colony, which reverts to Chinese rule in 1997.

Pindi offers help to end Gulf crises

ABU DHABI, Nov 5: Pakistan's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Wednesday urged Gulf states to end their disputes and offered his country's help in easing tension, reports AFP.

"We hope all states of the region will reach a peaceful solution to their border disputes," Siddique Kanju told reporters in Abu Dhabi Wednesday. "We are ready to help in a settlement if we were asked to."

Impoverished Pakistan especially concerned about new trouble because one million of its citizens work in the Gulf and send home billions of dollars annually, diplomats

said. The Gulf war hit Pakistan's economy hard.

Territorial disputes have resurfaced in the past months between Saudi Arabia and Qatar, Iran and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Bahrain and Qatar. Iran's purchase of Russian submarines, with one on its way to the gulf, has heightened tension.

Kanju said Pakistan, which maintains good ties with Iran and all (Arab) Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) nations, was

prepared to support any measures to maintain security in the Gulf, home to two thirds of the world's proven crude reserves.

Sophia Loren new goodwill envoy to UNHCR

GENEVA, Nov 5: Actress Sophia Loren, the new Goodwill Ambassador to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, will travel to Kenya and Somalia this month to help focus public attention on the massive refugee crisis in Africa, says a press release.

Ms Loren is scheduled to begin her six-day trip November 21.

High Commissioner Sadako Ogata will formally appoint the Oscar-winning film star as a UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador on November 18 and thank Ms Loren for her commitment to easing the plight of refugees around the world.

From Baidoa, she will fly to the sprawling refugee settlement at Mandera, a town bordering Somalia and Ethiopia. More than 50,000 emaciated Somalis desperately seeking food and water arrived in that desolate stretch of northeastern Kenya over the summer.

Zardari's bail application rejected

ISLAMABAD, Nov 5: A Pakistani court refused bail on Wednesday to the husband of Opposition Leader and former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto who has been in jail facing a string of charges since October 1990, reports Reuter.

A special court for the suppression of terrorist activities in the southern city of Karachi rejected Zardari's bail application of the grounds it was premature and several serious charges were still outstanding against him.

Zardari applied for bail after he was acquitted last month of a masterminding the murders of 29 people.

That was among the most serious of more than 10 charges filed against him,



NEW YORK: Models walk the runway in a crochet fishtail dress (R) and a fishtail skirt (L) on Tuesday during the Randolph Duke Spring 1993 collection show. —AFP/UNB photo

The woman who backs to win presidency

LONDON: A New York woman who backed Bill Clinton last April to win the US presidency scooped 56,250 pounds (£7,700) on Wednesday when the Democrat swept to victory, bookmakers William Hill said, reports Reuter.

She was one of many Americans who put money behind their judgement that President George Bush was in trouble, taking advantage of attractive odds British bookmaking firms were offering early in the presidential race.

Another Gambler placed a 100-pound (155) bet on Clinton in January the odds of 33 to 1 against a democratic victory.

At that point, the bookmakers were confident the Arkansas governor could not win. But the odds shortened steadily until the poll booths opened on Tuesday, when the bookies had Clinton at a prohibitive 1 to 6 that he would be the next president.

Wednesday's biggest winner was the unidentified New York woman who put down 25,000 pounds (now 38,900) on Clinton, when hill was offering 9 to 4 against his chances of victory. At that time, the odds on Bush winning were 2 to 7.

Overall, William Hill said it made a small loss from bets on the US election.

Bozo makes people laugh

HOLLYWOOD: Bozo the clown was among those who sent congratulations on Wednesday to president-elect Bill Clinton — who had been called a "bozo" by President George Bush during the campaign, reports Reuter.

The big-footed clown, perhaps the most famous in the world, was injected into the campaign when republican Bush called his Democratic opponents, Clinton and his vice-president running-mate, "two Bozos."

Clinton fired back "he called us Bozos. Well, all I can say is Bozo makes people laugh and Bush makes people cry. And America's going to be laughing on Tuesday."

Mark Harmon, television's original Bozo and the man who created the character, wrote to the president-elect: "I want to extend my sincere congratulations on your victory and thank you for your kind words about Bozo."

"I feel it's an honour to have been so recognised and wish you all the best in the days to come."

5 new organs into 4-yr girl

PITTSBURGH: Five new organs transplanted into a four-year-old American Indian girl in a grueling operation that ended early on Tuesday were functioning well on Wednesday, doctors said, reports Reuter.

A spokeswoman for the university of Pittsburgh Medical Centre also said Charlie Fourstar, a Sioux Indian from Montana, was awake and had listened to her favourite country music, although she was still breathing with artificial help.

Mystique de Jackson

LOS ANGELES: Multi-millionaire pop star Michael Jackson has joined the superstar perfume Sweepstakes, with part of the proceeds going to poor children, reports Reuter.

The perfumes — "Legende De Michael Jackson" for men and "Mystique De Michael Jackson" for women — will be available in time for the holiday season.

The fragrances have been declared "environmentally safe" and each slender bottle comes with a hologram of Jackson on it.

That, in the words of Jackson's publicists, "makes this already collectible product line even more valuable."

The perfumes will sell for dollar 30 a bottle and will also be available by mail order, with a portion of the proceeds going to Jackson's heal the world foundation, dedicated to improving the lives of poor children, his publicists said.

Jackson's newest product puts him in competition with his friend, Elizabeth Taylor, who has her own successful line of perfumes called "passion."

Hillary is a person in her own right with an integrity

LITTLE ROCK, Arkansas, Nov 5: It is a measure of Hillary Clinton's individualism that one of her husband's critics is a fan of hers, reports Reuter.

"Hillary is a person in her own right with an integrity and person of her own," says Paul Greenberg, the Arkansas editor who coined the "slick Willie" label to describe the state's Democratic governor, Bill Clinton.

Compared to Hillary, Bill Clinton is a "hollow man," says Greenberg, editorial page editor of the Arkansas Democrat Gazette.

A new kind of political wife, Mrs Clinton has her own life apart from her husband, her own achievements, and, as America has learned in this presidential race, her own ability to speak her own mind.

Reading her resume without knowing she was married to the new president-elect, one would not think it was anything but impressive or complete.

A successful attorney and advocate of children's rights, a former member of several corporate boards and public interest boards, she has been active in causes ranging from lowering

infant mortality to providing legal assistance to the poor.

But the differences between 45-year-old Mrs Clinton and her 46-year-old husband go beyond her job accomplishments. She and he attend different churches and are said to hold separate bank accounts.

Her critics say she is far to the left of her husband politically. The conservative journal American Spectator has branded her "The Winnie Mandela of American politics."

Hillary's engagement in many issues prompted her husband to tell voters during the early Democratic primaries that if they elected him, they would get Hillary too.

That may have been his honest assessment of the matter, but he stopped saying it when speculation ensured that she would get a cabinet position in a Clinton administration.

Mrs Clinton won sympathy last January when she appeared with her husband on national television as he weathered allegations of an extramarital alliance with a lounge singer.

"I'm not sitting here like some little woman

standing by my man like Tammy Wynette. I'm sitting here because I love him and I respect him and I honour what he's been through and what we've been through together," she said.

But her image suffered after her sharp reply to reporters who questioned her about her legal work two months later.

"I suppose I could have stayed home and baked cookies and had teas, but what I decided to do was fulfil my profession," Mrs Clinton snapped.

The Republicans seized on the comment as evidence that Mrs Clinton was a dangerous, radical feminist. They launched a chorus of attacks on her at the Republican national convention in August.

But heavy criticism of a candidate's wife appeared to backfire with voters just as much as Clinton's suggestions that she would be co-president had done.

And as Mrs Clinton campaigned with her husband around the country, she demonstrated that she was as good at standing by her man as anyone, often nodding emphatically as he spoke

