

# Sharif admits 2 mistakes in dealing with Ishaq Khan

RAWALPINDI, May 13: Pakistan's sacked Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said on Wednesday he made two political mistakes in dealing with President Ghulam Ishaq Khan that cost him his job last month, reports Reuter.

His first mistake was not using his large parliamentary majority to curb the controversial powers of the President by amending the constitution after taking office in late 1990, he told reporters.

His second error was in April when he named Ishaq Khan as his party's candidate for a second five-year term, in a move aimed at easing a bitter power struggle between the two men that began in February.

Ishaq Khan sacked Sharif on April 18 on charges ranging from nepotism to terrorising his opponents and handing out favours to friends. He dissolved the National Assembly and ordered fresh elections on July 14.

Sharif has challenged his dismissal in the Supreme Court, which heard arguments on the fifth day of his petition on Wednesday. The next hearing will be on Saturday.

The power struggle erupted after Sharif said he wanted parliament to alter the eight amendment to the constitution, which gives the president the power to dissolve parliament and appoint the chiefs of the powerful armed forces.

Ishaq Khan saw Sharif's campaign as a betrayal by a protegee he had helped to power. The President dismissed Sharif's predecessor Benazir Bhutto on similar charges in August 1990.

Sharif said his advisers told him to repeal the amendment soon after he took office because he then had the two-thirds majority in parliament needed to amend the constitution.

"But that was not our priority then," he said.

"I also believed that he (President) could not dissolve the National Assembly for a second time. But he did what we all thought was impossible."

Sharif said he regretted offering Ishaq Khan his party's candidacy for a second presidential term at the height of their power struggle last month.

"The man was holding a pistol in his hand with finger on the trigger," he said, recalling his meeting with the President.

Ishaq Khan accepted and thanked him, he said, contradicting sources close to Ishaq Khan who said the offer was not accepted.

"We will be more careful next time," Sharif said.

Ishaq Khan's tenure expires at the end of this year and he is widely expected to run for a second term.



UN Commander for Bosnia, French General Philippe Morillon (L) talks to the High Commander of the Croatian Army of Bosnia, General Milivoj Petkovic (R) at the Spanish UN battalion's headquarters in Metjugore (some 20km from Mostar) late Tuesday. — AFP/UNB photo

# Off the Record

## Teacher gives birth in classroom

MESA, Ariz: Teacher Judith Burke interrupted her fifth-grade class's math test by giving birth to her first child on the floor, reports AP.

"We got real scared," said one of her pupils, 10-year-old Jamie Morgan.

Ryan Patrick Burke arrived Tuesday morning about five minutes after paramedics reached the classroom.

"Now that it's over with, it's neat," the 34-year-old mother said. "But if I had to do it over again, I'd do it in a hospital."

The children were cleared from the classroom a few minutes before the actual delivery.

Burke said labour pains began overnight Monday, but she discounted them because the child wasn't due for a month. On Tuesday morning, she told her principal she needed a substitute and called her doctor and her husband. But it was too late.

## They're fond of dog meat

JAKARTA: Some 10,000 dogs are slaughtered here annually to meet the demand from dog meat lovers, the Jakarta Post daily said here Thursday, reports AFP.

"The dogs are brought in from West Java's areas of Bekasi, Tasikmalaya and Purwakarta and sold here from 5,000 rupiah (2.4 dollar) to 7,000 rupiah (3.4 dollar) each," the daily quoted head of municipal husbandry Utoro as saying.

Utoro said the dogs were not slaughtered at the city-owned slaughter houses but at restaurants listing dogs in their menu, adding that blackdogs were favourite.

He said Animal Husbandry officials examined the animals before they were slaughtered to ensure their health condition.

## Jackson best artist

MONTE CARLO: American pop star Michael Jackson and Italian tenor Luciano Pavarotti shared the limelight of winners at the world Music Awards, presented at a gala gathering in this Mediterranean principality, reports AP.

Jackson accumulated three awards — best artist of his country, of the year and of his era — presented by Prince Albert and his sister Princess Stephanie, herself a singer, at the Wednesday night ceremony.

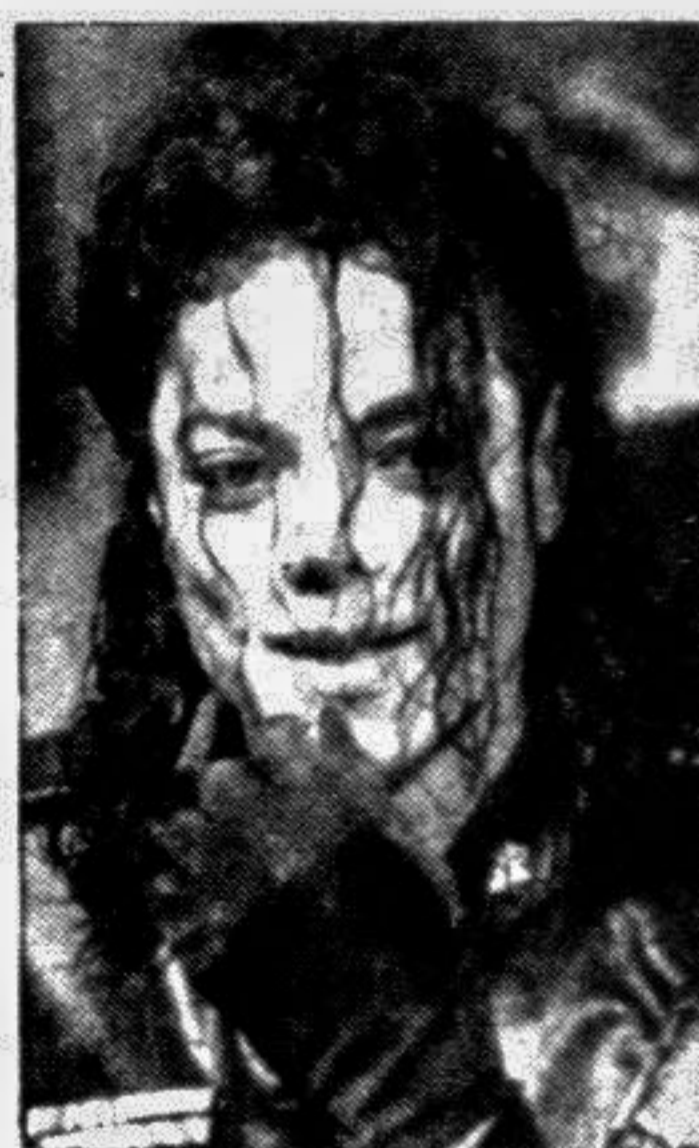
Princess Caroline honoured Pavarotti, credited with popularizing opera, with the award for best classical artist.

American singer Tina Turner was presented with the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Numerous luminaries were present at the Monte Carlo Sporting Club for the festivities, shown on television in numerous countries.

Also honoured were singer and guitarist Eric Clapton, singled out as best British artist and best rock artist.

Rolling Stones guitarist Ronnie Wood presented Scottish singer Rod Stewart with a music award. Yannick Noah, the French tennis star who has embarked on a singing career, awarded Mylene Farmer with the award for best French artist.



## Diana's brother accepts damages for libel

LONDON: Princess Diana's brother, Earl Spencer, accepted undisclosed damages for libel Thursday for two newspaper articles linking him with black-market sales of ballet tickets, reports AP.

The Earl was not in the High Court when the agreement was announced.

His lawyer, Simon Ekins, said Associated Newspapers, publishers of the Mail on Sunday, withdrew their allegations, apologized and agreed to pay substantial damages and court costs.

Times Newspapers apologized for spreading the libel by referring to the story in the Sunday Times of London, and also agreed to pay damages and costs.

The newspaper articles referred to the sale of Bolshoi Ballet tickets for the Earl's private box at the Royal Albert Hall.

## Chinese approve Madonna's 'appropriate sexiness'

BEIJING: Madonna has agreed to tone down her act in order to come to Beijing but can still display "appropriate sexiness", an official Chinese newspaper said, reports Reuter.

The Jiangxi daily in its May 9 edition, received in Beijing today, listed several reasons for the popularity of the US singer, known for provocative songs and videos.

First, she gives a stage show in which she appears to wear nothing and imitates the ways of the red light district, the newspaper said, although it admitted that she managed actually not to expose too much.

The paper's second reason was that she has a wonderful voice, dances madly and fits the mood of American youth.

"Moreover, although Madonna lost her virginity in her high school days and has a devil may care attitude, up to now she has had no traces of sexually-transmitted diseases or AIDS, so she is still an idol to youths in the West," it said.



# Turkish parliament fails to elect new president

ANKARA, May 13: The Turkish parliament failed to elect a new president in a second ballot on Wednesday, denying front-runner Suleyman Demirel the two-thirds majority required, reports Reuter.

Prime Minister Demirel, seeking to replace Turgut Ozal, who died last month, received 235 votes from the 450-member house, Deputy Speaker Fahmi Isiklar said after the televised vote.

Kamran Inan, nominee of the main opposition Motherland Party, garnered 95 votes, Lutfu Dogan of the Muslim fundamentalist Welfare Party won 49 and Republican People's Party candidate Ismail Cem got 25. A total of 426 deputies voted, but 21 cast blank ballots and one was invalid.

Demirel, who received 234 votes in the first round, is expected to be elected in a third round on Sunday when he

needs an absolute majority to win a run-off with Inan.

He has the support of his conservative true Path Party (DYP) and most of the Social Democrat Populist Party (SHP), junior partner in Demirel's 18-month-old coalition government, as well as the small right-wing Nationalist Movement Party.

The process of electing a president has virtually paralysed decision-making in Turkey, distracting the country from the economy, the Kurdish question and foreign policy challenges.

Demirel's election will not end political uncertainty. The DYP plans an emergency party congress on June 5 to choose a new leader, who would almost certainly become Prime Minister.

Possible candidates began jockeying for position as soon as Demirel made clear he was running for presidency.

Parliament Speaker Husemettin Cindoruk, acting president and a prominent DYP member, initially said he would stay out of the contest, but now says party pressure might induce him to stand.

Cindoruk sharpened the debate by telling newspapers this week that if he became Prime Minister he would try to limit the president's powers and might scrap the coalition with the SHP.

"A DYP-SHP coalition is not indispensable," he declared, adding that the DYP could attempt to run a minority government with its 182 seats or choose the second biggest party, the Motherland Party, as an alternative coalition partner.

His comments were a blow to the SHP, which agreed to back Demirel for the presidency mainly to preserve the coalition.

# Pindi frees 14 Arabs

PESHAWAR, Pakistan, May 13: Pakistani police released 14 Arabs detained as suspected militant extremists in the northwestern city of Peshawar on Wednesday and ordered them to leave the country within a week, reports Reuter.

Officials says between 150 and 200 Arabs have left Pakistan in the past month in a government sweep to get rid of Arabs suspected of using Pakistan as a base for Islamic militant activities in their home countries.

"They are being released on the assurance of their Arab and Pakistani guarantors that they have purchased their tickets and that they will leave Pakistan within the deadline," a senior official of the North

West Frontier Province said.

He said the 14 were from Egypt, Jordan, Yemen, Sudan and the Philippines and had asked to go to Jordan, Iraq, Tunisia and Libya.

The official, who declined to be named, said another 16 were still being detained in a marriage hall converted into a temporary jail in Peshawar. He said they would be released as soon as arrangements had been made for their departure, he said.

Islamabad has come under pressure from several Arab states, particularly Egypt, Algeria and Saudi Arabia who say Muslim militants were using the frontier province as a safe haven to plan operations elsewhere.

# Iraq allowed to fly in air exclusion zones

BAGHDAD, May 13: The United Nations has authorised Iraq to fly its planes in allied-imposed air exclusion zones to spray pesticides as part of an operation to boost its agriculture production, a UN official said Wednesday.

Mohammad Zejjari, the co-ordinator for the United Nations humanitarian activities in Iraq, told AFP that Polish pilots recruited by the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) would fly the planes.

The authorisation took effect May 8 and eight planes belonging to Iraq's Agriculture Ministry will be allowed to take part in the two-week operation.

# BRIEFLY

**Li gradually returning to work:** Chinese Premier Li Peng was reported Thursday to have chaired a government meeting for the first time since being hospitalized two weeks ago, indicating he is making a gradual return to work, AP reports from Beijing.

There was still no official word on the nature of his illness or his condition.

The People's Daily newspaper, in reporting on a national conference on science and technology, said, "Before the conference, Premier Li Peng chaired an administrative meeting called to review the situation of our nation's science and technology work and major tasks for the future."

It said Li entrusted Vice Premier Zhu Rongji to make an important speech at the conference, which Li did not attend.

**Winnie for ANC's reconstruction:** Winnie Mandela, estranged wife of African National Congress (ANC) President Nelson Mandela, called Tuesday for the "reconstruction" of the ANC to help the transition towards democracy, AFP says from Johannesburg.

Speaking on state-run television, Mandela, the darling of millions of young black radicals, said the "young blood" in the ANC needed to be promoted to top positions to back up her ageing husband.

Mandela, who was ousted from her top-ranking post in the ANC last year after a court found her guilty on kidnapping charges, added the ANC had to take some of the blame for the failure of political negotiations to lead to democracy after three years of talks with the white-minority government.

"Something is wrong somewhere, and the problem is not necessarily with the enemy (the government) alone," she said.



**Dalai Lama in Britain:** Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd on Wednesday assured Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama that Britain would pursue dialogue with China on human rights in Tibet, AFP reports from London.

Hurd received the Dalai Lama "in his capacity as distinguished religious leader" and "stressed our continuing concern" over human rights, a foreign office statement said.

He assured the Dalai Lama "We would continue to pursue our dialogue on human rights with the Chinese authorities at every opportunity," it said. He also assured the Dalai Lama "We would continue to urge the Chinese authorities to get into a real dialogue without preconditions, with the Tibetans, including the Dalai Lama, on Tibet."

**Two cops killed in Algeria:** Two policemen were killed by unidentified gunmen in western Algeria's Chlef Region Wednesday, officials announced, AFP reports from Algiers.

The two policemen were attacked in their car. It was not immediately known if other policemen were in the vehicle at the time of the attack, but were unharmed.

The assailants made a safe getaway.

Since the beginning of the month seven policemen have died in attacks attributed by the authorities to Muslim fundamentalist groups, according to an unofficial count.

**Poison claims 11 Indonesians:** At least 11 people, 10 of them in the same family, died after eating traditional home-made cookies in south Sulawesi, a news report said yesterday, AFP reports from Jakarta.

The Daily Suara Karya said 10 members of the family of Petta Serang and a gardener died after eating the corn-flavoured cookies known as "koko langi" on Sunday in the village of Lette in Ujung Pandang regency.

It said Petta Serang himself died Monday while his wife, four children, other family members and the gardener died Tuesday and Wednesday in hospital.

A local health official, Jasmin, said his team was still checking the cause of the death by examining the materials used for making the cookies.

# Tenzing's nephew dies while descending Everest

KATMANDU, May 13: The nephew of a sherpa who guided Sir Edmund Hillary up Mount Everest to his death while descending the world's tallest peak, the Tourism Ministry said Thursday reports AP.

The accident came just a few weeks before the 40th anniversary of the first successful assault on Everest on May 29, 1953.

The body of Lobsang Tshering Bhutia, 41, was found Wednesday, said a ministry official, but he could not say when Bhutia actually died.

Bhutia was the nephew of Tenzing Norgay, who accompanied Hillary on the first climb to the summit of the 29,248-foot (8,950-meter)

# Jayewardene rejects suggestions he should return to politics

COLOMBO, May 13: In the wake of the assassinations of two top Sri Lankan politicians the name of former President Junius Richard Jayewardene has been on everyone's tongues, reports AFP.

Many have been looking to the 86-year-old veteran politician as a strong and experienced contender to fill the political vacuum created by the killings of opposition leader Lalith Athulathmudali and President Ranasinghe Premadasa in the space of eight days.

Others in this dazed nation feared "old fox" or JR as Jayewardene is fondly known, had died too.

One tale had it he had succumbed to sorrow after the assassinations of two of his closest associates.

The rumour gained credence following his absence from last week's funeral of his former Prime Minister Premadasa, whom he had described as "my oldest friend and colleague" in politics. Athulathmudali was Jayewardene's National Security Minister during his United National Party's (UNP) rule from 1977 to 1988.

Officials at his residence eventually had to come forward to dismiss the rumours. Jayewardene was, they said, " hale and hearty."

Since then, the man who revolutionised Sri Lankan politics has filled the news rejecting suggestions he should return to politics.

He told the Sunday Times here he was not prepared to return to the presidency even

if invited by the government.

"I am now retired and not even a member of the UNP. To be a politician one should be like a race-horse running for the derby... I am not fit to run any election campaign. I have physical disabilities, though not evident," said Jayewardene.

In a statement Wednesday, Jayewardene said, "I am being constantly disturbed by telephone calls, as well as letters and visitors, inquiring whether I intend to come back to public and political life again and inviting me to do so."

"I have publicly stated that I do not intend to do so," he said, adding President Dingiri Banda Wijetunga and Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe were aware of

the need to preserve democratic freedoms.

Despite the humble rejection, many politicians believe the two-time president still wields much more power within the UNP than he is letting on and is still a force to be reckoned with.

This fact is not lost on the new leadership, whose senior members owe their career to the astute statesman.

Newspapers this week carried photographs of the president with Jayewardene, while Wickremesinghe, a close relative, thanked the man behind the UNP's landslide victory in 1977 parliamentary polls.

The architect of that victory and of the policy framework put in place thereafter was President JR Jayewardene. I wish to thank him for provid-

ing me with the opportunity to enter politics," Wickremesinghe said.

Since he exited the ruling party after handing over the presidential baton after 11 years to Premadasa in 1989, UNP members have looked on Jayewardene as the father figure.

This is the second time a crisis involving Athulathmudali and Premadasa has sparked rumours that Jayewardene would return to politics to maintain stability.

In August 1991, Athulathmudali led a revolt within the UNP to impeach Premadasa, making tongues wag that Jayewardene would take over the reins of government should the president fall.

But Premadasa survived, sacked Athulathmudali and his group of dissidents and

emerged stronger than ever. Jayewardene maintained silence throughout.

For all Jayewardene's popularity and the economic achievements of his presidency, he has also received his fair share of criticism.

One of the most controversial issues during his term as head of state was the introduction of a French-style constitution in 1978, under which he promoted himself from Prime Minister to executive president.

This constitution, remains Jayewardene's most disputed legacy to the nation.

Athulathmudali and the opposition rebelled against Premadasa in 1991, demanding the abolition of the executive presidency.

# '79 army revolt was a coup: Kim

SEOUL, May 13: President Kim Young-sam, under pressure from the opposition, said Thursday a 1979 army revolt was a military coup, a statement that could incriminate his two predecessors, reports AP.

Kim's declaration is expected to have a direct effect on a flurry of criminal suits filed or being prepared against former Presidents Chun Doo-hwan and Roh Tae-woo, who seized power in the coup.

"As President Kim Young-sam has stated before, the December 12, 1979, incident was kind of a military coup staged by officers against their superiors," chief presidential spokesman Lee Kyung-jae said in a statement.