

## IPU confce concludes today German MPs for strong steps against Bosnia war criminals

CANBERRA, Sept 17: German parliamentarians, here for an Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) conference, called today for strong international measures against war criminals in the one-time Yugoslavia, reports AFP.

One senior German government MP, Leni Fischer, told the congress she was "really ashamed that within a civilised region that Europe is supposed to be these things can happen."

The Germans have received initial IPU backing through a firmly worded resolution condemning war crimes and calling for a permanent international court to try those responsible.

The full IPU conference, of about 500 MPs from 103 nations, will vote on the draft reso-

lution on Saturday's final day of the week-long congress.

The resolution says the IPU meeting "severely condemns the odious practice known as 'ethnic cleansing' in war-torn Bosnia and Herzegovina," and calls for "a statute for an international court of criminal justice," and requests all governments to grant refuge to "victims of expulsion and displacement."

The resolution would not have a binding force on the member parliaments of the IPU.

But IPU delegates are expected to raise the issue when they return to their national parliament, with the German delegates hoping the additional political pressure will spur world action.

## Euro-Parliament votes for use of force in Bosnia

STRASBOURG, France, Sept 17: The European Parliament voted on Thursday for military action to end the war in Bosnia, calling on the 12 EC-member states to enforce United Nations resolutions, reports Reuters.

Although the vote is not binding on EC governments and the assembly has no power over foreign policy, it was the first time the parliament had voted for the use of force in what used to be Yugoslavia.

The proposal was tabled and supported by most of the parliament's political parties, including to the socialists, Christian democrats and liberals.

AFP adds: International peace mediators Lord Owen and Thorvald Stoltenberg told Turkish Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin Thursday that they hoped to see a peace plan for Bosnia-Herzegovina before the

end of the year.

The three men met shortly after Bosnian Muslim and Serb leaders signed a ceasefire pact in Geneva which called for a "prompt cessation of all hostilities and military conflicts" between Muslims and Serbs "immediately and by no later than September 18" (Saturday) at noon.

EC mediator Owen and his U.N. counterpart Stoltenberg told Cetin in Istanbul that they hoped to see a "definitive peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina" before the onset of winter.

And Cetin said Turkey hoped that the plan would be "realistic and lasting."

Cetin added he wanted to hold talks with Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic before a meeting of all three warring sides convened for Tuesday at 11:00 a.m. (0900 GMT) at

Sarajevo airport.

According to Cetin, Owen talked during the meeting of the Muslims' difficulty in getting their "just and well-founded" demands to territory and an access to the sea.

The two mediators gave a brief statement Thursday when they arrived in Istanbul saying they were "satisfied" with the ceasefire pact signed between Izetbegovic and the head of the Bosnian Serb assembly, Momcilo Krajisnik, representing Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Kradic.

Earlier Thursday Cetin told representatives of European nations Europe was "morally guilty for the deaths of 200,000 people in Bosnia."

Meanwhile, withdrawing Croat troops set fire to three Serb villages in a disputed region of southern Croatia just before U.N. peacekeeping troops

moved in to enforce a local ceasefire.

"I guess they are taking care of business before we get in," said one U.N. soldier on Thursday as he watched the smoke rising from the villages about 185 km (115 miles) south of Zagreb.

U.N. Protection Force (Unprofor) troops arrived in armoured vehicles at the hamlet of Donje Selo only moments after the departing Croat soldiers set barns and houses alight.

The Croats also ignited ammunition stockpiles, producing loud explosions over the surrounding villages.

The effects of the Croatian withdrawal resembled a brush fire as smoke billowed for several kilometres (miles) along a stretch of land below a coastal mountain range in northern Dalmatia.

## Off the Record

### 'Rising Sun' raising ruckus over taboo terms in Japan

Tokyo: "Rising Sun" is raising a ruckus even before opening here. But unlike in the United States, the fuss — at least for now — isn't over whether the movie bashes Japan, reports AP.

Instead, conflict is said to be brewing over racial and caste references in the Japanese-language dialogue, taboo terms deemed inappropriate for audiences here.

According to newspaper reports, the Japanese distributor is insisting on overcutting the scenes in question before the film is released.

In a related flap, press reports say "Rising Sun" was rejected for screening at the Tokyo International Film Festival later this month. Neither the studio nor the film festival would comment.

The movie, starring Sean Connery and Wesley Snipes, was the target of demonstrations by Asian-American groups in several US cities when it opened in the United States this summer.

The protesters argued that the movie's Japanese characters are portrayed as sinister and predatory.

Based on a novel by "Jurassic Park" author Michael Crichton the film is about the investigation of the murder of an American woman at the US offices of a Japanese corporation. The broader theme is Japan's economic power.

The movie, which has made more than 50 million dollars in the United States, is to open in Japan in October or November, said Paul Hanneman, general manager of distributor Twentieth Century Fox-Far East in Tokyo.

He refused to discuss any specific changes being contemplated for Japanese audiences, but said nothing was being done to alter the movie's overall content.

### Crime capitalised for home security business

PALMER PARK: A man who allegedly threatened women with a crossbow before raping them apparently capitalised on his crime to help his home security system business, police said, reports AP.

Filers seized at the home of Alphonzo Quinn, 36, refer to a "crime wave" in the neighbourhood and to a woman's dog being killed by a crossbow in one of the attacks, police said Tuesday.

"It seems to me that Mr Quinn is doing nothing more than taking advantage of the streak of terror that came about through his own cause as a means of economic gain," said Prince George's County Police Chief David Mitchell.

"Don't let it happen to you!" the filer read in part. "Please call me for a free home security system demonstration." The filer is signed "Your Neighbour, Alphonzo Quinn, Home Security Consultant."

Mitchell said Quinn has been charged with one count of first-degree rape in a September 5 incident in which a masked man broke in through a sliding glass patio door, bound his victim and threatened her with both a crossbow and a gun before sexually assaulting her.

In one attack, the rapist fatally shot a woman's dog with a crossbow. In another attack, he tied up the woman's husband and forced him to watch while he raped her.

### 5-yr-old girl receives six organs in 15-hr operation

PITTSBURGH, Pennsylvania: Laura Davies, a five-year-old English girl, received six organs in a 15-hour operation on Thursday, over a year after undergoing a liver and small-intestine transplant that proved unsuccessful, reports Reuters.

Laura was in critical condition but recovering in the intensive care unit at children's hospital of Pittsburgh, hospital spokeswoman Margaret Lemasters said.

Surgeons replaced her stomach, large intestine, small intestine, liver, pancreas and kidneys.

"The procedure went very smoothly and there were no complications," Lemasters said. "The surgeons were pleased with the results."

Laura entered the operating room at 10:00 pm eastern time Wednesday (0200 GMT Thursday), the organs were implanted around 3:00 am (0700 GMT) and the operation was completed around 1:00 pm (1700 GMT), the hospital said.

"Her surgeons feel that transplanting the entire block of organs represents Laura's best chance to regain a better quality of life," it said.

Laura had been waiting for a suitable organ donor since late August. The hospital said the donor was of similar size and blood type to Laura, but gave no other information.

Earlier the Manchester evening news quoted Fran Davies as saying, "now is the hardest part. All we can do is wait and pray."

At a news conference this month, Laura regaled reporters with a song and said she was unafraid of a second operation.

The operation will cost about 500,000 dollar Lemasters said. She said it would be financed in part from a trust fund established by Laura's parents after the first operation.

Donors to the first operation included Saudi Arabia's King Fahd, who have about 275,000 dollar.

### Explosion at RSS HQ: Muslim merchant held

MADRAS, Sept 17: Police in India's southern Tamil Nadu state have arrested a Muslim leather merchant suspected of organising a bomb blast that killed 11 members of a Hindu militant group in Madras last month, investigators said on Thursday, reports Reuters.

Officials of the federal Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) said they arrested Rafeeq Ahmed on Monday for allegedly planning the explosion at the headquarters of the rightwing Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) national volunteers corp.

The CBI displayed photographs of three others Muslims allegedly involved in the incident. One of them, Hyder Ali, was a Hindu until he recently converted to Islam, CBI official said.

Police arrested Palani Baba, a Muslim cleric, soon after the explosion ripped through the two-storey building housing the RSS headquarters.



A policeman is positioned before the barricaded Indian Youth Congress office in New Delhi Sept 17 where a car bomb attack a week earlier killed eight people and injured 36. The billboard, with a portrait of Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao, announces a rally by his ruling Congress Party Sept 24.

## Japan's cabinet okays reform bills

TOKYO, Sept 17: Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa's cabinet on Friday approved a package of bills aimed at overhauling radically Japan's political and election systems and stemming decades of rampant official corruption, reports Reuters.

Hosokawa has won points for overcoming differences among his feuding coalition partners — the heads of eight groups spanning a wide political spectrum — to forge a reform plan for the new session of parliament opening today.

Political analysts said however that he faces an uphill battle in parliament, where the conservative Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) is poised to challenge the reform plan and poke holes in Hosokawa's new economic stimulus package.

The LDP lost its parliamentary majority in the July general

election after ruling continuously for 38 years.

"My government will endeavour to pass reform bills within this year," Hosokawa said in a statement issued after Friday's cabinet meeting.

"An early realisation of electoral reform is the number one priority of this administration," Hosokawa, after forming his government five weeks ago, said he would take political responsibility — widely interpreted as a promise to resign — if he failed to push through the reform bills.

The centrepiece of the four-bill package is a plan to replace Japan's multi-seat constituencies for the lower house with a system that combines 250 single-seat polling districts with 250 seats based on proportional representation.

In the present system, parties field several candidates in the same district in hopes of garnering as many seats as possible. Candidates of the same party, unable to compete on issues of policy, vie to outspend one another in hopes of attracting the largest following of voters.

The system enabled the LDP, as the richest party, to win the largest share of seats. It also fuelled widespread corruption.

LDP politicians, needing funds in excess of legal limits to win elections, wooed companies and even gangsters with promises of favours in exchange for donations.

The proposed reform legislation seeks an immediate ban on corporate donations to individual politicians. Five years later, the government would consider limits on company contributions to political parties.

The plan envisages government subsidies for political parties to the tune of about 40 billion yen (380 million dollar) per year or 335 yen (3 dollar) per citizen. It also proposes a tougher political funds control law to punish legislators found guilty of bribe-taking and vote-buying.

"If all goes well, the new government could succeed in passing some kind of reform legislation but not what they had planned on," said Keio University expert Seizaburo Sato.

"The LDP's main motive is to exploit the coalition's divisions and delay passage of the reform bills for as long as possible," he said.

"If that fails, they'll push for plenty of changes to end up with a watered-down compromise plan that may not please anyone."

## 8 Kashmiris killed in gunbattle with BSF

SRINAGAR (India), Sept 17: Indian border guards raided a Muslim militant hideout in Kashmir early Thursday, triggering a gunbattle which left eight militants and an officer dead, officials said here, reports AFP.

Troops of the border security force (BSF) raided the hideout in the town of Ajas-Bandipur in northern Baramulla district following a tip-off that the rebels were planning a major strike, local BSF chief PC Dorga said.

Seven assault rifles, a pistol and some grenades were found in the house after the shoot-out which left one BSF inspector and eight militants dead.

A militant and a trooper were killed in a gun battle Wednesday in central Badgam district. Another militant was killed on the outskirts of the

summer capital Srinagar, an official spokesman said.

He said two civilians were killed in separate incidents. No details were available.

Five pedestrians were injured when Muslim separatist lobbed a grenade at an army convoy in Anantnag district on Thursday and three women wounded by a landmine blast in Telwal town.

Militants also torched a bridge in the state, which has been wracked by their violent campaign for secession since 1989.

Kashmir, India's only Muslim-majority state, is claimed by Pakistan. The two neighbours have fought two of their three wars since independence from British colonial rule in 1947 over the disputed province.



File photo dated Aug 22, 1993 of Chinese paramount leader Deng Xiaoping with his daughter Deng Rong, one day after he turned 89.

## Lockerbie suspects deny charges

LONDON, Sept 17: Two Libyans accused of blowing up a Pan Am Boeing 747 over the Scottish town of Lockerbie in 1988, causing 270 deaths, have strongly denied any involvement in the attack, their lawyer Alistair Duff said Thursday, reports AFP.

After spending two days talking to his clients in Tripoli earlier this week, Duff released a statement saying his clients feared they would get rough justice if they were extradited to Britain.

The two suspects, Abdel Baset Ali Mohammed and Al Amin Khalifa Fhimah, "deny emphatically the charges made against them," Duff said, adding "they are principally concerned about the prospects of receiving a fair trial in any jurisdiction, including Scotland."

## UN officials in Somalia ready to sit with Aideed

NAIROBI, Sept 17: UN officials in Somalia are ready to hold talks with fugitive warlord Mohamed Farah Aideed, a close aide to UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali said in the Kenyan capital Thursday, reports AFP.

UN political adviser Chinmaya Gharekhan said Aideed had "no choice but to cooperate," at a press conference screened on the US information agency's satellite television channel Worldnet.

However for talks to take place Aideed must genuinely wish to resume the process to rebuild war-shattered Somalia, which began at a conference organised by the United Nations in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa in March, Gharekhan said.

"All he has to do is to stop his confrontation," the UN official added.

The UN has put a 25,000-dollar reward on the warlord's head. Aideed's followers were responsible for the killing of 24 Pakistani peacekeepers in Mogadishu June 5, which prompted US-led retaliatory attacks that have left hundreds of Somalis dead, including many women and children.

Meanwhile in an interview published Thursday in the Italian weekly "Sette", Aideed, who heads the Somali National Alliance, said he was "ready to meet all representatives of the Somali factions to give a new impetus to the Addis Ababa accords."

Describing himself as leader of a "coalition representing 70 per cent of the population," Aideed said he United States was trying to invade Somalia and "impose a kind of colonial system."

## Human rights activists occupy Croatian embassy office in Bonn

BONN, Sept 17: Three members of a German human rights group occupied an office of the Croatian embassy in Bonn on Thursday, demanding that Zagreb stop what it called brutalities by ethnic Croat forces in Bosnia, reports Reuters.

Tilman Zuehl, head of the Society for Endangered Peoples, said Zagreb could influence Bosnian Croat militias.

He accused Bosnian Croats of killing some 2,000 people in a drive to push Muslims from the regions of Mostar and Travnik.

## Benazir-Murtaza rift hurting PPP's image ahead of polls

ISLAMABAD, Sept 17: Pakistan's leading political family, with a painful history of suffering at the hands of foes, is now troubled from inside by a rift between the heirs of executed Premier Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, reports AFP.

With elections only 19 days away, a row between former Premier Benazir Bhutto and her self-exiled younger brother Mir Murtaza Bhutto is worrying the rank and file of her Pakistan People's Party (PPP).

"It is hurting the party's image on the eve of the polls," said a PPP candidate for National assembly, who did not want to be named.

Murtaza, 38, entered the

electoral race from his Damascus refuge in multiple constituencies in Sindh, a PPP stronghold and home province of the family, apparently without the blessings of his sister.

Rowdiness by Murtaza's supporters marred an important public rally Bhutto addressed in Sindh's capital city of Karachi a week ago, drawing a strong denunciation from the 40-year old PPP leader.

Murtaza has attacked the policies of PPP and what he calls the presence of intelligence agents and turncoats in the party, in a series of long-distance telephone interviews to Pakistani newspapers.

But unlike his sister and

PPP Co-Chairperson Benazir Bhutto, her mother Nurat Bhutto who is Chairperson of the PPP, has backed her son's decision to contest the polls.

Nurat, admitting brother-sister differences, told reporters at the family ancestral home in Larkana Wednesday that though it was "too late," she was still trying to bring about a "patchup."

Expressing her wish to see her son gaining Sindh's chief ministership, Nurat blamed PPP provincial Chief Qaim Ali Shah, a former chief minister, for creating the differences by influencing Bhutto's mind against Murtaza.

Her support for Murtaza's

political ambitions has evoked criticism from those perturbed by the brother-sister friction. They hold the mother mainly responsible for the unsavoury situation the party finds itself in.

Murtaza left the country after his father was overthrown in 1977 by General Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq who sent Zulfikar Ali Bhutto to the gallows two years later for an alleged political murder conspiracy.

Until his death in a 1988 plane crash, Zia relentlessly hounded the Bhutto family and the PPP during his decade-long military rule, jailing Benazir from time to time before letting her leave Pakistan in early 80s.

Benazir Bhutto returned in 1986 after Zia lifted martial law and inducted a civilian government under Premier Mohammad Khan Junejo under the pressure of international opinion.

While a band of supporters grouped in a so-called Shaheed (martyr) Bhutto Committee are now handling the election campaign for Murtaza, a question mark hangs over his return home.

Caretaker Premier Moeen Qureshi, earlier this month ruled out amnesty sought for him by Nurat, saying he saw no reason to grant a pardon because of "a number of cases pending (against him) and

awaiting trial."

As leader of the Al-Zulfikar organisation he founded during exile to resist Zia regime, Murtaza was implicated in a 1981 hijacking of a Pakistani airliner and several other acts of alleged terrorism.

He was sentenced in absentia to 14 years in prison, but during the 1988-1990 government of his sister the sentences handed down by military courts were quashed. However, cases against Murtaza on other counts remain.

Many PPP activists fear Murtaza's leap into the electoral fray could lead to an internal tussle for leadership, if he wins in the elections and returns.

## Guerillas attack SLA positions

MARJOYOUN (Lebanon), Sept 17: Guerillas attacked two Israeli-backed militia positions in South Lebanon today, security sources said, reports Reuters.

They said the guerillas fired 81 MM mortar bombs at a South Lebanon Army (SLA) post near Kfar Hounneh village on the edge of Israel's self-proclaimed security zone.

The guerillas also fired anti-aircraft machine guns at the SLA's hilltop Sojoud position, they said.

SLA militiamen retaliated by firing several mortar bombs at guerilla targets to the north.

There was no immediate word on casualties.