

International

Peace will never come to Bosnia, says Alija

NEW YORK, Oct 27: Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic believes that peace will never come to his country. New York Times reported today's edition, reports Reuter.

"The criminals have to be removed," the Bosnian President said in a meeting with editors of the newspaper. "That is the most important question."

He was referring to Bosnian Serb political leader Radovan Karadzic and military commander Ratko Mladic, who have led the rebellion against the Muslim-dominated Bosnian government.

Izetbegovic was quoted by The Times as saying he had received private indications that Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic would somehow remove the pair, whose fate has not been addressed in the peace plans under discussion.

Izetbegovic said it was important to find a role for Rus-

sian in any NATO-led peace-keeping force because the upcoming Russian elections could bring extreme nationalists to power. The Times reported. It quoted the Bosnian President as saying it was important to support Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

"All of us in the world should help Yeltsin," the newspaper quoted Izetbegovic as saying. "Whether he is good or bad, all the others are worse than he is."

The newspaper said Izetbegovic also discussed the tensions between his government and its Croatian allies. But the president did not expect war to resume between the two and he called on the West to keep pressure on President Franjo Tudjman of Croatia to preserve the integrity of Bosnia.

Izetbegovic said democratic elections were a key to eventual reconciliation and would drive belligerent Serbs and Croats from power, the New York Times reported.

Aid organisations for 'safe havens' in Jaffna**Chandrika rules out foreign mediation in ethnic conflict**

COLOMBO, Oct 27: President Chandrika Kumaratunga ruled out foreign mediation in Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict, which took a turn for the worst with a sudden surge in violence, a state-owned daily reported today, reports AFP.

Kumaratunga told a meeting in New York that the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) imposed war on her government and said talks could resume only if the rebels surrendered arms and agreed to a truce.

"One year ago we were foolish not to lay down conditions," Kumaratunga was quoted by the Daily News as saying. She was referring to unconditional talks with the LTTE which eventually broke off a truce on April 19.

The Daily News said the president ruled out third-party foreign mediation to

end the 23-year-old separatist campaign of the LTTE which is leading a guerrilla war to establish an independent homeland for minority Tamils.

"I can't find any better conflict resolution specialists than Sri Lankans themselves," said Kumaratunga whose radical political plan to end the bloodshed was rejected by hard-liners on both sides of the country's ethnic divide.

Kumaratunga's security forces have stepped up a major offensive against the LTTE inside their Northern Jaffna Peninsula stronghold since October 17 and the rebels have retaliated with a spate of attacks against non-military targets.

AFP adds Humanitarian organisations in Sri Lanka's embattled North-

ern Jaffna Peninsula are seeking "safe havens" for civilians following a major military onslaught in the region. Tamil guerrillas said

thousand refugees moving into Thenmaratchi in the face of an army advance on the town of Jaffna.

The LTTE statement quoted aid workers as saying that due to the government's intention to carry out a major military offensive there would be a "large-scale displacement of people" if a "safe haven" were not declared soon.

The LTTE said that over 300,000 civilians in the Jaffna Peninsula had been displaced and made refugees by the latest military offensive codenamed Rivirasa (Sunshine).

The guerrillas accused air force planes of attacking Ariyalai in the LTTE-controlled peninsula Thursday killing 10 civilians including a newly-married couple.

Roh apologises for accumulating slush fund of \$ 650m

SEOUL, Oct 27: Former South Korean President Roh Tae-Woo on Friday apologised to the nation for accumulating a slush fund of 650 million dollars while in office, but said he had only 180 million left, reports AFP.

"I, Roh Tae-Woo, stand here to apologise to the people and confess contritely to raising a political fund," Roh said in a 10-minute-long nationally televised address from his home in Seoul.

"I feel ashamed and full of remorse for betraying the expectations of the people," said Roh who served as president from 1987 to 1993.

He said the political fund totalled 650 million dollars and was raised mainly in donations from businessmen. Most was used for political activities such as party operations, he said.

Off the Record

Emma Blaydon of Christie's auction house shows a hat and cane on Thursday, once the property of Charlie Chaplin, which are to lead a sale of Chaplin artifacts early in December. The collection was compiled by Chaplin's half-brother, the late Wheeler Dryden. The hat and cane are expected to go under the hammer for over 10,000 pounds.

— AFP/UNB photo

3 wishing cards for his beloved

WASHINGTON: President Bill Clinton gave First Lady Hillary Clinton a whistle for her 48th birthday Thursday, an ordinary blower but one shaped like a woman holding the world above her head, reports AFP.

At a small birthday party in the White House Rose Garden, the President explained what had inspired this gift, suitable for wearing around the neck.

The design remind him of his wife, because she is always doing something for women around the world, said the First Lady's spokesman Neil Lattimore.

Lattimore said Hillary Clinton had received three of the gifts from her husband of an undisclosed nature, as well as three birthday cards. Clinton only showed the gathering two of the cards but reddened when his wife mentioned the existence of a third.

I guess I will have to save it for my memories, she said. The First Lady then left for New York where she was to visit a breast cancer research centre.

The First couple spent the afternoon together, we gave the President of the United States the afternoon off so he could enjoy Mrs Clinton's birthday, said White House spokesman Michael McCurry.

Bill Clinton turned 49 in August.

Taiwan issue key obstacle to Sino-US ties: Qian

of Sino-US relations," Qian was quoted as saying by the official Xinhua news agency.

Bilateral contacts were suspended by China in June after Taiwanese President Lee Teng-Hui was allowed to make a "private" visit to the United States.

Beijing strongly opposes any international moves that might be taken as lending de-facto official recognition of the nationalist government in Taipei.

Despite Qian's remarks, Beijing has noticeably toned down its rhetoric on the dispute over Taiwan, dropping as a precondition for normalising Sino-US relations its demand for a concrete pledge from Washington to ban future visits by Taiwanese officials.

He also stressed that those relations were an internal Chinese affair that "require no international venue or outside help."

Rafsanjani defends role of clergymen in politics

TEHRAN, Oct 27:

President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani on Thursday defended the role of the Shi'ite Muslim clergy in Iranian politics insisting that religion and the state were inseparable.

His intervention came

amid growing debate on the issue in Iran between Liberal Islamic intellectuals led by philosopher Abdolkarim Sorush and Islamic fundamentalists.

The 1979 Islamic revolution which toppled the Shah's secular regime is not separable from the clergy.

Our leader and heads of the

legislative and executive

branches of government are

clergies, said Rafsanjani himself a clergymen.

It is not right to exclude the clergy from the administration of the country, he said.

Sorush, a professor who is popular among university students has challenged the rule of the clergy in Iran and called for separation of state from religion.

His political views have angered many Islamic conservatives and hardliners who have attacked and disrupted the professor's speeches at universities in Tehran and Esfahan in central Iran.

Since the attacks newspapers have commented for and against Sorush.

No split from Canada without consent, warns aborigines

the Crees Montagnais and

Hurons said they recognise

the right of Quebecers to

express an opinion on their

future but insisted that such

a decision would be seen by

the aboriginal communities

as simply consultative.

The Indian chiefs citing

Canada's revised constitution

of 1982, which was adopted

despite opposition from the

Quebec government do not

recognise the province's

right to take over the federal

government's obligations to

the aboriginal communities.

Some aboriginal communites

are stressing an even

tough line the Crees of

James Bay, for instance,

flatly refuse to accept that

Ottawa can negotiate the

transfer of the crown's In-

dian treaty obligations to

Quebec without their consent.

One thorny problem is

over the insistence of the

Quebec government that

while Quebec has the right to

secede from Canada in the

current province's borders may

secede from Quebec.

The Indians and Inuit —

known in Canada as the first

nations, because their people

were the first to arrive here

— currently have reserves totalling 14,770 square kilometres (56,000 square miles) within Quebec.

They are also seeking ownership through the courts of approximately a further one million square kilometres (390,000 square

miles) of Quebec territory, or roughly two-thirds of the province's total land mass.

Among these land claims

is a Cree demand in the Bay

James region for a territory as large as Japan.

In southern Quebec, the Mohawks are claiming title to the island of Montreal while the Algonquins have an outstanding claim for the territory from Quebec City to Ottawa (including ownership of the land on which the federal parliament sits).

To prove their determination to be masters over their own destiny, two of Quebec's aboriginal communities will hold their own referendum before the province-wide poll on October 30.

Next Tuesday, Crees will be asked to say simply whether they wish to recognise the outcome of a Quebec decision to separate, while further north a similar question will be put to the Inuit on Thursday.

Although there have been some successes — for in-

stance, Quebec's granting of

autonomy to some Inuit, At-

tikamek and Montagnais

communities — there are

many unresolved disputes

between different first

nations and both the provincial

and federal governments.

To prove their determina-

tion to be masters over their

own destiny, two of Quebec's

aboriginal communities will

hold their own referendum

before the province-wide poll on October 30.

His trip to attend the

United Nations 50th anniver-

sary commemoration in New

York was the high point of a

two-week foreign tour that

included a summit of Ibero-

American leaders in Bar-

iloche, Argentina and a simi-

lar meeting of non-aligned

heads of state and govern-

ment in Cartagena, Colum-

bia.