CPI blames Gowda for not consulting UF partners

Communist partner in lulia's three-month-old coalition gov ernment has warned that time Minister HD Deve Gowde had not vet mastered the art of heading a loose knit allance

reports AFP. AB Bardhan, general secretary of the Communist Barty of India, who gave the government a six out of 10 rating forts performance since June was quoted as saying today "It is different from running a oneparty government.

There has to be mere consultation, more corbensus. more mutual discussion

Bardhan said Deve Gwda, a relative until he was elected prime minister of the United Front alliance, was not donsulting other partners enough

"You can say the prine minister is not consulting as much as we would like but I'm sure he will get into the practice." The Times of India quited him

NEW DELHI. Sept 16 The as saying in a television inter-

Bardhan's gave the centre left alliance, which took office on June 1. "six marks of satisfaction and four marks for dissatisfaction and said his party would not hesitate to criticise a

policy it left was wrong. He also said Deve Gowda held too many discussions with deposed prime minister PV Narasimha Rao, whose Congress (I) party was decimated in the last general elections

"It is not necessary to consult Rao so much," he said. "We have to take our own decisions as the United Front Bardhan described Deve

Gowda, who flaunts his rural upbringing and adopts a conciliatory tone whenever criticised. as being "soft spoken and not very arrogant

The United Front had to review its common economic agenda soon after taking power when left parties attacked.

Perry tries to win support for military showdown with Iraq

Iraq to keep its promise not to fire at planes policing 'no fly' zone

WASHINGTON, Sept 16: A senior Iraqi official on Sunday said Iraq would keep its promise not to fire at US and allied warplanes policing 'no fly zones over northern and southern Iraq, but warned that continued U:5 military buildup in the region could cause problems, reports Reuter.

Iraq's envoy to the UN Nizar Hamdoon, told CNN that US deployment of additional plane ships and troops to the Gulf was "not a good sign."

Asked to respond to comments from US defence secretary William Perry on Sunday that the United States could decide to strike again at Iraq. Hamdoon said . "that's up to him. We have declared our position clearly which is if

they don't shoot at us not going to shoot at then. So I think the ball is in the

American court right now. Asked if the buildup could reverse Iraq's pledge not to fire at the US planes. Hamdoon said, all this depends on how the American military activities will evolve. If there will be any provocations, then it is difficult to think that the situation will continue as clam as it is now, he said

Handoon said it was difficult to tell whether the latest crisis between Iraq and the United States was dving down.

"We are in a waiting status waiting to see whatever will develop," he said. "If the American military buildup continues, then I think we could

be back to problems. Hamdoon called for dialogue between Baghdad and Washington, and rejected a question on whether Washington could

"trust" Iraqi President Saddam

Hussein's pledge to stop the

missile attacks Another report from Manama, says Defence Secretary William Perry said on Sunday that Iraq had rebuilt air defence units and fired six missiles at US warplanes since US missile strikes against Iraq in early September.

For the security of this region, to continue Operation southern Watch - that is the linchpin of security and stability in this region," Perry told reporters in Bahrain.

That Operation Southern

Watch. just vesterday we had

constituting air defence units in the area, they challenged it by moving mobile surface-to-air missiles into the area and they challenged it by firing six missiles at out planes. These were wild firings but nevertheless they were firings.

dom of more strikes at President Saddam Hussein.

conducted more than 100 sor ties over southern Iraq. That operation has been challenged by the Iraqis," Perry said.

"They challenged it by re-

Another Reuter report from Kuwait says, US Defence Secretary William Perry tried to win support for a possible military showdown with Iraq on visits to three Gulf Arab states but doubts surfaced over the wis-

ing booths.

Second leg of polls in Kashmir

Polling begins amid low turn-out of voters

SRINAGAR, India, Sept 16: Polling began on a subdued note today in the strife-torn Indian state of Kashmir at the start of the second leg of provincial elections, the first in nearly 10 years, reports AFP.

Small numbers of people were seen at voting booths when they opened at 7.00 am (0130) GMT) in 23 constituencies across Kashmir, including the Hindu-dominated area of Jammu, the state winter capital, officials said

A total of 238 candidates are contesting today's polls. Officials said only a fraction of the registered electorate of 1.9 million voted in the first hour of balloting at 2,330 vot-

"The turnout has been unusually low here," said Ghulam Rasool, an election official in

the southern Kashmir town of Pulwama. "However. there have been no cases of coercion."

Parliamentary elections in Kashmir, held under unprecedented security in May, were marred by charges of rigging and voter intimidation by In-

dian troops. But the India's autonomous Election Commission claimed the first phase of the current polls, which opened on September 7, attracted a more sponta-

neous turnout. Meanwhile, an anti-election general strike by the powerful all parties Freedom Conference. grouping some 30 Muslim political and rebel outfits, crippled the Kashmir valley for the second day today.

Shops, offices and banks were closed and traffic staved off the roads, witnesses said

Sukh Ram alleges plot to discredit Rao

NEW DELHI, Sept 5: A former Indian miniter has claimed huge sums of unaccounted funds seizes from his homes were part of a vider plot to smear Congress Pity chief P

V Narasimha Rao, rejorts AFP am being a male 'sacrificial pawn in politica intrigues for power, former Hecommunications minister tukh Ram said in remarks pullished to-

"It is a plot to digredit P V Narasimha Rao." In told the Press Trust of Inlia news agency on Sunday h London, where he was reportedly receiving medical treatment.

Ram, suspendedfrom Rao's Congress (I) Partyafter detectives from the Cental Bureau of Investigation (CB) found more than one million-dollars in cash and jewelley in his homes, has been of ered home by police.

Ram said he knew nothing about the money, sying: have already gone on hoord to state that the recovered money does not belong to me and I will

state it to investigating authori

ties to whom it belongs. The former minister, whose rags-to riches story made newspaper headlines recently said he was being used as " pawn in the power game" between india's new coalition government and the Congress government it replaced.

Rao, who was voted out of the prime n nister's office in May has been linked to several corruption scandals including al leged involvement in a 100,000 dollar fraud case. He denies all

allegations Ram meanwhile was scheduled to fly to India later today to face a federal investigation. He had stalled his return on medical grounds for three weeks.

He defended his period in charge Telecommunications Department.

I brought full transparency to the department then it had to deal with the largest bidders in the wake of the opening up of the sector in the aftermath of liberalisation," he said.

BRIFFILY

17 killed in Vietnam storm: Violent

tropical storms last weekleft at least 17 people dead and thou-

reported Monday. AP repets from Hanoi.

homes by floodwaters by theweekend.

ago. Reuter report from Jakarta.

Suharto.

New Delhi.

Islamabad

being investigated.

sands homeless in centri provinces of Vietnam, official media

swept away by floods between Tuesday and Friday. Heavy rain

continues over much of the rea. In Ha Tinh province, the worst

affected, some 11,4,000 peple had been forced out of their

Clinton congraulates Yeltsin: Presi

dent Bill Clinton talked to lussian President Boris Yeltsin

Sunday and wished him well head of his heart surgery later

with the President in lowa that he 10 minute conversation was

initiated by Clinton as "a frienchip call to touch base." Clinton

also congratulated Yeltsin for aking a "bold stroke" by being

Australian PM in Jakarta: Australian Prime Minister John Howard arived in Jakarta today for his

first official visit to Indonesia ince taking office six months

He drove straight from Jaka a's Sukarno-Hatta Interna-

While relations between the wo neighbours have been

tional Airport to Freedom Palace or a meeting with president

sometimes rocky. Howard's visit is een as boosting ties between

Indian Maoists kill 5: Indian Maoists shot

dead five members of Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda's party to

avenge the slaying of three relatives of a leftist leader two days

ago, the Press Trust of India said yesterday, AFP reports from

Party) killed the three relatives of Maoist leader Gulam Haider

guerillas then gunned down five Janata Dal activists Saturday.

Pak Air Force fighter crashes:

fighter aircraft of the Pakistan Air Force crashed near Samugli base in southwestern Baluchistan province yesterday causing

no casualties, defence ministry sources said. AFP reports from

fighter aircraft was on a routine training mission when it

crashed near the town of Belili, close to the provincial capital

Quetta. Its pilot ejected safely and there were no casualties on

the ground, they said, adding that the cause of the crash was

One found dead in China hotel: A

Hong Kong executive of the French Bank Credit Lyonnais has

Guixi in Jiangxi Province after he failed to turn up for a morn-

ing business meeting. His money was missing, and no suspects

Kevin Kong, 31, was found in his hotel room Thursday in

been robbed and murdered in his hotel room in southeastern

China, the bank said Monday, AFP reports from Beijing.

Without identifying the type of the plane, they said the

in the eastern state of Bihar on Friday, the news agency said.

Gunmen allegedly from Deve Gowda's Janata Dal (People's

The victims included Haider's three-year old niece. Maoist

them and emphasising his government's commitment to Asia.

open with the Russian people about his health problem.

Spokeswoman Mary Ellen Glynn told reporters traveling

this month, the White House sid, AFP reports from Indianola.

The victims were killed in the collapse of their homes or



Some Kurd refugees, fleeing northern Iraq for fear of reprisals from Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and his Kurdish allies, arrive late on Sunday at the Diyarbakir airport, southeastern Turkey. A first group of 337 refugees, travelling in about 10 buses under a Turkish police escort, arrived at Divarbakir where they were to leave yesterday aboard a US-chartered aircraft for Guam where the United States has a military base, said Frank Ricciardone, the number two official at the US embassy. - AFP/UNB photo

Serious battle erupted in Grozny

Maskhadov terms peace fragile, ready to resume fighting

MOSCOW, Sept 16: Chechen separatists are ready to resume fighting when necessary as the peace process comes under increasing strain, the rebels' military commander said in remarks televised on Sunday, re-

ports AP. Aslan Maskhadov, who signed a series of accords last month with Russian security chief Alexander Lebed, said it's not clear whether the 3-weekold peace will hold.

It's very fragile," Maskhadov said in an interview aired on the "Itogi" programme of Russia's independent NTV television. "The situation depends on how politicians in Moscow work it out amongst themse-

He noted that he had already signed several agreements with the Russians.

"I'm doing the best I can." Maskhadov said. But if the agreement is violated, then

what can we do? We'll fight." Fighting in the Caucasus mountains republic came to a virtual half on August 23 when a truce was agreed to and the warring sides began pulling their forces out of the capital

ing settlement to the 21month-old conflict have bogged down due to resistance in Moscow to the peace deal, which calls for Chechnya to vote in 2001 on whether to become independent.

President Boris Yeltsin and other top officials remain adamantly opposed to any concessions that would lead to the republic breaking away from Russia

Earlier AFP says. Fighting broke out Sunday in the northern outskirts of the Chechen capital Grozny, Chechen rebel spokesman Movladi Udugov was quoted as saying.

He told Moscow Echo Radio rozny. that "a serious battle" had erupted around 9:00 pm (1700 GMT) near the airport, involving automatic weapons, grenade launchers and mortars.

He added that the area was "immediately cordoned off" by forces of the joint Russia-Chechen forces.

Women are badly in parliaments BEIJING, Sept 16: Women

sented in the world's parliaments, with less than 11 per cent of legislators female, an international parliamentary organisation' said on Sunday, reports Reuter. The number of women par-

world had slipped one per cent since 1995, said the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), which opens its 96th international conference in Beijing on Mon-Women accounted for just

"Democracy will only aslegislation are decided upon halves of the population," it

Algerian leaders sign pact setting stage for polls

ALGIERS, Sept 16: Algerian political leaders signed a pact Sunday laying the groundwork for a return to regular elections and condemning violence that has racked this North African nation fighting an Islamic insurgency for four years, reports

But some key opposition parties boycotted the two-day National Conference, taking some of the glow off its "platform for national understand-

President Liamine Zeroual who led the meeting, said he was satisfied with the results State-controlled television called the conference "historic.

The 1,000 delegates agreed on holding a referendum on a constitutional revision by the end of this year, legislative elections in the first half of 1997 and local elections in the second had been worked out over several months in a series of meetings with the presidency and political parties.

India firm to host Miss World pageant in November

NEW DELHI, Sept 16: Indian authorities are determined to host the Miss World pageant in November despite mounting protests by the opposition and leminists which could turn the contest ugly, reports AFP.

Although security and logistics are major problems, the organisers say the competition would be a new feather in the cap of Bangalore, the country's fastest-growing city.

Karnataka State Chief Minister J H Patel, a confidant of Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda and who governs Bangalore, has dismissed critics opposed to the 22-day extravaganza as

hypocrites. "Why don't they object when men stand with hardly any clothes on for Mr Bangalore and Mr. India contests?" he asked here. "It is wrong to say that the (Miss World) contestants will be in the nude."

under-represented

are still badly under-repre-

liamentarians around the

over 100 of the nearly 600 members of parliament in Beiing to discuss Human Rights. food and other matters, a far higher level of participation than the global average of 10.4 per cent, the union said in a

sume true significance when political policies and national jointly between men and women in the interests of both

Off the Record



tional splash in the Atlantic Ocean off the beach in Atlantic City, New Jersey, early on Sunday, - AFP/UNB photo

Paris won't welcome homosexual couples

PARIS: France has turned down a Swedish request to let Swedish homosexual couples take romantic trips to Paris to be wed in the Swedish consulate there, the Swedish embassy said on Thursday, reports Reuter.

Sweden, which has allowed gay couples to be wed in a ceremony similar to a civil marriage since January 1995, asked France to let it stage the gay weddings in its Paris consulate, where about six heterosexual couples are married every month.

After a delay of almost a year, the French Foreign Ministry turned down the request. "We're not especially surprised by the refusal." one Swedish diplomat said.

"Bid to foil drafting new constitution will prolong military rule in Myanmar"

YANGON, Sept 16: The leader of Myanmar's military regime has warned that any attempt to interfere with the progovernment panel drafting a new constitution will only prolong military rule. reports AP. The statement, published on

Monday in official newspapers. amounted to a warning to prodemocracy activists led by Nobel Peace laureate Aung San Suu Kyi who have boycotted the constitutional proceedings and threatened to write their own charter. Gen. Than Shwe, chairman

of the ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council. spoke Sunday at the close of a convention of a state social group, the Union Solidarity and Development Association. "Efforts to delay and disrupt

the ongoing National Convention will simply delay the emergence of the constitution and prolong the current

Observers, international agencies

type of administration," Than Shwe said.

Suu Kyi withdrew the delegates of her National League for Democracy from the convention last year, claiming the proceedings were weighted in favour of the regime and continued military rule. The convention has been meeting in-

termittently since 1993. In May, an arrest depleted congress of Suu Kyi's party vowed to draft a separate constitution. Authorities responded with harsh new laws threatening long prison terms for any such action. The separate charter has been little spoken of since.

Suu Kyi's party overwhelmingly won democratic elections in 1990, but the regime never allowed Parliament to convene. She has said that any new constitution should be drafted by the country's elected represen-

Non-infectious diseases to become leading cause of death within 25 years

WASHINGTON, Sept 16: that we live a lounge, we live a to 8.4 million a year. Non-infectious diseases like stroke, heart attacks and cancer will become the leading cause of death worldwide within 25 years and poorer countries are not prepared for the shift, according to two international reports released

have been arrested as of Saturday.

here on Sunday, reports Reuter. These noncommunicable 'seases are already the leading ers in richer nations but are e rise in poorer countries ble live longer and on the

30me grim develophealthier . Despite & world AIDS epiments, like th. threat of newly demic and the . , overall life emerging disease. rtancy at expectancy is rising. By 2020; life expec birth will be 71 years -s for

women in industrialised co. "The findings across regions are consistent with the view

wide, and almost 88 year 'in-

healthier life", Christopher Murray, a Harvard Public Health expert who co-authored one of the twin reports prepared for the World Health Organisation and the World

The studies aim to help national health systems and the international aid agencies prepare for changes and set priorities through the year 2020. One recommendation is more research and deve lopment, investing in such are as as vaccine research or pub lic health, such as anti-smoking programmes.

As in the ind ustrial world, heart attacks an d cancer will become major k iller in the poorer nations. T. hat is partly due to tobacco-re, lated health problems, which a tre growing faster than the AID, S epidemic. Murray found that s moking-related deaths could no early triple

sentative.

In addition depression and other mental problems will become one of the top causes of disability. Though they cause only one per cent of the deaths. they are a key element in the overall "disease burden."

"It's a surprisingly big burden and it's only projected to grow," Murray said in a telephone interview last week. The trend toward non-infec-

tious diseases reflects more prosperity and development. better sanitation, education and advances in scientific knowledge. Only in sub-Saharan Africa are the communicable diseases like malaria, measles and pneumonia expected to remain the leading killers.

"Half of all gains in human life expectancy of the past several thousand years have occurred in this century," said

Dean Jamison, the author of the second report on health investment. He attributes the gains largely to knowledge. The proportion of people age 45 and over is expected to rise

Chechen Muslims bend down while praying for those killed in the war as a small boy

plays in front of them in the village of Pervomayskaya, on Friday. Russian peace envoy

Alexander Lebed said on Sunday that Chechnya was far from forming a temporary

coalition post-war government and that rebel proposals were not sufficiently repre-

by 200 per cent between the years 1990-2020. But illnesses like tuberculosis, pneumonia and diarrhoeal

disease account for nearly onefifth of the "global disease burden" — the years subtracted by a health life by disability or premature death. Yet they get only 0.2 per cent of the research and development money, according to Jamison, of the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA). As heart diseases and other

"advanced" killers become more common in developing regions, "we're not going to bed able to deal with it with anything like the expense that it's dealt with in France or San Francisco," he said.

slam Bosnian polls as defective a's general election, billed as an almost flawless success by its international organisers, was in fact marred by irregularities and imperfections, Western observers said on Sunday, reports

- AFP/UNB photo

AFP. Breaking for the first time the unanimous chorus of praise for the trouble-free vote held Saturday, official election observers and international agencies slammed the elections as defective.

Based on first hand reports from numerous polling stations and interviews with voters on election day, the accounts highlighted consistent abuse in mainly Serb-held areas. In the most blatant example,

Serb refugee voters bused into Bosnia to vote were required to get certification that they had cast their ballots in order to retain their status. . Besides electoral manipula-

SARAJEVO, Sept 16: Bosni- tion, the critics also cited cases who could have crossed into of "gross insensitivity" in the choice of polling stations intended for use by Muslim refugees in Serb-held Bosnia.

One such station, officials from a leading international agency working in Bosnia said, was established in a destroyed mosque by local Serb election officials. Two others were housed in schools used by the Serbs in the aftermath of the fall of the Srebrenica enclave to torture and detain Muslims.

In the initial period following the landmark elections held as the first step to electing new government machinery for post-war Bosnia, there had been widespread praise for the vote.

Most significantly, the violence that many had anticipated on election day failed to materialise. However, one source of friction was averted when only a tenth of the potential 200,000 Muslim refugees

Serb-held areas to vote actually made the journey. The official observers who

spoke on condition of anonymity, said that abuses of the electoral process had been widespread and consistent.

All who spoke to AFP were tied to the main monitoring body for the elections operating under the auspices of the Organ isation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). which is supervising Bosnia's

Chiefly they pointed to the unprecedented number of Bosnian Serbs bused into Bosnia from refugee centres in goslavia to vote.

neighbouring Serb-led Yu-In Foca, a town in southeast ern Bosnia which had a pre-war Muslim majority, the Serbs bused in 4.000 people to pack the ballot, one observer told

tion of living in Bosnia. they were voting in isolated villages they had never even visited, one observer said.

The voters had registered to vote earlier this year officials said.

However, abusing a controversial rule allowing voters to name a town they intended to live in. Serb authorities packed strategic towns with their own supporters from ranks of refugees living in Yugoslavia.

Such was the extent of the abuse which saw Serbs register in droves for towns in Serbheld areas that had been "ethnically cleansed" of their Muslim and Croat population during Bosnia's war, that municipal elections were cancelled in

This did not stop thousands of voters arriving en masses in town districts they had no intention of living in the observers said.