

### Saudi Arabia asks int'l community to intervene

# US urges UNSC to encourage Israel, PA to revive ME peace

UNITED NATIONS, Sept 28: The United States urged the Security Council on Friday to encourage Israel and the Palestinians to revive the Middle East peace process and not to condemn Israel, reports Reuters.

The call, by US envoy Madeleine Albright, contrasted with the views of most other speakers, who criticised Israel in varying degrees for opening an archaeological tunnel in the old city of Jerusalem and accused it of delaying moves towards peace.

"Let us turn our attention not toward condemnation but toward encouraging the parties to restore the peace process and return to efforts to achieve concrete progress," Albright told the Council.

She had opposed holding the debate, sparked by violence that has claimed the lives of more than 50 Palestinians and over a dozen Israelis since Israel recently opened a new entrance to an underground passage near the Al-Aqsa Mosque, Islam's third-holiest shrine.

Albright, whose country is the main sponsor of the peace process, said the first objective was to restore calm, then to accelerate the negotiating process.

"Words here are no substitute for action in the region," she said, alluding to US efforts to prod Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat to meet and restore the peace momentum.

In Houston, White House spokesman Mike McCurry said President Clinton was encouraged by reports the Israeli and Palestinian leaders were on the verge of a meeting.

They had not yet announced a meeting "but it could be soon and it could be over the weekend," McCurry said.

Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia has accused Israel of aggression against Palestinians and undermining the Middle East peace process, and called on the international community to intervene, the official Saudi Press Agency (SPA) said.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was and is still observing with profound anxiety... Israel's aggression against unarmed Palestinians, and especially the moves by the Israeli authorities to open a tunnel under the Al-Aqsa Mosque, said a Saudi official quoted by the agency late on Friday.

The mosque in Jerusalem's old city is Islam's third holiest shrine. More than 50 Palestinians and more than a dozen Israelis have been killed and hundreds have been wounded in violence which erupted after Israel opened an archaeological tunnel near the mosque.

The Saudi official said Israel committed a "clear violation of the Madrid conference, the principle of land for peace and the resolutions of international law."

The 1991 Madrid peace conference, which brought all frontline Arab states and Israel to the negotiating table for the first time, marked the beginning of the current Middle East peace process.

The official source called on the international community to intervene to prevent Israel's tyrannical practices which stifle the initiatives aimed at implementing the resolutions of international legitimacy, the SPA said.

AP adds: Israel came under strong criticism during a Security Council debate on Palestinian-Israeli violence, despite US appeals to refrain from rhetoric which could inflame the crisis.

"What happens now must be a warning for all of us that the peace process... is dying," Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk al-Sharaa said Friday. "It is high time for Israel to realise that it will not, be able to achieve peace and keep occupied territories."

Japanese UN Ambassador Hisashi Owada said both parties "must summon the courage to implement, without further delay, the commitments that they have already made" toward peace.

## BRIEFLY



This September 26 photo taken in Karachi shows senior police officer Haq Nawaz Siyal (C) leaving a medical inquiry board examination. Siyal, disgraced by his involvement in the shooting that killed Murtaza Bhutto, was found dead Saturday after an apparent suicide, police said. — AFP/UNB photo

**Clinton welcomes woman astronaut:** President Clinton officially welcomed astronaut Shannon Lucid back to earth Friday, saying her record-breaking six months in space is "a monument to the human spirit." AP reports from Houston.

In a ceremony at Ellington field, Clinton said Lucid's 188 days aboard the Russian space station Mir made her a role model for young people, especially young girls, across the nation. "I think we've all felt we've gotten to know Shannon Lucid, just watching her grin and bear it," Clinton said. "It's a monument to the human spirit. It's been an amazing, amazing achievement."

**British warship arrives in HK:** The British destroyer Exeter arrived in Hong Kong yesterday on its way to becoming the first British warship to call in China since military contacts were suspended more than seven years ago, AFP reports from Hong Kong.

Britain imposed the suspension in response to Beijing's bloody crackdown on pro-democracy activists on June 4, 1989. The last British naval vessel to visit China called in Shanghai in 1985. The 412-foot (124.5 metre) Exeter, which last visited the British colony more than a year ago, will depart on Thursday for the northeastern Chinese port of Qingdao.

**2 Taiwanese jailed in Vietnam:** A court in southern Vietnam has sentenced two Taiwanese businessmen and a Vietnamese woman to prison terms varying from eight to 12 years after they were convicted of gun smuggling, a newspaper reported Saturday, AP says from Hanoi.

Huan Kuei-fa, a Taiwanese merchant in fish products, was accused of traveling to neighbouring Cambodia to buy small arms and ammunition to sell in southern Vietnam's Ho Chi Minh City, reported the Vietnamese-language newspaper Tuoi Tre, or Youth. Huan was sentenced by Ho Chi Minh's People's Court to 12 years in prison. Two of his associates, a Taiwanese colleague and a Vietnamese woman, were sentenced on related charges to 10 years and 8 years respectively.

**1 killed in US prison riot:** Guards fired live ammunition to break up a fight between gangs of black and Hispanic inmates in the yard of a maximum-security prison. One inmate was killed and 13 were injured, five critically, AP reports from Represa, California.

Authorities said Friday that at least 15 shots were fired as a last resort after the 100 inmates at California State Prison-Sacramento ignored orders to lie down on the ground. They continued to fight as guards fired rubber bullets and then warning shots before switching to real bullets. The riot was finally brought under control a half-hour after it began.

**Tanker hits bridge in Portland:** An oil tanker trying to squeeze through a tight drawbridge gashed its hull Friday, spilling heating oil into Portland Harbour, AP reports from Portland, Maine.

The Coast Guard estimated 500 gallons (1,890 litres) to 1,000 gallons (3,785 litres) a minute spilled for at least 10 minutes before the leak slowed. The tanker was carrying 235,000 gallons (889,545 litres). The bridge, a major commuting route into Portland, will be closed until at least Saturday morning while the damage is assessed.

**Taiwan to hold talks with Japan:** Taiwan will hold talks with Japan on fishery disputes over a chain of east China Sea islands next week Foreign Minister John Chang said yesterday, Reuters reports from Taipei.

"The second round of talks will be held in early October, on either October 3 or October 4, in Japan. I can confirm that," Chang told journalists, broadcast on state-funded television. The last fishery talks were held in early August in Taipei. "As for the level and content of the talks, we need further discussion," Chang said.

**Huge drugs seized in HK:** Hong Kong customs officials seized a record 7,142 tonnes of cannabis yesterday and arrested a German man alleged as the consignee of the illegal cargo, the government said, Reuters reports from Hong Kong.

The drugs, worth HK dollar 327.5 million (US dollar 42.4 million) were found in a container terminal and were believed destined for Europe, officials and government radio reported. "We believe it originated from the Golden Triangle area," a senior customs official was quoted by government radio as saying.

## Small countries use UN to press their own agendas

UNITED NATIONS, Sept 28: While the major powers talk of nuclear disarmament and keeping the peace, the Marshall Islands worries that global warming could leave the Pacific country underwater, reports AP.

The Caribbean island nation of Trinidad and Tobago fears shipments of nuclear fuel and wastes might spill in its waters. The former Soviet republic of Turkmenistan wants a global agreement to protect the polluted Caspian Sea.

The three-week debate of the 185-member General Assembly, which opened Monday, offers small countries a rare opportunity to stand with the mighty and tell the world the little guys have their concerns, too.

For the Marshall Islands, a group of 34 low-lying islands and coral reefs in the Central Pacific, global warming is the main concern.

In a worst-case scenario, gradual warming of the Earth could melt polar ice caps and raise sea levels over most of the country's 79 square miles (180 square kilometres) of land.

"The survival of many small island developing states... depends on our taking action," Philip Muller, the Marshall Islands foreign minister, said at the opening of the General Assembly.

He urged more action to reduce "greenhouse gases" — pollutants such as carbon dioxide.

## Tigers blast telecom tower in N Lanka

COLOMBO, Sept 28: Tamil rebels blasted a telecommunications tower in their final northern Sri Lankan bastion, as some 20,000 troops closed in and losses mounted on both sides, officials here said today, reports PTI.

The separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) destroyed the tower on Friday evening after their fierce counter offensive failed to stop the military advance on their final bastion of Kilinochchi, officials said.

If the rebels are following past practice, the move signals imminent plans to withdraw from the town, leaving no usable assets behind.

The officials said fighting raged in the area today as 20,000 government soldiers kept up an offensive launched on September 22.

Military spokesman Sarath Muansinghe declined to say if the army was moving to take Kilinochchi.

"Our aim is to draw out the terrorists and kill as many as possible," Muansinghe said. "We are achieving that already."



A Palestinian fighter guards people who pray Friday at the Ain Helwe Palestinian camp, the largest Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon, close to the Lebanese port of Sidon, in south Lebanon. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu blamed Palestinian leaders Friday for the unprecedented clashes between Israelis and Palestinians and warned that their actions were undermining the "whole structure of peace." — AFP/UNB photo

## Ex-military ruler heading for victory in Gumbian polls

BANJUL, Gambia, Sept 28: With his closest rival in hiding, Gambia's former military ruler Friday headed to victory in presidential elections, reports AP.

Results from all but two of the tiny West African nation's polling stations showed Yahya Jammeh with more than 60 per cent of the vote, trailed by Ousainou Darbo with about 35 per cent. Two other candidates received less than 5 per cent.

Jammeh, 31, was an army captain when he led a coup in July 1994 that ousted the civilian government of Dawda Jawara, whom the military accused of massive corruption and fraud. He promised a return to civilian rule, and retired from the army earlier this month to qualify as a candidate himself.

## Myanmar police detain several photo, TV journalists at hotel

YANGON, Sept 28: Myanmar police detained several photo and television journalists in their hotel today and demanded they hand over film and tapes of checkpoints near the house of democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi, witnesses said, reports Reuters.

"They told us we had to stop taking pictures and said we couldn't go anywhere until they got their superior to come and check our cameras and film," said a photographer, who had visited the hotel.

He told Reuters the security men let him go when he said he was not staying at the hotel.

Up to six photographers and television cameramen from several international news organisations were among those who had their equipment searched and travel documents checked by security officers.

The journalists were in Yangon to cover this weekend's planned eighth anniversary congress of opposition leader Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) Party at her house.

Earlier AFP says: The Myanmar capital was quiet today as riot police manned barricades on the road leading to opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi's compound.

In the early hours of Friday, military authorities took an unknown number of National League for Democracy (NLD) members in for questioning in order to keep the opposition activists from holding a party congress at the compound.

The junta thwarted plans for a similar party meeting in May by detaining more than 260 NLD activists before they could reach the venue.

Most were subsequently released, but Amnesty International said in a statement received in Bangkok on Saturday it had information that at least 60 picked up in May or later were still being held.

On Friday night, an estimated 30 army trucks went through the barricades and took up position on University Avenue around the compound, but by early morning they were no longer visible.

It was not possible to reach anyone by telephone at Aung San Suu Kyi's home.

## Off the Record

**Priesthood in problem**

LONDON: An English nun has instructed lawyers to sue the Roman Catholic church and a priest who she claims sexually abused her, a press report said Saturday, reports AFP.

The Daily Mail said Yvonne Maes, 56, brought a charge of pastoral sexual abuse to a church panel last December against Frank Goodal, a priest based in the northwestern English city of Liverpool.

The panel reportedly upheld the charge and reprimanded Goodal but it allowed him to remain within the church, although he was told to have no contact with female parishioners.

Maes, currently based in Canada, was unsatisfied with the ruling, and has written a letter to Pope John Paul II to resign her vocation, the paper said.

It added that she wrote in the letter that "the priest took advantage of me when I was a virgin. Those are hardly the actions of a man of god."

**William begins dating**

LONDON: Prince William, the 14-year-old son of Princess Diana and Prince Charles, had a date with three of the world's best-known supermodels this week, a tabloid reported Saturday, reports AFP.

The mass-circulation Sun said William met Naomi Campbell, Claudia Schiffer and Christy Turlington at Kensington Palace — his mother's London home — on Thursday, shortly before the models opened their new fashion cafe in the city's west end.

The Sun said the date was arranged by Diana, and quoted a royal source as saying that "Di knows Willis has a healthy interest in pretty women and thought it wild be great for him to meet Naomi and her friends."

William reportedly asked the supermodels about their new restaurant, which they opened with a glitzy party for fellow supermodels, pop stars and television celebrities.

## Chronology of Afghan war

Some key dates in Afghanistan's ongoing conflict:

1973 — King Zahir Shah is overthrown by a relative in a palace coup amid unrest over the country's stagnant economy.

1978 — Socialist activists led by Hafizullah Amin take power in Kabul during a bloody coup. They receive Moscow aid, but are now wholly backed by the Soviet Union.

December 1979 — A Soviet-backed coup ousts the leftists and puts a more pro-Moscow regime in power in Kabul. Babrak Karmal becomes Afghanistan's new leader. Later that month, Soviet troops pour across the border to help bolster Karmal's rule against Muslim resistance fighters.

1985-86 — More than 100,000 Soviet soldiers fail to subdue rebels, a loose alliance of seven factions that receive US arms. Moscow installs new leader, Najibullah.

1988 — Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev announces Soviet withdrawal.

February 15, 1989 — Last Soviet soldiers leave.

April 15, 1992 — Afghan communist leader Najibullah relinquishes power and rebels seize Kabul then turn their guns on each other.

1994 — Former resistance rebel, Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and other allies launch a January 1 attack trying to oust President Burhanuddin Rabbani. In nearly daily fighting, Kabul is reduced to rubble.

September 1994 — Previously unheard of Taliban rebels enter Afghanistan's fray, swiftly capturing the southern province of Kandahar. In the following two years, Taliban rebels will march across southern, western and eastern Afghanistan, seizing huge tracts of land.

June 1996 — Hekmatyar, having been all but eliminated as a military power in the civil war, signs a peace pact with Rabbani and returns to his former post in the capital as prime minister.

June-July 1996 — Taliban rebels reject Hekmatyar's repeated peace overtures and vow to capture Kabul by force.

September 27, 1996 — Taliban rebels drive Rabbani from power, capture Kabul and execute Najibullah.

## Security around court complex tightened amid Rao's possible arrest

NEW DELHI, Sept 28: Indian authorities today strengthened security around a court complex ahead of former prime minister PV Narasimha Rao's possible arrest Monday in a 100,000 dollar fraud case, reports AFP.

The police have put up metal detector frames around the Tis Hazari Complex, anticipating large crowds when Rao, 75, is due to be brought there to face charges of criminal conspiracy.

Special Judge Ajit Bharihoke, who will hear the case, has barred photographers and television crew from entering his chamber in a bid to avoid a rush.

Rao, who quit as president of the Congress(I) Party on September 21 after being named a co-accused in the case, will be accompanied to court by a group of elite commandos who guard him round-the-clock.

The Supreme Court is to hear a petition by New Delhi Police Commissioner Nikhil Kumar today seeking a change of venue for the case because of security problems at Tis Hazari.

"Over 60,000 people visit the Tis Hazari Complex every day," the petition said. "With 250 court rooms housed in the premises a large number of vehicles enter the complex."

Kumar said it would be impossible for the police to provide top security at the complex for Rao.

## One more suspected N-Korean shot dead ROK blasts DPRK's sub incursion at UNGA

UNITED NATIONS, Sept 28: The recent incursion of a North Korean submarine was "a brazen act of military provocation" that might be part of a large-scale infiltration operation, South Korea's foreign minister said Friday, reports AP.

The incident, "clearly demonstrates that North Korea still seeks Korean reunification by any means, including use of force," Gong Ro-Myung told the UN General Assembly, according to a prepared statement.

Tensions have been heightened on the Korean peninsula since North Korean soldiers came ashore last week after their submarine ran aground in South Korea.

Soldiers from South Korea are pursuing some North Koreans still believed to be at large.

"This brazen act of military provocation by North Korea constitutes not only a serious infringement of our territorial waters, but also a blatant violation of the Armistice Agreement," he said.

While not going into detail, Gong said: "The findings to date present a strong possibility that last week's infiltration is part of a larger-scale infiltration operation."

North Korea has said that engine trouble led the submarine to drift across the border. It has demanded the return of the vessel and its crew, including the 11 dead bodies.

South Korea has rejected the North's demand as a "deceptive ploy."

AFP adds, South Korean troops today shot dead a suspected North Korean from a beached submarine, the Defence Department said.

## Najibullah led violent life, met violent end

NEW DELHI, Sept 28: For six years, Najibullah led a Moscow-backed government feared as ruthless and reviled as goddess. On Friday, his enemies took his vengeance, dragging him from his refuge and hanging him in a public square, reports AP.

Since his 1992 ouster, Najibullah, who like many other Afghans used only one name, was an unwilling recluse behind the high walls of a United Nations compound in Kabul.

Within hours after breaching the defences of the government that replaced Najibullah, Islamic rebels of the Taliban militia broke into the UN compound and seized him.

Najibullah knew what his fate would be.

Soon after 3 am, the former president telephoned another UN facility to say his guards were gone. "I need some security," he pleaded.

By dawn, his brutalised body was hanging from a 20-foot cement traffic tower. Bullet wounds and bruises were clearly visible to the crowd of thousands that gathered all day to jeer his corpse. He was about 50 years old.

"He was a killer of Afghan people. He was against Islam. He was a criminal and he was a communist," said Mullah Mohammad Rabbani, a member of the provisional Taliban government. "This was his punishment."

Najibullah fled to the compound on April 16, 1992, after Muslim mujahedeen, or holy warriors, overwhelmed Kabul and blocked his intended escape aboard a UN plane.

The United Nations wanted to send him into exile, but the government of President Burhanuddin Rabbani denied him permission to leave. The gate was under constant guard to ensure he could not flee.

In the 1980s, Najibullah was head of the secret police under the Soviet-installed regime of Babrak Karmal. He was in charge of prisons that became infamous as centers of torture and execution, according to human rights groups.

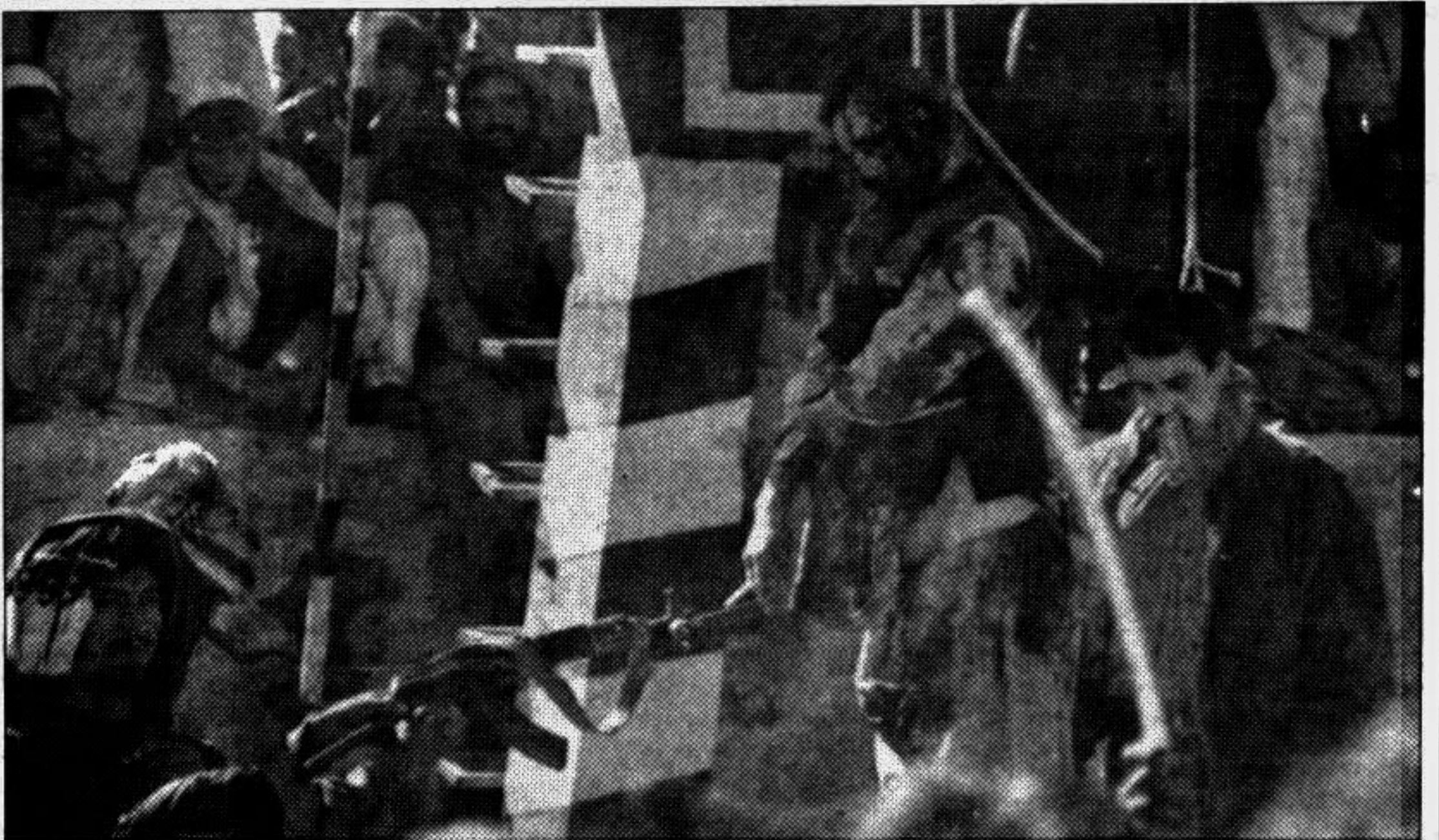
In 1986, the Soviets engineered his rise to the presidency to replace Karmal, whose government had sparked an Islamic resistance movement.

Three years later, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev withdrew his army from Afghanistan, ending a 10-year occupation that left 13,000 Soviet soldiers dead and his army demoralized.

Najibullah, left in control of only Kabul and the east, was not expected to last long. But he fought off the Islamic resistance for three years, destroying towns and villages.

But his capital remained peaceful and relatively prosperous, rarely witnessing the war that ravaged the countryside.

After his ouster, the Muslim rebels turned their weapons on each other, and the mountain-ringed capital dissolved into chaos and civil war. Many Kabul residents said they longed for the days of Najibullah.



Bodies of former Afghan communist president Najibullah (R) and his brother Ahmadzai (2nd R) swing from a traffic post in Kabul Friday. The two were executed by the victorious Taliban militia after taking out from the United Nations Compound where they were under house arrest since 1992. — AFP/UNB photo

## Canada seeks measures to restore democracy in Nigeria

UNITED NATIONS, Sept 28: Canadian Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy said that the Commonwealth must resort to other means if negotiations fail to convince the Nigerian government to adhere to democratic values, reports AP.

Axworthy said Friday that a meeting this weekend of Commonwealth ministers should be able to determine the next step in dealing with Nigeria.

"My view is that we have a fundamental mission, which is to ensure the Commonwealth, in company with other countries, other international organisations — find some way to put whatever kinds of pressure or persuasion to move the regime to releasing prisoners, to opening up the system and to show some signs of development toward a democratic system," Axworthy told reporters at the United Nations.

"We will support whatever means we think will achieve that," he added.

Axworthy will join his counterparts from Ghana, Jamaica, Malaysia, New Zealand, South Africa, Britain and Zimbabwe in a meeting of the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group over the weekend.

They will discuss the restoration of democracy in Nigeria, Gambia and Sierra Leone.

Much of the attention will be on Nigeria, which was suspended from membership in the Commonwealth last November.