

International

Several officials sacked, detained students freed

Wattoo vows to fight 'undemocratic' methods in country

BRIEFLY
Rescuers find bodies of US couple in Himalayas

Rescuers dug through 2 and half metres (eight feet) of snow Sunday to uncover the bodies of a US medical school dean, his wife and three Nepalese who died while sleeping in their tent in the high Himalayas. AP reports from Kathmandu.

The bodies of Philip J. Falkow, 62, of the University of Washington medical school in Seattle, and his wife, Helen, also 62, were flown to Dunai, 300 kilometres (180 miles) northwest of Kathmandu, the Nepalese capital, said Maj. Kisendra Shahi, the helicopter pilot.

AIDS cases rising fast in Jamaica

AIDS is spreading quickly in Jamaica and its victims are increasingly women and children, a Health Ministry report states. AP reports from Kingston.

Three hundred new cases of AIDS were reported in the first nine months of 1996 — double the number recorded during the same period in 1994, according to the report. As of the end of September, a total of 1,823 cases of AIDS had been reported on the Caribbean island since 1982, when the government began keeping track of the disease, the report stated.

4 burnt to death in Malaysia

Four Malaysians were burnt to death in a fire that razed their house early yesterday in the central state of Selangor, police said. AFP reports from Kuala Lumpur.

A police spokesman said the dead — three brothers and a woman, all of whom worked in a factory — were trapped in separate rooms. But the 18 other occupants of the rented two-storey house managed to escape or were away at work.

2 killed in Indian road mishap

An angry mob set a passenger bus ablaze in the western Indian state of Maharashtra after the bus ran out of control and crushed two pedestrians to death, the Press Trust of India reports yesterday. AFP reports from New Delhi.

It said another person was seriously injured when the private bus ploughed through people in the state's beed district on Sunday. The driver escaped and the mob told the passengers to get out before torching the vehicle.

US businessman shot dead in Moscow

A US businessman who has been involved in a long dispute over control of one of Moscow's best-known hotels was shot to death Sunday by an unknown assailant, AP reports from Moscow.

Paul Tatum was killed by a single attacker who fired his submachine-gun at the businessman near the entrance to the Kievsky metro station in downtown Moscow, a police spokesman said. The station is located just near the Radisson-Slavianskaya Hotel where Tatum had his office. President Clinton has been staying at the hotel during his trips to Moscow, most recently in April.

3 trawlers seized in S Korea

South Korean maritime police seized 35 Chinese fishermen and three trawlers on charges of illegal fishing in South Korean maritime waters, reports said yesterday. AFP reports from Seoul.

The three 90-tonne boats, the Lurongyu 1371, 1372 and 1373, and their crews were taken into police custody on Sunday after being caught 11 to 13 miles (17 to 20 kilometers) from Maenggol Island. Yonhap news agency said.

Swedish PM meets Li

Swedish Prime Minister Goran Persson has met with his Chinese counterpart Li Peng for talks intended to strengthen relations between the two countries, AP reports from Beijing.

Persson, accompanied by about 30 Swedish executives, emphasised in the Sunday meeting that Sweden believes there are broad prospects for furthering economic cooperation, the state-run Xinhua News Agency reported Monday.

ISLAMABAD, Nov 4: Manzoor Wattoo, a bitter rival of Pakistan Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, sacked several officials and ordered detained students freed today, a day after a court reinstated him as head of the country's largest province, reports AFP.

Wattoo, who resumed office as Chief Minister of Punjab on Sunday, 14 months after his dismissal by a presidential decree, vowed to fight "undemocratic" methods in the country.

The Chief Minister, in his first press conference after the ruling by the Lahore High Court, said he ordered the release of students detained for protesting the privatisation of schools and colleges.

Opposition wins Bulgarian polls

SOFIA, Nov 4: Opposition candidate Petar Stoyanov won presidential elections in Bulgaria with 59.9 per cent of the domestic vote, the electoral commission said today, reports AFP.

The announcement was based on 100 per cent of votes cast in Bulgaria itself. With the addition of votes cast by Bulgarians abroad, who backed Stoyanov heavily, the opposition leader will have garnered just over 60 per cent in Sunday's second round, the commission said.

His opponent, Ivan Marazov of the ruling Socialist Party won 40.1 per cent.

The turnout was 61.2 per cent the commission said, the lowest in the country since the collapse of communism in 1989.

Final official results are due to be announced by tomorrow evening.

Stoyanov, a 44-year-old lawyer, will take up office on January 22. He replaces Zheliu Zheliev, whom he beat in primaries in June to choose a presidential candidate for the opposition.

ROK to launch new campaign to root out corruption

SEOUL, Nov 4: President Kim Young-sam, stung by a series of corruption scandals involving government officials, said Monday he will launch a new campaign to root out corruption in South Korea, reports AP.

"South Korea has no hope to become an advanced country without wiping out corruption," Kim told a meeting with senior local government officials.

Kim's government has been under heavy public criticism after its Defence Minister, Lee Yang-ho, was recently found to have received 187,000 dollars in bribes from an arms contractor.

Lee was arrested about a week after he was fired as defence minister. Prosecutors are still investigating whether the retired air force general might have received more bribes.

The country was hit with a new scandal last week, in which a number of bus companies in Seoul reported fake deficits to persuade city officials to give them big fare increases, including a 17.5 per cent hike last year.

Court permits Wang Dan to appeal his 11-yr term

BEIJING, Nov 4: Beijing's Supreme Court gave permission today for dissident Wang Dan to appeal his 11-year sentence for plotting to overthrow the government, reports AFP.

But the appeal will be held in Cameia, without the presence of either Wang Dan or his defense team, his lawyer Yang Dunxia said.

A court official called up this afternoon and asked me to bring my appeal documents to the Supreme Court next Monday, the dissident's mother Wang Lingyun said in a telephone interview with AFP.

The appeal will be held in private, but I asked to see Wang Dan before and the court said it would see what it could do, she added.

Wang Lingyun co-defended her son along with Yang at his trial at the Beijing Intermediate People's Court on October 30.

5,700 PLA troops to enter HK after handover

HONG KONG, Nov 4: Some 5,700 Chinese troops, along with 1 warplanes and navy ships, will enter Hong Kong immediately after the territory returns to Chinese rule on July 1 next year, reports said today, according to AP.

A Chinese military source was quoted by the independent Chinese language Ming Pao Daily as saying the People's Liberation Army (PLA) troops would enter Hong Kong via the Huanggang border checkpoint from neighbouring Guangdong province at the stroke of midnight.

Air force jets would simultaneously land at the Shenzhen Kowloon naval base, the report said.

Both bases were established by the British but are to be handed over to the Chinese military.

The source added that China plans to post about 6,000 troops to Hong Kong, with 300 likely to be deployed as an advance party early next year, Ming Pao reported.

China has not yet formally announced how many troops it will station in Hong Kong or how they would be deployed.

The subject remains highly sensitive in the territory, with many residents harboring bitter memories of television footage of the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre in Beijing.

So unstable that Western governments — and even Iraq

Peninsula, to the Stonecutter's Island naval base, the report said.

Both bases were established by the British but are to be handed over to the Chinese military.

The source added that China plans to post about 6,000 troops to Hong Kong, with 300 likely to be deployed as an advance party early next year, Ming Pao reported.

China has not yet formally announced how many troops it will station in Hong Kong or how they would be deployed.

The subject remains highly sensitive in the territory, with many residents harboring bitter memories of television footage of the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre in Beijing.

So unstable that Western governments — and even Iraq

and Iran — have sometimes shrunk from getting involved in the fighting that has been going on for decades in the craggy mountains of northern Iraq.

The party in charge of a city one day may be retreating under gunfire the next. The townships change the flags in their windows to reflect the winner of the latest power struggle.

"I sleep with my Kalashnikov under my pillow every night, so it is not stolen — because it's expensive — and so nobody can harm me even during my sleep," said Hushiyar Fars, a 23-year-old fighter spending his time off from the front in a tea house playing backgammon.

"You cannot trust anyone in Kurdistan. But your gun you can. It's my best friend," said Fars. He fights for the Kurdistan Democratic Party, which is

neuvering in the Punjab, considered crucial for national stability.

Asif Ali Zardari, Benazir's husband and also federal Minister for Investment, has been in the provincial capital, Lahore, for a week in an apparent bid to maintain the ruling coalition's unity and defeat the political threat.

The People's Democratic Front (PDF) alliance led by the embattled Benazir moved a no-trust motion against Wattoo soon after the court declared his September 1995 dismissal illegal.

Benazir said the judgement was "acceptable" to her government but warned the Punjab Assembly would decide Wattoo's

future.

The verdict came as Benazir was locked in bitter confrontation with the opposition over her economic policies and with the Muslim fundamentalist Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) Party leading nationwide street protests against her.

Benazir is also under immense pressure over the deteriorating law and order situation in Punjab, sectarian killings and frequent bomb blasts.

Wattoo has launched hectic efforts to muster support, saying "I will submit to the decision of the assembly members" and condemned political corruption, adding "the tendency of horse-trading must be discouraged."

Wattoo's reinstatement at the head of the provincial government after the widely-publicised contretemps with Benazir, sparked intense political ma-

neuvering in the Punjab, considered crucial for national stability.

Asif Ali Zardari, Benazir's

husband and also federal Minister for Investment, has been in the provincial capital, Lahore, for a week in an apparent bid to maintain the ruling coalition's unity and defeat the political threat.

The People's Democratic Front (PDF) alliance led by the embattled Benazir moved a no-trust motion against Wattoo soon after the court declared his September 1995 dismissal illegal.

Benazir said the judgement was "acceptable" to her government but warned the Punjab Assembly would decide Wattoo's

future.

The verdict came as Benazir was locked in bitter confrontation with the opposition over her economic policies and with the Muslim fundamentalist Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) Party leading nationwide street protests against her.

Benazir is also under immense pressure over the deteriorating law and order situation in Punjab, sectarian killings and frequent bomb blasts.

Wattoo has launched hectic efforts to muster support, saying "I will submit to the decision of the assembly members" and condemned political corruption, adding "the tendency of horse-trading must be discouraged."

Wattoo's reinstatement at the head of the provincial government after the widely-publicised contretemps with Benazir, sparked intense political ma-

neuvering in the Punjab, considered crucial for national stability.

Asif Ali Zardari, Benazir's

husband and also federal Minister for Investment, has been in the provincial capital, Lahore, for a week in an apparent bid to maintain the ruling coalition's unity and defeat the political threat.

The People's Democratic Front (PDF) alliance led by the embattled Benazir moved a no-trust motion against Wattoo soon after the court declared his September 1995 dismissal illegal.

Benazir said the judgement was "acceptable" to her government but warned the Punjab Assembly would decide Wattoo's

future.

The verdict came as Benazir was locked in bitter confrontation with the opposition over her economic policies and with the Muslim fundamentalist Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) Party leading nationwide street protests against her.

Benazir is also under immense pressure over the deteriorating law and order situation in Punjab, sectarian killings and frequent bomb blasts.

Wattoo has launched hectic efforts to muster support, saying "I will submit to the decision of the assembly members" and condemned political corruption, adding "the tendency of horse-trading must be discouraged."

Wattoo's reinstatement at the head of the provincial government after the widely-publicised contretemps with Benazir, sparked intense political ma-

neuvering in the Punjab, considered crucial for national stability.

Asif Ali Zardari, Benazir's

husband and also federal Minister for Investment, has been in the provincial capital, Lahore, for a week in an apparent bid to maintain the ruling coalition's unity and defeat the political threat.

The People's Democratic Front (PDF) alliance led by the embattled Benazir moved a no-trust motion against Wattoo soon after the court declared his September 1995 dismissal illegal.

Benazir said the judgement was "acceptable" to her government but warned the Punjab Assembly would decide Wattoo's

future.

The verdict came as Benazir was locked in bitter confrontation with the opposition over her economic policies and with the Muslim fundamentalist Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) Party leading nationwide street protests against her.

Benazir is also under immense pressure over the deteriorating law and order situation in Punjab, sectarian killings and frequent bomb blasts.

Wattoo has launched hectic efforts to muster support, saying "I will submit to the decision of the assembly members" and condemned political corruption, adding "the tendency of horse-trading must be discouraged."

Wattoo's reinstatement at the head of the provincial government after the widely-publicised contretemps with Benazir, sparked intense political ma-

neuvering in the Punjab, considered crucial for national stability.

Asif Ali Zardari, Benazir's

husband and also federal Minister for Investment, has been in the provincial capital, Lahore, for a week in an apparent bid to maintain the ruling coalition's unity and defeat the political threat.

The People's Democratic Front (PDF) alliance led by the embattled Benazir moved a no-trust motion against Wattoo soon after the court declared his September 1995 dismissal illegal.

Benazir said the judgement was "acceptable" to her government but warned the Punjab Assembly would decide Wattoo's

future.

The verdict came as Benazir was locked in bitter confrontation with the opposition over her economic policies and with the Muslim fundamentalist Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) Party leading nationwide street protests against her.

Benazir is also under immense pressure over the deteriorating law and order situation in Punjab, sectarian killings and frequent bomb blasts.

Wattoo has launched hectic efforts to muster support, saying "I will submit to the decision of the assembly members" and condemned political corruption, adding "the tendency of horse-trading must be discouraged."

Wattoo's reinstatement at the head of the provincial government after the widely-publicised contretemps with Benazir, sparked intense political ma-

neuvering in the Punjab, considered crucial for national stability.

Asif Ali Zardari, Benazir's

husband and also federal Minister for Investment, has been in the provincial capital, Lahore, for a week in an apparent bid to maintain the ruling coalition's unity and defeat the political threat.

The People's Democratic Front (PDF) alliance led by the embattled Benazir moved a no-trust motion against Wattoo soon after the court declared his September 1995 dismissal illegal.

Benazir said the judgement was "acceptable" to her government but warned the Punjab Assembly would decide Wattoo's

future.

The verdict came as Benazir was locked in bitter confrontation with the opposition over her economic policies and with the Muslim fundamentalist Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) Party leading nationwide street protests against her.