

## Israel to keep Jordan Valley, all of Jerusalem: Netanyahu

JERUSALEM, June 10: Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Monday that Israel must keep all of Jerusalem and large parts of the West Bank in a final peace settlement with the Palestinians, reports AP.

It was the first time Netanyahu spoke publicly of his ideas for a final peace settlement since he began discussing the issue in recent weeks at meetings with Cabinet ministers.

"The issue of united Jerusalem must be clear from the start... We have total responsibility and sole sovereignty," Netanyahu said at a briefing for lawmakers from his Likud Party.

That would place Israel in conflict with the Palestinians, who want to establish a capital in the eastern sector of the city. Netanyahu broadcast on radio, Netanyahu said an area along the Jordanian border would be among the parts of the West Bank that must remain in Israeli hands.

We must "fortify our eastern border on the Jordan River (and) maintain in our hands

and under direct control the Jordan Valley's assets," he said. The radio said Netanyahu also reiterated his opposition to the Palestinians' goal of establishing a full-fledged Palestinian state.

Under the 1993 Israel-PLO accord, the sides have until 1999 to complete a final settlement that resolves a series of tough outstanding issues: Palestinian statehood, borders, the future of Jewish settlements in disputed areas, Palestinian refugees and Jerusalem.

Under Israel's Labour government, final status talks formally began in May 1996, but they were frozen after the conservative Netanyahu's election victory a few weeks later.

Netanyahu has said he wants to move past the present stage of expanding Palestinian autonomy — which has led to repeated crises — and quickly hammer out a final peace deal.

According to a map published two weeks ago by the Haaretz newspaper, Netanyahu is considering offering the Palestinians only 40 per cent of the West Bank in a final peace settlement — far short of their

demand that they receive almost all the territory.

According to the map, a Palestinian "Entity" would control much of the West Bank's heartland, but its area would be divided into several zones lacking in territorial continuity. The Palestinians rejected those ideas, and Netanyahu denied he had approved any map.

Netanyahu said Monday that he would also seek to retain control over Jewish settlements in what he termed "blocs" — terminology used by moderate Israelis to suggest dismantling some of the small and isolated settlements deep in Arab-populated territory.

The Jewish settlers — a key Netanyahu constituency — are likely to oppose any plan that does not guarantee Israeli control over all 144 settlements.

AFP adds: UN chief Kofi Annan and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat on Monday called for intensified efforts to put the Middle East peace process back on track.

In a speech to a UN committee commemorating the 30th anniversary of the 1967 Israeli

occupation of Arab land including east Jerusalem, Annan highlighted UN concerns about Israel's decision to proceed with construction of a housing settlement in disputed east Jerusalem.

The Palestinians have boycotted peace talks since March 18 when Israel broke ground on the housing project at Har Homa, known to Arabs as Jebel Abu Ghneim.

Meanwhile, Egypt on Monday sharply rapped Europe's middle east peace envoy Miguel Angel Moratinos for setting a two-week deadline for progress in Egyptian efforts to break the deadlocked Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.

"We don't accept any dictation," said Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Mousa.

"There is no set date for political action (to advance the peace process) but something should (be achieved) in a reasonable time frame," Mousa told reporters.

Earlier Monday Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak also attacked the comments by Moratinos to the Jerusalem Post newspaper on Sunday.

## Nepal's ruling party wins 56 pc seats in local polls

KATHMANDU, June 10: Nepal's major ruling party has virtually gained majority control of the country's over 4,000 local administration bodies, according to latest results of the local elections held throughout the country last month, reports Xinhua.

The Communist Party of Nepal (United Marxist-Leninist, CPN-UML) won over 56 per cent of all the seats for local-level administration officials which had been announced so far, the elections commission here said today.

The local elections were held in two phases on May 17 and 26 for a total of nearly 190,000 seats at various local administration bodies including those at village, municipality and district levels.

So far the results of the polls for about 90 per cent of all the seats had been announced, an official of the Election Commission said.

Main opposition the Nepali Congress (NC) Party, which had controlled some two-thirds of all the local bodies in the country for the last five years, could only garner nearly 30 per cent of the total seats, the official said.

CPN-UML leaders launched various programmes in recent years to strengthen the party's organisation network at grass-roots levels with a view to taking over the majority control of the country's local authorities from the NC Party.

## Jiang, Li to attend HK handover ceremony

HONG KONG, June 10: Chinese President Jiang Zemin and premier Li Peng will attend the ceremony for the Hong Kong handover to show the importance the government attaches to the territory's return to China, it was reported here today, reports AP.

Jiang, who is also the Communist Party's General Secretary, will arrive in Hong Kong on the night of June 30 to attend the handover ceremony scheduled to start at 11:45pm local time (15:45 GMT), the independent Chinese language daily Ming Pao citing sources in Beijing said.



President Nelson Mandela throws up his hands in mock horror as he is told that he has lipstick on his cheek after being kissed by an enthusiastic resident of Mitchell's Plain in Cape Town Monday. The President visited ten pre-schools to mark the International Month of Children. He was accompanied by Jocina Machel (r), daughter of his companion Graça Machel. — AFP/UNB photo

## Former Congo president accepts Gabon's offer to mediate ceasefire

KINSHASA, June 10: Former Congolese President Denis Sassou Nguesso has accepted an offer by Gabon to mediate a ceasefire after five days of fighting between army and opposition loyalists in the Congolese capital, Brazzaville, one of Sassou Nguesso's aides said Monday night, reports AFP.

Ambroise Noutumzalay said Sassou Nguesso "has agreed to mediation by Gabonese President Omar Bongo with a view to a ceasefire."

Earlier in Paris, the French presidency said French President Jacques Chirac had secured an agreement "in principle" from Sassou Nguesso and incumbent President Pascal Lissouba for a truce and mediation.

However Noutumzalay said mediation had to come before a ceasefire.

Sassou Nguesso was "in favour of President Bongo's" mediation as President Chirac suggested. In principle he agrees but Lissouba has to admit he is the aggressor," said Noutumzalay, who was questioned by

telephone from Kinshasa on Monday night.

The former president believed a ceasefire should result from and not precede mediation talks, Noutumzalay said.

Shortly before 00:30 am today (23:30 GMT Monday), sporadic heavy artillery fire was audible here from Brazzaville which lies on the opposite bank of the Congo river.

The fighting began Thursday when Lissouba sent troops to Sassou Nguesso's home after vowing to disarm private armies loyal to political leaders before presidential polls on July 27 in which Sassou Nguesso is seeking to make a comeback.

"We are in favour of diplomatic efforts by President Bongo to mediate a settlement. He is very familiar with the Congo. He will find a way," Noutumzalay said.

"He has acted as mediator several times and has always succeeded. We hope he will succeed," he added.

Noutumzalay said a ceasefire negotiated on Sunday by Brazzaville Mayor Bernard Kolelas had failed to keep his word to "freeze" the front lines.

On Sunday night, Lissouba, Sassou Nguesso and Kolelas agreed that the troops would not budge from their positions before the start of the negotiations.

But at 03:00 am (Monday) Lissouba's forces attacked Sassou Nguesso's forces. They broke through the front line near Hotel Pim before being driven back. We advanced and seized Mukondong Gendarmerie Camp (in northern Brazzaville).

Reuters adds: A broadcast on Congo-Brazzaville's main state radio frequency declared on Monday evening that the militia of former president Denis Sassou Nguesso controlled most of the capital.

INDIAN AIR FORCE lost 94 aircraft in 4 yrs  
NEW DELHI, June 10: The Indian Air Force (IAF) has lost 94 aircraft during routine flying missions in the last four years, The Times of India reported today, says AFP.

The report follows an accident on Monday when a Russian-made Mig-21 crash-landed in a field in the Himalayan state of Kashmir after a bird hit the plane, the pilot bailed out safely.

The Times said 26 IAF pilots had been killed in the crashes. Losses in 1996 included 17 Mig planes, two Jaguars and one Mi-17 helicopter.

## Gunmen kill 5 in Karachi

KARACHI, Pakistan, June 10: Gunmen shot dead five people including a young woman, in a drive-by shooting in the Pakistani port city of Karachi, police said today, reports Reuters.

They said unidentified gunmen sprayed bullets from a car at a shop in Karachi's eastern Korangi area, where a group of youngsters were playing a board game late on Monday night.

Three male victims, all in their early 20s, died instantly, while a fourth died later in hospital. A 16-year-old girl was also killed by a stray bullet, police said.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility and it was not clear if the attack was politically motivated.

Witnesses said tension gripped the whole area after the shooting and armed men took to the streets firing in the air.

Blairs plan to sell north London family home on security ground

LONDON, June 10: British Prime Minister Tony Blair and his wife Cherie are planning to sell their cherished family home in north London because of security considerations, a spokesman for the premier said Monday, reports AFP.

They had hoped to stay there but now accepted it was an "unrealistic proposition because of the cost to the taxpayer of securing it against terrorist attack, allied to the inconvenience caused to people living in the area," he added.

The Blairs and their three children moved last month into a chancellery of the exchequer Gordon Brown's home on Oxford Street at number 11 Downing Street because the traditional home for the premier at number 10 was too small.

Bachelor Brown accordingly uses the number 10 living quarters.

Leftist gov't faces first labour protest in France

PARIS, June 10: The government of Socialist Premier Lionel Jospin was to confront its first labour protest Tuesday, with more than 50,000 workers expected in Paris to demand that Europe make employment its top priority, reports AP.

The protest, joined by all but one of the country's big labour unions, had been planned for months. But it was postponed when President Jacques Chirac called early legislative elections May 25 and June 1.

Gujral's Nepal visit seen as proof of his foreign policy success

NEW DELHI, June 10: The Indian press has hailed Prime Minister I K Gujral's visit to Nepal as yet another successful example of his foreign policy approach that is fast making friends of foes in the neighbourhood, according to India's foreign ministry.

Praising Gujral for continuing with the policy of single-handed generosity towards India's smaller neighbours, media commentators said the grant of a trade transit corridor to Nepal through Indian territory into Bangladesh would give a much-needed push to slow moving regional economic cooperation.

"There are implicit messages in this for SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) as a whole, and particularly for Bangladesh which may now be motivated to consider allowing India transit rights to its northeastern states," said the influential English language daily, The Times of India in a lead editorial.

The daily described India's decision to open up a 61 km long transit route linking Bangladesh in Bangladesh through Kakarbita in Nepal, through India's Phulbari district as "the landmark achievement" of Gujral's visit to Kathmandu June 5-7.

"Under Kumar Gujral's first bilateral visit after becoming Prime Minister has shown that



A local resident puts his Hong Kong Special Administration Region (SAR) application into a collection box Tuesday. The authority will issue the new SAR passport after July 1 after the Chinese take over Hong Kong from the current British administration. — AFP/UNB photo

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"Under Kumar Gujral's first bilateral visit after becoming Prime Minister has shown that

the policy precepts that he had strenuously underscored as Foreign Minister have acquired a firmer force of conviction," said the daily. The Pioneer.

Praising the "straightforward and robust manner in which he has tackled traditional Nepal concerns with regard to India," the Pioneer said Gujral's task was made easier by ongoing political and economic developments in the region.

"Thus, it would not be possible when the ingeniously devel-

oped notion of sub-regional grouping is being carefully allowed to come of political age to offer vigorous resistance to the notion of a transit corridor," it said.

"It is the mission of Gujral and his spin doctors to tell Kathmandu and other world capitals that India is now the Big Brother with a crucial difference: It has recently acquired a bigger heart," the paper added in its lead editorial, titled "I give, you take".

## Clinton offers legislation to ban human cloning

WASHINGTON, June 10: US President Bill Clinton Monday offered legislation to ban human cloning but permit research and encourage debate over a perplexing moral and scientific issue, reports AP.

His proposal is based on the weekend recommendation of the National Bioethics Commission.

"These are all exceedingly difficult issues," panel chairman Harold Shapiro told Clinton in the Rose Garden ceremony at the White House. "They are issues that go to the very na-

ture of what it means to be human and to the very heart of what people think of as their families and individuality."

Scottish scientists announced February 24 that they had cloned a sheep named Dolly using the nucleus, which includes the genes, from an udder cell of an adult sheep. The nucleus of an egg from another sheep was removed and the udder cell nucleus was substituted. The egg then was put into the uterus of a third sheep, and Dolly was born.

## A culture of violence prevails in Pakistan, says AI report

ISLAMABAD, June 10: In a scathing report condemning Pakistan's human rights record, Amnesty International on Tuesday said torture is common in prisons, women are discriminated against and court-imposed punishments often are cruel and inhuman, reports AP.

People fear both the police and the law in Pakistan, the London-based group said in a report on Pakistan.

"Torture, including rape, is widespread in Pakistan," said the report. "Police often intimidate and humiliate people in custody, beat, kick and use electric shocks on detainees, hang them upside down and deprive them of food and sleep."

The Amnesty International report blamed Pakistan's dismal human rights record in part on its history of army rule, saying the legacy of successive military rulers has created "a culture of violence."

The many elected governments to follow military rule, which ended in 1988, have failed to return fundamental human rights to the country's

140 million people, the report said.

"A culture of violence prevails in Pakistan," the report said. "Elected governments have failed to repair the damage caused by long periods of martial law, during which civil and political rights were suspended, political institutions destroyed and the Constitution distorted."

Pakistan's powerful army ruled this mostly Muslim nation for half of its 50 year history.

The last military strong man, Gen Mohammed Zia-ul Haq, died in a mysterious plane crash in 1988 paving the way for the first free and fair elections in 11 years.

In its report, Amnesty International said the police show "Utter contempt for the human rights of detainees... also for the legal process."

Policemen are killing people under the guise of self-defence, the report said.

Last November when President Farooq Ahmed Leghari dismissed Benazir Bhutto's Government, he accused her of sanctioning police hit squads.

## Radical group outlawed ROK students ordered to quit anti-gov't movement

SEOUL, June 10: The government outlawed a radical student group Tuesday and ordered thousands of its members to quit by the end of July or face long prison terms, reports AP.

The action was aimed at Hanchongryun, South Korea's largest student group responsible for last week's anti-government violence which resulted in the deaths of two people.

Thousands of militant students clashed with riot police in the streets of Seoul for four days last week in one of the most violent protests in almost a year.

A policeman died after being run over by a government armored vehicle during the clashes, and a factory worker was beaten to death by students who believed he was a police informant.

Three students were arrested after claiming responsibility for the man's death. Prosecutors said the top leadership of the student group was involved.

Senior government law enforcement officials met Tuesday and decided to outlaw the

student group as pro-North Korean and disband it by the end of July.

The student group's demands echo those of North Korea, including the withdrawal of 37,000 US troops in South Korea and an immediate unification of the peninsula under North Korean terms.

Last summer, the group led a 12-day protest, during which one police officer was killed. More than 1,000 police officers and students were injured and a record 5,597 students were detained.

Last week, thousands of Hanchongryun members gathered in Seoul to inaugurate their new leadership. They used the occasion to demand the resignation of President Kim Young-sam, accusing him of lying about his 1992 campaign spending.

Opposition politicians claim Kim spent far more than legally allowed. He has acknowledged that his campaign spent heavily, but has not disclosed how much.

## US sees clear problems with Algerian polls

WASHINGTON, June 10: The United States said on Monday there were problems with Algeria's elections but chose to put most emphasis on the fact that they were held at all and drew a large turnout, reports Reuters.

"Clearly, there were some problems with the Algerian election, with the way it was carried out," State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said.

"We do think it's positive, however, that people voted in great numbers. And it's positive that the government was able to open up television and radio to political debate and political discourse, he told reporters.

United Nations observers who went to Algeria to monitor the election, the first in more than five years of violence, were involved in a dispute on Monday over the general election.

The observers issued a statement criticising the conduct of parts of the election in which pro-government parties swept to a majority in the new parliament.

Burns said the United States urged the Algerian government "to address the issues raised by international observers and political parties as Algeria prepares for municipal and local elections."

Also, Washington would encourage Algeria "to continue with this small step forward in openness, because we think that might be a way to provide some positive momentum in relations between the government and others," he said.

But Burns laid most stress on "commending the government of Algeria for holding parliamentary elections, and for inviting international observers to monitor them."

Also, "we'd like to praise the

Algerian people for their courage in turning out in such high numbers at the polls last week," he said.

The official results gave the National Democratic Rally (RND) 155 seats in the 380-member national assembly. The Islamic fundamentalist-oriented Movement of a Peaceful Society (MPS) was second with 89 seats and the former ruling National Liberation Front (FLN) was third with 64 seats.

## Several held for inciting 'revolt' in Bahrain

MANAMA, June 10: Bahraini security forces have arrested several demonstrators who were inciting a "revolt" in a village west of the capital, the official news agency GNA said today, reports AFP.

"Several people who committed acts of sabotage on Monday afternoon and incited a revolt were detained for questioning after the protest in Sanabes, the Interior Ministry said, quoted by GNA.

A London-based opposition group, the Bahrain Freedom Movement, said security forces fired rubber bullets to prevent a march in memory of a young Bahraini who died on June 1.

Several people were injured, including one who lost an eye after being hit by a rubber bullet, it said.

Bahraini authorities have denied opposition accusations that police were to blame for the death of Abdel Zahra Ibrahim Abdullah, 27, following his arrest in Sanabes.



US President Bill Clinton (L) and Vice President Al Gore (R) applaud after receiving a report from the National Bioethics Advisory Commission on Cloning Monday at a White House Rose Garden ceremony. — AFP/UNB photo

## BRRIEFLY

**British diplomat stabbed in Albania:** A British diplomat was stabbed in the Albanian capital Tirana on Monday and flown to Italy for an emergency operation, a hospital spokesman said, Reuters reports Tirana.

He said the diplomat, who he named as Jeff Briggs, was undergoing surgery in the Di Summa hospital in this southern Italian city. The British Embassy in Rome confirmed that one of its diplomats had been stabbed in Tirana but would not comment on the circumstances.

**Saddam's son leaves hospital:** Saddam Hussein's eldest son, Uday, has recovered from wounds he received during an assassination attempt in December and left the hospital Monday, the official Iraqi News Agency reported, AP reports from Baghdad.

Uday Saddam Hussein left Ibn Sina hospital at 2 pm yesterday following his completed recovery from the treacherous and despicable attack on him on December 12," the agency said. Using crutches, the 33-year-old son of the Iraqi president walked out of Ibn Sina hospital, an exclusive facility inside the presidential complex in Baghdad, an official close to Uday said.

**Military club bombed in Turkey:** Unknown assailants tossed a hand-made bomb into the garden of an officers club in downtown Istanbul Monday, causing panic but no damage or injuries, police said, AP reports from Istanbul.

The blast at the club in Selimiye district, where non-commissioned officers go for drinks and lunch, was the fifth bombing on a military installation in the city in three weeks. There was no claim of responsibility for Monday's attack, and there were no signs that Islamic radicals, who have been at odds with the secular military, were involved.

**6 tonnes hashish seized in Greece:** Greek police confiscated six tonnes of hashish inside a container at the main port of Piraeos on Monday and two people were arrested as suspects, Reuters reports from Athens.

The container arrived in Greece on a ship from Egypt on May 2. It was originally loaded in Pakistan and the final destination was Bulgaria," a police official told Reuters. He said nobody had claimed the container and its papers said it contained towels and other fabrics.

**1 held for drowning children in India:** A man, Rathindranath Naskar, was arrested Monday for drowning his two children on Saturday night at Mirzanagar under Mandirbazaar police station in south 24-Parganas district, PTI reports from Diamond Harbour.

Police source said that Naskar's wife had filed an FIR Monday alleging that their three-year old daughter and ten months old son were drowned by her husband. The incident occurred after the couple, who had strained relations, had an argument, sources added.

**Storm 'Andres' kill 3 in El Salvador:** A new storm has formed off Mexico's southern coast, and emergency workers in El Salvador said the season's first tropical storm killed three people over the weekend, AP reports from Mexico City.