

# Sharif's policy of capitulating before India has flopped: PPP

KARACHI, Sept 20: The main opposition Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Friday claimed the lack of progress in India-Pakistan talks in New Delhi proved that Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's policy of capitulating before India has flopped, reports AFP.

Pakistani Foreign Secretary Shamsud Din Ahmad's statement on Thursday that India "resiled" from a previous agreement "vindicates" the PPP position, the party's Central Executive Committee chaired by ex-premier Benazir Bhutto said.

New Delhi had "dangled the carrot of talks to demoralise the people of Jammu and Kashmir and to gain time," the PPP statement said.

In a resolution adopted here it said "Sharif's myopic policy of capitulating before India failed to deliver the goods."

Sharif's overtures saw the emergence of a "more belligerent and aggressive India," it said adding New Delhi stored short-range Prithvi missiles near the border bringing key Pakistani cities "under threat of a nuclear warhead within five minutes warning time."

It alleged that prior to the talks India increased tension at the line of control dividing the Himalayan state into Pakistani and Indian held zones of Kashmir which "led to many casualties."

The two countries have fought two of their three wars over Kashmir.

The process of dialogue started in March on Sharif's initiative to implement his election pledge to improve ties marked by the 50-year-old Kashmir dispute.

The third round Thursday adjourned without any major breakthrough, the two sides could not set up working groups on outstanding issues including Kashmir despite an agreement reached in their second session in Islamabad on a "mechanism" on tackling an eight-point agenda.

A joint statement said further consideration was required and the talks will be reconvened at a mutually convenient date.

Officials said Sharif and Indian Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral will meet in New York next week in an effort to give impetus to the process.

Earlier another report says, five security personnel were killed in a head-on collision between a police jeep and a truck carrying paramilitary rangers near a police training centre in Karachi on Friday, police said.

The rangers' truck changed lanes to overtake a vehicle and ploughed into the police jeep coming the other way on the main national highway linking Karachi with upcountry, they said.

The crash left three policemen and two paramilitary soldiers dead.

Police said three others, including two policemen, had been admitted to the city's Jinnah Hospital with serious injuries.



Women of the leftist party, Socialist Unity Centre of India (SUCI), demonstrate against the recent price hike in petrol commodities by the Indian Government, in Calcutta, Friday. The police had to resort to a baton charge and teargas to disperse the protesters.

— AP/UNB photo

## BRIEFLY

**Weizman to visit US from Oct 5:** Israeli President Ezer Weizman will visit Washington from October 5 to 9, at the invitation of President Bill Clinton, the Israeli embassy said in a statement issued in Washington Friday, AFP reports from Washington.

During his visit, Weizman will meet with Clinton, Vice President Al Gore, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Secretary of Defence William Cohen and Congressional leaders. He will also meet with leaders of the American Jewish community, and visit the Holocaust Museum, a local Jewish day school and the tomb of the unknown soldier in nearby Arlington, Virginia, the statement said.

**Another bomb found in Dushanbe:** Another bomb was found Saturday in a Dushanbe store but it was deactivated before it could explode in the Tajik capital, already rocked by eight blasts this month, AP reports from Dushanbe.

Tajik authorities have blamed the bombings on militant groups opposed to efforts to bring peace to the former Soviet republic, long torn by civil war.

**Thai military chopper crashes:** A military helicopter with 19 persons aboard crashed Saturday in the southern province of Narathiwat, a television station reported, AP says from Bangkok.

TV television said some aboard survived the crash and that rescue efforts were under way in an area about 1,100 kilometres (680 miles) south of the capital, Bangkok. Details of the crash were not immediately available.

**Quake shakes NZ:** An earthquake measuring 4.3 on the Richter scale hit South Canterbury Saturday, AP reports from Wellington.

The quake which struck about 9.30 am was centred about 18 miles (25 kilometres) south of Arthur's Pass, the Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences said. The quake was felt as far away as Christchurch, but there were no reports of damage.

## 'Search for Arafat's successor begins as he is ill'

JERUSALEM, Sept 20: Israeli television reported Friday that Yasser Arafat suffers from a serious illness and that a search for a successor has begun. But people close to Arafat denied the report, saying the 68-year-old is in good health, reports AP.

## 4 killed as US B-1 bomber crashes

ALZADA, Montana, Sept 20: An Air Force B-1 bomber on a training mission crashed in a Montana prairie, killing all four crew members, the Air Force said, reports AP.

It was the sixth US military crash in seven days. The rash of accidents prompted the Pentagon to order a halt to all military training flights for one day over the coming week. After the Montana crash, the Air Force pushed up its one-day suspension to Monday, instead of next Friday as planned.

The B-1 crash happened Friday afternoon in the corner of southeast Montana, near the state line with Wyoming. The bomber was flying out of Ellsworth Air Force Base, about 100 miles (160 kilometres) to the southeast, when it went down near the Powder River military training range.

Ellsworth spokesman Sgt. Gary Padra said there were no bombs on board.

## Di, Dodi's driver Paul buried in France

LORIENT, France, Sept 20: Three weeks after the crash that killed Princess Diana, friends and family prepared to bury the driver of the Mercedes, Henri Paul, who was drunk at the time of the accident, reports AP.

A small dark van carrying Paul's body left Paris on Friday for the 500-kilometre (380-mile) trip to his hometown of Lorient in the Brittany region in western France.

Paul's funeral originally was scheduled to take place two weeks ago for the same day that Diana was buried in England. It was postponed until Saturday so that more blood tests could be made.

## '9 yrs enough to get alternatives to land mines'

WASHINGTON, Sept 20: Pentagon commanders believe they can come up with nonlethal alternatives to land mines within nine years to protect US forces in Korea from attack, the Army's top general said Friday, reports AP.

Pentagon officials have long argued that an exception on land mine use should be made for the Korean Peninsula, where 37,000 US troops in South Korea are vulnerable to an attack from the communist North. Forces there depend on the heavily mined zone that separates the two Koreas.

But in recent negotiations on a treaty banning land mines, the Clinton administration made a last-minute bid to amend the treaty and proposed allowing the use of mines in Korea only until the year 2006.

## Charles praised for giving UK monarchy more human face

LONDON, Sept 20: Prince Charles was praised today for giving the British monarchy a much more human face as he spoke movingly of his grief after the death of Princess Diana, reports Reuters.

The heir to the throne broke with royal protocol with a very personal impromptu speech on Friday to thank people for the overwhelming support received since Diana's death in a high-speed car crash.

Charles, making his first public appearance since the funeral, said he was incredibly proud of his sons, Prince William, 15, and Prince Harry, 13, for being so dignified and courageous.

The touching declaration of a man in the past accused of being the starchy opposite to the compassionate and spontaneous Diana was hailed as a turning point for the severely shaken monarchy.

# Hardship of Afghan women mounts as they barred from working

KABUL, Sept 20: Every morning, lines of women widowed by war snake out of the Afghan capital's destroyed hospitals and wrecked schools waiting for handouts of oil and beans that mean survival, reports AP.

The food provided by aid agencies at distribution centres goes to 11,000 widows, many of whom have families of six children or more. They wait under green canvas tents, clutching their identity card in one hand and their veil in the other.

In a sign of the mounting distress, the centers in Kabul this year had to stay open in the summer as well as winter.

The economy is in such a shattered state, the women can't even afford to buy a piece of bread a day," said Esther Robinson, who coordinates the food project for CARE International.

When the Taliban religious army took Kabul last year, they banned women from working, emptying the bureaucracy, schools and hospitals of many who had single-handedly supported their families.

Women were forced to cloak themselves head to toe in a shroud called the burqa. Wearing high heels or cosmetics was forbidden. And more than 70 schools that served girls were shut down.

Talking to a foreign man could draw a beating from young zealots who patrol the streets enforcing the Taliban's strict interpretation of Islamic law. Several Afghan women refused to be interviewed for this story.

Many are simply preoccupied with surviving.

Doves of women in burqas now crowd the streets, begging for a pittance. Aid agencies that tried to start projects inside homes found their warehouses overflowing with sweaters and quilts that no one, not even at bargain prices, could afford to buy.

## Phnom Penh blasts decision Cambodia's UN seat to stay vacant for time being

UNITED NATIONS, Sept 20: Cambodia's UN seat will stay vacant for the time being after a UN committee on Friday deferred any decision on the credentials of two rival delegations, reports Reuters.

The claimants are a delegation led by Premier Hun Sen, who in July deposed co-premier Prince Norodom Ranariddh in a coup, and a delegation led by Ranariddh.

After a closed-door meeting of the General Assembly's nine-member Credentials Committee, members said the issue had been shelved indefinitely. No vote was taken.

Committee Chairman Carlsson Boucher of Barbados confirmed this meant neither delegation would be seated and Cambodia's UN seat would be vacant for time being, nobody would represent Cambodia at the United Nations, Boucher said.

This year's annual Assembly session opened on Tuesday, but the general debate, in which heads of state and government and foreign ministers speak, does not begin until Monday.

When the Credentials Committee first met on Wednesday, Russia and China supported the Hun Sen delegation, which includes Ung Huot, the Foreign Minister who was also appointed first prime minister in place of Ranariddh after the coup.

AP adds: Laying the blame squarely on the United States, the Phnom Penh government Saturday denounced a decision to leave vacant its seat at the UN General Assembly.

"I think we should not be surprised by the outcome of the decision," said Prak Sokhun, an advisor to Second Prime Minister Hun Sen. "This is the stance of America and we know what America has already decided about the Cambodia issue."

The issue of representation at the world body came in the wake of a bloody coup staged by Hun Sen and the ouster of First Prime Minister Norodom Ranariddh. The United States has sharply criticised the coup.

## Australia dominates Pacific neighbours on global warming

RAROTONGA, Cook Islands, Sept 20: After a tense diplomatic standoff, Pacific island nations gave into Australia Saturday and agreed not to endorse binding targets for greenhouse gas emissions at the South Pacific Forum, reports AP.

Pacific leaders emerged unhappy from last minute negotiations on the wording of the forum's official communiqué, claiming Australian Prime Minister John Howard had failed to respect island concerns about the threat of global warming to low-lying states.

Australia on Friday threatened to divide the South Pacific Forum for the first time in its 27-year history by refusing to budge on its global warming position.

Island states, led by Tuvalu Prime Minister Bikenibeu Paeniu, had sought that binding targets for reducing greenhouse gases be endorsed by the 16-nation forum.

The low-lying Pacific states, some of them only one or two metres (3 to 6 feet) above sea level, fear they could be wiped out by rising ocean levels caused by global warming.

Australia, a major exporter of coal and natural gas, says it cannot afford to lose jobs and investment by agreeing to international demands for mandatory cuts in greenhouse gas emissions.

It intends to go to the UN climate conference in Kyoto, Japan, in December with a plan to allow nations to set their own limits, which would allow Australia to increase its emissions until 2010.

Paeniu said Saturday the talks were deadlocked by Howard's refusal to budge, with the other nations only reluctantly agreeing to a split in the forum.

"There really was no pressure, but there was no compromise, it was just no, no, no, no, no. No way through," Paeniu said.

"All these times we have given Australia yes, yes, yes, because Australia is a very important partner to us and we respect them and I think what happened is it came to a stage where being small, we depend on them so much, we had to give in on what they wanted."

"At least for once in a while they should give us respect by allowing us to pass through a statement the way we say it and we believe in it and they can take up their position in Kyoto."

With the talks now ended, Howard said the communiqué would contain no reference to greenhouse gas targets.

"I made it clear for Australia's sake I could not accept mandatory targets, particularly mandatory uniform targets," he said.



Billionaire media mogul Ted Turner flashes a smile at the dinner table prior to announcing his plans to donate a billion dollars to a foundation to benefit United Nations causes Thursday, in New York. During a dinner speech at an awards ceremony at a Times Square hotel, Turner said he would give \$100 million a year for the next 10 years to UN-approved programmes, including those helping refugees, fighting diseases and cleaning up land mines.

— AP/UNB photo

# Arafat, Arab FMs slam Tel Aviv's actions in Jerusalem 'Israel causes ME peace process to malfunction'

CAIRO, Sept 20: Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and Arab foreign ministers meeting in Cairo on Friday slammed Israeli actions in Jerusalem and said the Jewish state had caused the Middle East peace process to malfunction, reports Reuters.

There was consensus that Israel's policies, particularly in Jerusalem, cannot be accepted and that the peace process has malfunctioned because of Israel's intransigence," Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Moussa told reporters after the meeting which lasted almost five hours.

The peace process must resume on the land-for-peace principle and others Israel has backtracked on," he added.

Moussa said Arafat had briefed the ministers on the situation in Jerusalem. The Palestinian leader earlier told reporters he would complain at the meeting about a deal allowing seminary students to occupy homes in the Arab east Jerusalem district of Ras al-Amoud in place of Jewish settlers.

"This is a way for Israel to set up a base for settlers," he said. On Friday, Palestinians clashed with Israeli police in Hebron to protest the Ras al-Amoud deal under which up to 10 students would stay day and night in two buildings in the 11,000-strong Arab neighbourhood.

Arafat said he would also raise the Ras al-Amoud issue at another ministerial meeting at the Arab League on Saturday.

Palestinian-Israeli peace talks have been frozen since March after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu approved the building of a Jewish settlement on east Jerusalem land the Jewish state had occupied in a 1967 war.

Netanyahu has angered Arabs by refusing to honour an agreement made by the previous Labour government to trade occupied lands for peace. Some states have suggested that a major regional economic conference due to be held in Doha in November be pinned on Israeli peace pledges.

Another report from Washington says, the United States on Friday said it accepted Israel's solution to the dispute over Jewish settlers moving into an Arab Jerusalem area, saying it had been assured the status of the neighbourhood would not change.

The State department advised Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority, which has bitterly protested the outcome, to realise that its chief concerns had been dealt with, and to limit its reaction.

"Our main concern that the nature of this neighbourhood would not change over time appears to have been met and we have received assurances (from the Israeli government) that it will not be changed over time," spokesman James Rubin said.

## US conducts 2nd N-test

WASHINGTON, Sept 20: The United States has conducted a second underground sub-critical nuclear test at a Nevada test site, US officials said Friday, reports AP.

The test, which did not involve a chain reaction, was conducted at 2020 GMT Thursday about 960 feet below the ground, the Energy Department said.

"It was fully compliant with the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty because it was well below chain reaction strength," Pentagon spokesman Kenneth Bacon said.

On July 2, the United States performed an underground test which involved using conventional explosives to blast plutonium.

Chemical high explosives are used to blast nuclear materials to see how they react, but the test is designed so that no nuclear explosion will take place.

Some anti-nuclear activists complain that such tests undermine efforts toward a global ban on nuclear weapons. A group of nearly 300 Japanese municipalities were expected to protest the latest tests.

But US officials defend the need for the tests.

"Scientific data obtained from the experiment will allow scientists to answer basic questions about the way plutonium reacts when it's shocked — which cannot be determined with the required precision by experimenting with substitute materials," the Energy Department said.

"The data will help to benchmark complex computer simulations of nuclear weapons performance that will be used to certify the safety and reliability of the nation's nuclear weapons stockpile without nuclear testing," it said.

Reuters adds from Tehran: Iran on Friday slammed the United States for conducting an underground test, saying it violated intentional nuclear test ban treaties.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Mahamoud Mohammadi, quoted by Tehran Radio, said the United States had no right to accuse Iran of seeking nuclear arms when Washington itself failed to follow international accords on the weapons.

"America tries to hinder [Iran's] peaceful activities, which are under the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency, while itself carrying out test destructive to human society," Mohammadi said.

The United States said it conducted an underground explosive test on radioactive plutonium at a Nevada site on Thursday.

The experiment resembled a controversial July 2 test that critics argued offered Russia and China cover for continuing full nuclear testing underground.

Washington says the tests are within the limits set by the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) signed last year.

Iran is facing sanctions imposed by Washington which accuses Tehran of seeking to develop nuclear arms and backing terrorism.

Iran denies the charges and says its nuclear programme is strictly civilian and monitored by the United Nations watchdog body.

## Annan to address UNGA to make appeal for reform

UNITED NATIONS, Sept 20: In a departure from tradition, Secretary-General Kofi Annan will address the opening session Monday of the annual debate of the General Assembly to make a personal appeal for his reform programme, reports AP.

Annan's remarks are expected to set the tone for the three-week debate, which brings together presidents, prime ministers and foreign ministers from throughout the world.

The secretary-general's reform plan calls for, among other things, streamlining the UN bureaucracy, better coordination among the UN's independent agencies and creation of a new post of deputy secretary-general.

Sadako Ogata of Japan, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, is the leading candidate for the new post, which will require General Assembly approval.

Virtually every speaker is expected to pay lip service to restructuring and reviving the 52-year-old world organisation and placing it on sound financial footing to enter the coming century.

Without changes, the former General Assembly president, Razali Ismail of Malaysia, fears the United Nations will see its role in the world diminished through "creeping irrelevance."

Nevertheless, that hardly means the debate will demonstrate unanimity among the 185 member states. Instead, the debate is expected to underscore the broad differences among the various groups of countries regarding reform.

For the United States, reform means cutbacks in the 9,000-member Secretariat staff and in the UN budget. Developing countries want to see expansion in the 15-member Security Council, limits on the veto power of the five permanent members and more spending on development programmes.

Germany and Japan are pushing for permanent membership of the council, despite strong objections from Italy. Some UN officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, believe it will be difficult if not impossible to win broad support for truly fundamental reforms.

The issue of reform is linked inexorably to the financial crisis, brought on by the refusal of the United States to pay the 1.5 billion dollars which the United Nations says it owes.

The Clinton Administration has promised to pay nearly 900 dollars if the United Nations meets "benchmarks" for reform. Chief among them is to reduce the US share of the operating budget from 25 per cent to 20 per cent and the peacekeeping budget from 30 per cent to 25 per cent.

On Friday, US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said the Clinton Administration and the United Nations are near agreement on a "grand bargain" that would cut waste in the world organisation and have the United States pay nearly 1 billion dollars in arrears.

She also said the deal would limit the US contribution for UN peacekeeping operations to 25 per cent.

This would reduce the United Nations' financial dependence on the United States and require other prosperous nations to shoulder more of the load, Albright told reporters.

"The grand bargain we have long sought on UN reform and US arrears is in sight, but it is not yet in hand," Albright said.

But diplomats from several nations, speaking on condition of anonymity, believe the former US ambassador to the United States has underplayed the difficulties the United States faces in selling its programme to the UN membership.

## Four-way talks on Korean peace negotiations stalled

NEW YORK, Sept 20: Four-way talks on Korean peace negotiations stalled Friday after North Korea demanded more emergency food aid and insisted on discussing the withdrawal of US forces in Asia, reports AP.

A US official familiar with the talks ruled out further discussion until North Korea showed some willingness to compromise, though he suggested working-level contacts would continue.

"There needs to be some sort of basis for proceeding to any further negotiation," the official said after two days of meetings among US, North Korean, South Korean, and Chinese diplomats here. The North Korean side simply was not serious about it.

"They continued to insist on an explicit linkage of a guarantee of food for them to proceed," the official said, referring to North Korea's longstanding request for emergency aid before full-scale peace negotiations begin.

Pyeongyang also demanded that an agenda for peace talks must include a withdrawal of US forces from Asia and a bilateral peace treaty between Washington and Seoul, the official said, adding: "These positions are not acceptable to the United States."

The North Korean position on all of the issues including food are unchanged," he said.

The United States keeps 100,000 troops in Asia and the Pacific, including 37,000 in South Korea, and North Korea has long sought their withdrawal.

The chief US negotiator, Charles Kartman, said he was tired (and) disappointed that we were unable to succeed today.

South Korean and Chinese officials declined to speak with reporters as the left Columbia University, the site of the talks, shortly before 5:00 pm (2100 GMT).

The chief North Korean negotiator, Kim Gye-Gwan, said only that the parties "have failed to reach an agreement on the agenda, the only thing we require here is all the patience and time to settle these issues."

Other North Korean diplomats in New York could not immediately be reached for comment on the talks.

An earlier round of preparatory talks stalled in August over the issue of US troops, though the delegates agreed to a general scheduled withdrawal.

A UN armistice rather than a peace treaty brought the 1950-53 Korean war to a halt. It was intended as a stopgap measure leading to a peace treaty, but bitter divisions between Seoul and Pyongyang prevented that from happening.

US officials were betting that bankrupt, isolated North Korea might just be hungry enough to make genuine moves toward openness and some sort of reconciliation with its capitalist arch-rival 44 years after the end of the Korean war.

But analysts say Pyongyang clearly wants maximum food aid in exchange for minimal concessions, and North Korean authorities may have believed that the minimum was just showing up at meetings such as these.

"We worked hard, we tried a number of possibilities, nothing seemed to work," the American official said. "We don't have any new ideas to try out at this point. We have done what we could and now it is up to the North Koreans."

Separately, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Robert Einhorn said in Washington North Korea was in the early stage of developing a long-range missile that could hit Alaska.

Einhorn, the State Department's top arms proliferation expert said the Taepo Dong 1 and Taepo Dong 2 missiles have ranges of 1,500 kilometres (900 miles) and 4,500 kilometres (2,700 miles) respectively.