

International

Tamil group rejects govt's plan to hold referendum

Lankan troops repulse LTTE attack in north: 192 killed



President Fidel Ramos pounds his fist while delivering his speech during the celebration of the 19th founding anniversary of the Jesus is Lord Church, a charismatic movement, at the Rizal Park in Manila Sunday. He told thousands of supporters he would step down when his term ends next year and vowed to intensify a campaign against the country's oligarchy and business monopolies in his last days in power. He did not mention names but former president Coerazon Aquino's family controls vast farmlands in the northern Philippines province of Tarlac.

— AP/UNB photo

BRIEFLY

Return of Atlantis delayed:

The return of the US space shuttle Atlantis and its seven-man crew has been delayed until yesterday because of bad weather, NASA said. AFP reports from Cape Canaveral.

Monday the shuttle will have two opportunities, or "windows" for landing at the Kennedy Space Centre here. NASA said at 5:55 pm (2155 GMT) and at 7:31 pm (2331 GMT). The landing was originally scheduled for 6:56 pm Sunday but was then delayed about 90 minutes because of clouds and windy conditions.

China mobilises ships for war games:

Chinese naval forces based in Shanghai has mobilised 15 vessels for a series of exercises in the East China Sea, it was reported yesterday. AFP says from Hong Kong.

The People's Liberation Army's naval forces manoeuvres began on the weekend and would last 10 days in the southeastern area of the East China Sea, the Chinese-language Oriental Daily News, citing reports in Fujian province. The 15 vessels involved in the exercises included amphibious craft, an anti-submarine ship and a supply ship, the report said.

Egypt frees 8 militants:

The Egyptian Attorney General Sunday ordered eight members of the banned Muslim Brotherhood released out of 33 arrested in mid-August for trying to convert students to their beliefs, a judicial official said. AFP reports from Cairo.

However, the authorities extended the detention of 14 others, for another 15 days. No decision was made concerning the 11 other members of the group. The Muslim fundamentalist brothers were arrested in Cairo and several provinces of northern Egypt for organising student meetings at several universities in the Mediterranean city of Alexandria, judicial authorities said.

China, Kazakhstan to boost ties:

Kazakh Defence Minister Muhtar Alteinbaev has pledged his government's support for China's efforts to combat Muslim unrest, an official report said Monday. AP reports from Beijing.

Meeting with Prime Minister Li Peng in Beijing, Alteinbaev said his government strongly opposed Muslim separatist activities in China and had banned its citizens from getting involved, the state-run Xinhua News Agency reported. Alarmed by an upsurge in bombings, assassinations and other violence among Muslims living in remote northwestern Xinjiang, which borders Kazakhstan, China has sought to boost its ties with all neighbouring Central Asian nations.

300 drug dealers held in Uzbekistan:

Some 300 drug traffickers have been arrested so far this year in Uzbekistan and more than 200 kilograms of drugs seized, said a report from Tashkent, capital of Uzbekistan, Xinhua says from Moscow.

In a recent operation on a Moscow-bound train from Dushanbe, capital of Tajikistan, Uzbek police seized 100.66 kilograms of opium, 24.7 kilograms of marijuana and 2.94 kilograms of heroin, said the report.

Ex-sex slave regains ROK citizenship:

The Ministry of Justice restored South Korean citizenship Monday to a former sex slave who was abandoned in Cambodia by Japanese soldiers during World War II. AP reports from Seoul.

"I'm immensely delighted," Lee Nam-ji, 73, said after receiving a certificate of citizenship and a South Korean flag at the ministry. Lee had lived in Cambodia since the war under the Cambodian name of Leng Hun and taken citizenship in that country. Several months ago, a South Korean businessman in Cambodia told Seoul media the story of her life and her search for her family back in South Korea. The story grabbed the nation's attention and Lee was reunited with her younger sister, Lee Soon-ji, living in a southern seaside village, in August.

— AP/UNB photo

The Czech Republic's supermodel Eva Harzicova on the runway for Les Copains' Spring/Summer 1998 fashion collection, presented in Milan Sunday.

— AP/UNB photo

Phnom Penh dismisses Ranariddh's forces resistance

Cambodian dissident calls for arrest of Hun Sen

PHNOM PENH, Oct 6: Prominent Cambodian dissident Sam Rainsy called today for the immediate arrest of powerful Second Prime Minister Hun Sen claiming the strongman was guilty of terrorism, war crimes and drug trafficking, reports AFP.

"As long as Hun Sen remains in power, Cambodia must be declared a terrorist state (like) Libya and Iran. A state run by war criminals such as some African countries and a narco-state (like) Myanmar," Sam Rainsy said in a highly-charged statement faxed to news organisations.

The former finance minister who is now president of the opposition Khmer Nation Party (KNP) and an official in deposited first prime minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh's Resistance Movement, appealed for US and French authorities to detain Hun Sen and place him under international jurisdiction.

Hun Sen is returning to Cambodia this week after a trip to the US and France where he has been lobbying for international recognition following the ouster of Prince Ranariddh in July.

This is a unique opportunity to get hold of such a notorious and dangerous criminal," Sam Rainsy said in the statement, which compared Hun Sen to notorious Khmer Rouge leader Pol Pot and former Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega.

Hun Sen must be jailed in the Hague or in any other convenient place while awaiting his trial on charges of terrorism, war crimes and drug trafficking," he said from Europe where he is urging donor countries to curtail or cut-off aid to Cambodia.

Their operations were purely designed to "make noise" while their leaders lobbied for political support abroad, he said.

Tea Banh said recent attacks on government positions in the northern, northwestern and western parts of the country were conducted solely to enhance the leaders' credibility as chiefs of powerful resistance movement.

Resistance activity at O Smach, Samlot and An Ses [is] all the same political strategy done for the interests of their leaders who are working outside," Tea Banh told reporters outside Parliament.

"They just want to make noise," he said when asked about reports that the resistance had captured An Ses, a mountain pass on Cambodia's far northern border with Thailand.

Residence officials in Bangkok said on Saturday the pass had been taken after two days of fighting.

But Tea Banh said that while troops loyal to deposed co-prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh, including Khmer Rouge guerrillas, had twice last week attacked An Ses — called An Mai pass in Thailand — they failed to capture it.

There was small fighting between the government and the combined forces of (the price's top general) Nhek Bun Chhay and the Khmer Rouge," he said. "Then they withdrew."

The reason they fought was to make noise in the interests of their leaders at the United Nations," he said. "Then they withdrew."

JAKARTA, Oct 6: A baby orangutan clings to its mother while she climbs down a tree in a drought-stricken rainforest, hazy from the widespread fires raging across Indonesia, reports AP.

Tribes people attack as soon as the red-haired apes rarely venture into a village garden desperate for food.

The mother is weak from hunger and slow on the ground. She's no match for the humans who hack her to death with machetes and wrench the baby from her mutilated corpse.

A visiting trader buys the orangutan for a few dollars. Soon the infant is illegally for sale in a nearby town for drs 50.

In Taiwan it could sell for drs 5,000. If smuggled into the United States such a cute, exotic creature might fetch more than drs 25,000.

This is happening now," said Willie Smits, a Dutch-born wildlife worker who with the help of police and the army has saved 30 baby orangutans on the island of Borneo in the past two months.

He nurtures more than 100 in a refuge and will eventually release most back into the wild. Tribes have long combed the jungle to service the illicit pet trade. But more and more of the apes, considered one of hu-

mankind's closest biological relatives, are falling into their hands because of this year's severe drought and the destruction of forest habitat by fires.

Orangutans are being forced out of their habitat. Normally they would never go near a village. But they are facing a food crisis in the forest. There is little fruit on the trees," Smits said.

Wildfires thick smoke and lack of water are exacting a terrible toll on animals, humans and their shared environment across Indonesia.

The official Antara news agency reported that fires on the island of Sumatra are forcing wild elephants out of their scrubland habitat. Some herds have rampaged through villages in search of food.

On the same island three people have been mauled to death during the past four months by rare Sumatran tigers, which wildlife officials believe also fled their normal jungle range.

There are fears for the survival of the rare Sumatran rhinoceros as well as several species of monkeys and birds that, like orangutans, live mainly off forest fruit that has become scarce in the prolonged dry spell.

Meteorologists say the latest

El Nino, a shift in weather patterns over the Pacific Ocean, has triggered the worst drought in a half-century, delaying monsoon rains needed to save crops, replenish the jungles, clear the skies and douse the flames.

Hundreds of forest and scrub fires, many of them started by plantation owners and timber companies to clear land, have been burning across dry Indonesia for weeks.

Comcastable peat land has also caught fire in some places and has the potential to smolder for years.

A thick smog cloud, which choking southeast Asia, hangs over Indonesia and has drifted over neighboring Malaysia, Southern Thailand and parts of the Philippines, as well as Singapore and Brunei.

The health of more than 20 million people is at risk, officials say.

Smoke inhalation has been linked to the deaths of four Indonesians, and more than 30,000 people have sought medical treatment for respiratory infections and stinging eyes.

"I think the haze has now reached a dangerous level," Indonesia's Health Minister Sudji said last week.

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pe and Brunei.

The science is solid," Clinton said recently, adding that the US will press for "realistic and binding" commitments to reduce carbon emissions.

"We have a responsibility to cut back ... because the world is looking to us for leadership."

Clinton and Al Gore, the vice

president who hopes to succeed

his boss in 2001, would like to

keep environmental support while not antagonising busi-

siness. That may not be possible.

The administration has not

hinted how far it is willing to go to control emissions or what timetable it will suggest. The answers may depend in part on an assessment of the economic impact of new controls on emissions.

As environmentalists and many scientists warned that unchecked pollution could lead to disastrous long-range warming of the planet, business has waged a 15 million dollars advertising campaign suggesting that gas and electricity prices would soar and drag down the economy.

Five years ago, at the last international conference on global warming, industrial countries set a goal of emissions at the 1990 level by 2000.

Instead, even more carbon is

pouring into the atmosphere, so

much that getting to 1990 levels in the United States even by 2010 would require US industry and cars to reduce them by 20 per cent from current levels.

Another report from Tokyo says, in an effort to take leadership in the fight against global warming, Japan on Monday issued a proposal to substantially cut greenhouse gas emissions worldwide by 2012, officials said.

The proposal calls for indus-

trialised countries to slash greenhouse gas levels by 5 per cent from their 1990 levels in the period between 2008 and 2012. Chief Cabinet Secretary Kaneo Muraoka told reporters on Monday.

India admits 'serious problem' with satellite

BANGALORE, India, Oct 6:

India today admitted the failure of its most advanced communications satellite was a "serious problem" which could force it to look abroad for help, reports AFP.

But the state-run Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) predicted the setback to the country's space programme, the second within 10 days would be short-term.

ISRO spokesman Krishna-murthy told AFP that Sunday's decision to abandon the INSAT 20 satellite, used by the country's leading stock exchange as well as for telecommunications, was definitely a serious problem.

10 Croat war crimes suspects to face trial at UN court

ZAGREB, Croatia, Oct 6: Ten Bosnian Croat war crimes suspects, including their most wanted fugitive, will surrender on Monday and be taken to an international tribunal for trial, the Croatian defence minister said, reports AP.

The announcement on Croa-

tin TV on Sunday by Defence Minister Gjoko Susak capped months of intense pressure on Croatia by the United States and its allies, and negotiations to ensure that the suspects are tried quickly.

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