Opposition's 9 options to Yeltsin's choice

# Russian president, parliament seek compromise as crisis mounts

MOSCOW, Sept 5: Opposition leaders said Saturday they had as many as nine alternatives to Boris Yeltsin's choice for prime minister, including several top Soviet-era bureaucrats, reports

Their remarks kicked off a second weekend of behind-thescenes negotiations to end a protracted political and financial crisis that has begun to spur anxiety among ordinary Russians worried about further instability.

The Communist-dominated parliament unexpectedly postponed hearings Friday on whether to confirm the president's pick for prime minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin. Party leaders agreed to hold face to face talks with Yeltsin on Monday before a rescheduled debate on Chernomyrdin later in the

"I don't expect anything good from Yeltsin" on Monday,

Former regional

leaders propose

new forum

for Asia

Philippine President Fidel

Ramos, former Australian

Prime Minister Bob Hawke and

former Japanese Prime Minis-

ter Morihiro Hosakawa held

talks in Manila this week and

proposed a new Asian forum to help the region solve its prob-

A press statement issued

Saturday following the meeting

by the three former leaders said

they had agreed that "it is im-

portant to address the need to

establish a new regional focal

Mandela denounces

US sanctions

against Cuba

President Nelson Mandela de-

nounced US sanctions against

Cuba before bestowing South

Africa's highest civilian order

for foreigners on Cuban Presi-

dent Fidel Castro here Friday,

at odds with the United States

over his friendship with Castro

said South Africa, is proud to be

amongst the majority of na-

tions who affirm the right of

the Cuban people to determine

punish them for having decided

to do so are anathema to the in-

ternational order to which we

on a two-day state visit to South

Africa after attending the Non-

Aligned Movement summit

which ended in Durban on Fri-

day, the Order of Good Hope

Class One Grand Class in

thanks for Cuba's support for

the struggle against apartheid.

He added "sanctions which

Mandela gave Castro, who is

their own destiny."

Mandela who has long been

PAARL, South Africa, Sept 5:

lems, reports AP.

centre."

reports AFP.

MANILA, Sept 5: Former

Zyuganov told The Associated Press on Saturday.

"We will state our opinion of the real situation. Because he rarely meets (with lawmakers) he doesn't know the situation. He is not governing."

Zyuganov said he and his hard-line allies have nine possible alternatives to Chernomyrdin, whom they blame for creating Russia's current predicament during the five years he was prime minister before being fired in March.

"The Yeltsin-Chernomyrdin couple ... are distrusted by 9 out of 10 people now," Zyuganov said. "By the end of September they will be distrusted by 98 out of 100 people. They have no assets, no resources, no brains, no will ... They have nothing."

Yeltsin brought Chernomyrdin back to head the gov ernment on August 23, saying he needed an experienced heavyweight to deal with the

CALCUTTA, Sept 5: House-

wives, beggars and schoolchil-

dren were among thousands of

people who joined nuns of the Missionaries of Charity to pray

for the extraordinary Mother

Teresa of Calcutta on her first

death anniversary on Saturday,

mass at Mother House, the

headquarters of Mother Tere-

sa's charity, priests from differ-

ent churches in the eastern In-

dian city of Calcutta conducted

prayers and read passages from

the nearby St. Xavier's church

led the mass and offered holy

communion to all the nuns and

guided us to the path of god is

still fresh in our hearts. Today

we all assemble here to com-

memorate the first anniversary

of her death that touched mil-

Since dawn on Saturday,

hundreds of visitors queued at

the tomb of Mother Teresa to

pay their respects to the nun

who, during her lifetime, be-

came famous as "Saint of the

Gutter" for her work among In-

dia's poorest people.
Nums of her charity organi-

sation stood near her tomb,

decorated simply with white

roses and marigold flowers, as

admirers filed by and laid bou-

quets of flowers at the foot of

Dozen's of Mother Teresa's

"Today is a great day as

admirers said her presence

mother has gone home to god

and she is resting there. She is

very powerful with god to inter-

cede for us, pray for us and bless

us," Sister Nirmala said to the

Hindus, Muslims, Christians,

Buddhists, Sikhs and members

of India's other religious mi-

norities who had gathered

her grave.

could still be felt.

lions of hearts," he said.

Catholics present.

Father Francis Gomes from

"Her lovable memory which

At a special early morning

reports AP.

country's mounting problems.

He has been locked in a standoff with parliament since. while the economy deteriorates

The leader of the Communist-allied Agrarian Party said the opposition candidates in-clude Vladimir Gerashchenko. whose favourite response to economic problems as Central bank chairman in the Sovietera was to print more money, and Yuri Maslyukov, former head of the Soviet State Plan-

ning agency. Agrarian leader Nikolai Kharitonov said they would also suggest Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov; Yegor Stroyev, speaker of the Federation Council, the upper house of par-liament; and Gennady Kulik, deputy chairman of the parlia-mentary budget committee, the Interfax news agency reported.
Interfax said the opposition

considered proposing Commu-

Thousands pray for Mother Teresa

on her 1st death anniversary

nist leader Zyuganov as well. "I decided not to name Zyuganov because this name gives the president heartburn."
Yeltsin has said he will nominate no one other than

Chernomyrdin. Under the constitution Yeltsin has three chances to propose a prime ministerial candidate, either the same person or different people. If the Duma votes no three times, the president can disband the legislature and call new elections.

Chernomyrdin's position was strengthened Friday when the Federation Council passed a non-binding motion 91-17 ex-

pressing confidence in him. The vote was only symbolic, but it may increase pressure on the Duma to find a compromise. The regional governors who make up the Council have huge power and the vote signalled they would back Yeltsin in a showdown.

#### **BSF** arrests 2 top ranking militants in Kashmir

SRINAGAR, Sept 5: In a prize catch, BSF Friday, arrested two top ranking militants of pro-Pakistan militant outfits who were evading arrest for the last

nine years, reports PTI. Hilal Ahmad alias Douda, a self styled sector commander of Islamic Front and Imtiyaz Ahmad Khan alias 'Tarriq Hussain and Coka' self styled deputy chief of Al-Umer Commando, were arrested from Karrfali Mohalla and Khankath Moulla in Srinagar, a BSF spokesman said.

Elsewhere in the valley. militants shot dead one person while four more militants were arrested with some arms and ammunition since last evening. an official spokesman said.

Militants shot dead one Mubarak Ahmad, a village level worker, inside his house at Waripora-Damhal in Anantnag district of south Kashmir last

evening, the spokesman said. Four militants two each from Baramulla and Srinagar - were arrested by the security forces during search opera-tions. Today the captured ultras included an activist of Harkat-Ul-Ansar and a member of Al-Umar outfit, the spokesman

#### US House leaders will meet to talk impeachment process of Clinton

WASHINGTON, Sept 5: US House of Representatives leaders will meet on Wednesday to make preparations for handling independent counsel Kenneth Starr's report on President Bill Clinton and discuss the process of impeachment, House leadership aides said on Friday. reports Reuters.

House speaker Newt Gingrich, republican of Georgia, his second-in-command majority leader Dick Armey of Texas and house majority leader Richard Gephardt, a Missourt democrat will be briefed by house judiciary committee chairman Henry Hyde, republican of Illi-nois, whose panel would be in charge of any impeachment

hearings. As he winds down the sevenmonth sex and lies investigation, Starr's office is expected to work through the weekend to try to finish the impeachment report. If the final report on the investigation into Clinton's sexual relationship with Mon-Lewinsky outlines impeachable offences, it will be up to the republican-dominated house to decide whether to trigger impeachment proceedings.

In anticipation of Starr's report, Gephardt told Gingrich of his concerns that the preparations so far by the house to deal with Starr's findings had excluded democrats.

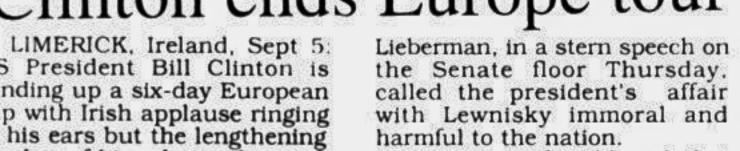
#### State-run press slates opposition in Myanmar

YANGON. Sept 5: As one college campus remained closed on Saturday for fear of student unrest, the state-run press accused the pro-democratic opposition of demanding the impossible in a bid to destabilise the country, reports AP.

The commentary, which also took note of Southeast Asia's economic turmoil, comes at a time when the military government is facing increasing challenges.

The World Bank on Friday announced that Myanmar also known as Burma - would ineligible for new loans from the international lending body because of a failure to pay old debts. The move doesn't affect any existing World Bank programmes for Myanmar, but it sends a signal around the world that the country is a bad credit

The World Bank's last project in Myanmar closed in 1995, after the agency gave Myanmar its last loan in 1987. After that, the macroeconomic environment became so severe that the bank felt it was unable to oper-



Some sort of "public rebuke" is called for, Lieberman said, although he said it would be premature until Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr reports on his assessment of whether Clinton had committed any impeachable offenses and the White House has a chance to respond to it.

"I made a bad mistake," Clinble and I'm sorry about it."

even some of his admirers had been seeking, but Lieberman's speech suggests the president is by no means out of the woods.



A view of destruction on Friday at the camp, near Khost in Afghanistan. US Forces fired several missiles on Aug 20 on alleged terrorist camps in Afghanistan claiming those were run by Saudi dissident Osama Bin Laden who according to the US was involved in the bombing of its embassies in east Africa. -AP/UNB photo

## Clinton ends Europe tour

US President Bill Clinton is winding up a six-day European trip with Irish applause ringing in his ears but the lengthening shadow of his relationship with Monica Lewnisky awaiting him back home, reports AP.

Clinton's role in pushing Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland toward a peaceful accommodation has earned him plaudits in Ireland. He mused Friday in a speech at a Gateway computer facility in Dublin that he wished he could get other warring groups to take

"It's a step forward not only for Irish people but for all people divided everywhere who are seeking new ways to think about old problems," he de-

The president was returning to the theme that peace inspires economic success in a speech here Saturday. Afterward, he was getting a chance to relax by playing golf at Ballybumon before returning to Washington.

Clinton however has a more difficult scenario facing him at home. One of his closest political friends. Sen. Joseph

At a Moscow news conference Wednesday with Russian President Boris Yeltsin, Clinton for the first time said publicly that he had made a mistake in becoming involved with Ms. Lewinsky. He also was more direct than previously in admitting that he had sought forgiveness.

ton said Friday. "It's indefensi-

It was the apology critics and

### Blast kills 13 in Dagestan

MAKHACHKALA, Russia, Sept 5: A car bomb probably caused the explosion that killed at least 13 people, including two children, and gouged a five-metre crater in street in the capital of a restive southern Russian region, officials said on Saturday, reports AP.

At least 80 people were injured in the Friday night explosion and more than half remained in hospitals, according to the press office of the regional administration of Dagestan.

The Emergency Situations Ministry initially said the explosion was caused by an artillery shell fired from an eastern suburb of the Dagestan capital of Makhachkala.

But the local administration said on Saturday that shards of glass and metal fragments found in the bodies suggested a car bomb.

Dagestan has been wracked by violence and kidnappings in recent months as various religious and ethnic groups battle for power.

## It was a satellite, not missile: DPRK

## South Korea condemns North's missile capability

SOUL, Sept 5: South Korea said on Saturday it doesn't matter whether North Korea launched a ballistic missile or a satellite, its communist neighbour is a threat either way, re-

ports AP. After a meeting of the National Security Council, the Foreign Ministry issued a statement saying Seoul has been unable to confirm North Korea's claim that Monday's launch was a scientific satel-

US and Japanese officials had described it as a two-stage ballistic missile that soared across northern Japan before dropping into the Pacific Ocean.

But the Russian Service for the Monitoring of Space Objects said it had confirmed that North Korea had launched a satellite, the Itar-Tass news agency reported from Moscow.

Itar-Tass quoted an unidentified official of the service as saying the satellite was circling the earth every two hours and

45 minutes in a high, elliptical "Whether it's a satellite or a

missile, it shows North Korea has acquired an ability to deliver a missile. This is a serious security threat to the region," Lee- Ho-jin said. Military officials and scien-

tists in the region scrambled on Saturday to try to verify or dismiss the North Korean claim that it used a three-stage rocket to launch a satellite broadcasting patriotic songs.

# BUILFILY

Israeli planes raid hideouts in Lebanon: Israeli warplanes raided suspected guerilla hideouts in southern Lebanon on Saturday, Lebanese security officials said. AP reports White House that Iran is poised from Nabatiyeh, Lebanon.

Two fighter jets fired two air-to-surface missiles at the hills of Mazraat Igmata and Mlita in the Iglim al Tuffah province, a Hezbollah stronghold that faces an Israeli-occupied border enclave in south Lebanon, the officials said, speaking on customary condition of anonymity.

Black smoke billowed from the targeted area, but there were no immediate reports of casualties. Iqlim al Tuffah, a frequent target of Israeli warplanes, is used by the Iranian-backed Hezbollah guerilla group as a base for attacks on Israeli troops and their allied Lebanese militiamen in the occupied zone.

Chinese dissident jailed: A court in Shaanxi province has sentenced a democracy activist who tried to run in a local legislative election to prison, a human rights group said yesterday, AP says from Beijing.

The Hanzhong District Intermediate Court in Shaanxi province, in northern China, told Zhao Changging's brother and sister he had been sentenced, but refused to tell them the length of the sentence, when it was handed down or the crime for which he was convicted.

Hanoi, Bangkok to sign visa deal: Vietnam and Thailand are expected to sign an agreement on visa exemptions in October, Saturday's Tuoi Tre newspaper quoted a Thai diplomat as saying. AP reports From Hanoi.

Teerada Kerrsuwan, counsillor of the Thai Consulate General in Ho Chi Minh city, said the agreement will take effect 30-45 days after it is signed and that Thailand will be the first ASEAN country to exempt visas for Vietnamese visitors.

# 'Iranian incursion into Afghanistan imminent' WASHINGTON, Sept 5: US cause neither side possesses a

The full figure bronze statue of Mother Teresa being off-

loaded at the residence of artist Gautam Pal in Salt Lake,

Calcutta, Friday. The artist will place the statue in his

courtyard to pay homage to mother Teresa on her first

death anniversary on Saturday. Earlier, the statue has

been scheduled to be erected at a prominent place in Cal-

cutta. It has been posponded mainly under objection of

intelligence analysts have warned the Pentagon and the to send thousands of troops and dozens of attack aircraft into Afghanistan and that an incursion is "imminent," the Washington Post reported today, say

the Missionaries of Charity.

Quoting senior defence and administration officials, the newspaper said that in the past week under the guise of a military exercise, Iran sent about 35,000 troops, 25 attack aircraft, 80 T-72 tanks, two SA-6 mobile missile batteries, 90 heavy artillery pieces and 60 armoured vehicles to its northeastern border with Afghanistan.

The troop movement coincides with escalating tensions between the two countries, fuelled by reports that Taliban guards killed 10 diplomats in the Iranian consulate in Mazare-Sharif, a city in northern Afghanistan, according to the

Any fighting that breaks out between Irani and Afghanistan could be long and bloody be-

definitive military advantage. US officials told the newspaper. The Post said US analysts believe Iran wants to deny the

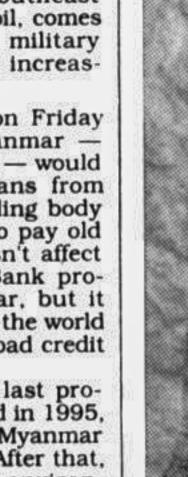
-AP/UNB photo

Taliban recognition as a legitimate government of Afghanistan and is intent on breaking its hold over some territory it now controls. The Taliban seized Afghanistan's capital, Kabul, in 1996 and now controls about two-thirds of the country.

#### DPRK parliament may abolish post of president

SEOUL, Sept 5: North Korea's newly-elected parliament convened Saturday amid signs the communist state may not elect a president, either abolishing the post or leaving it vacant permanently, reports AP.

The Supreme People's Assembly had been widely expected to elect Kim Jong II. North Korea's undisputed leader for four years, as state presi-



ate in Myanmar.

The commentary in Saturday's state-run newspapers said that while economies in Southeast Asia are in turmoil and countries around the world are facing economic crisis, the Myanmar government has tried hard to overcome difficulties within its capacity.



Moshin Shaikh, second from left, displays his painting of Princess Diana in New Delhi Friday. The image on the right is of Diana as a Sister of Charity nun. The anniversary of the death of Mother Teresa, who died within a week of Princess Diana, was observed Saturday. Shaikh said he painted these to remind people of Princess Diana's charitable -AP/UNB photo

## Sihanouk opens talks aimed BJP govt broke nat'l consensus on foreign policy: Gujral at ending political crisis

SIEM REAP, Cambodia, Sept 5: Talks aimed at ending Cambodia's current political crisis opened on Saturday morning under the aegis of King Norodom Sihanouk at his palace in the northwestern province of Siem Reap, reports

The meeting — held just a short distance from the famous temples of Angkor Wat — is chaired by the king and brings together representatives from three rival political parties, the election committee, and the country's highest appeals body.

The aim of the planned three-day meeting is to help ease political tensions which have been mounting in Phnom Penh since July 26 parliamentary elections, the 75-year-old monarch said in a statement. Those tensions have edged

into violence which it is feared may increase. Cambodian leader Hun Sen's ruling party won a slight majority in the polls, but not the two-thirds needed to form a government on his own.

The leading opposition party, FUNCINPEC, and its ally the Sam Rainsy Party - which together won 58 of 122 seats in the National Assembly — have accused Hun Sen of cheating to ensure victory at the polls.

They have threatened to boycott the new National Assembly if their allegations of fraud — dismissed as baseless by election authorities loyal to Hun Sen — are not properly investigated.

Sihanouk said Saturday he wants to find out what concessions rival parties are willing to make so that "calm" can return to Phnom Penh, a new National Assembly can convene and a new government can

form. He has expressed doubts that the goals of the meeting will be

## NEW DELHI, Sept 5: Former Prime Minister IK Gujral has

accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led government in India of breaking the national consensus on foreign policy and said he was not satisfied with the way it handled foreign relations after the country's nuclear tests, reports IANS.

Gujral, who heads the Parliament Standing Committee which reviews the working of the External Affairs Ministry, indicated he was not satisfied with the way Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's government has handled India's foreign relations after the May nuclear tests.

He accused the Vajpayee gov-

ernment of "breaking" the "national consensus" on foreign policy. "The strength of Indian foreign policy has been the national consensus behind it. The consensus has to be sustained by sharing information. Information sharing is now (being kept) distinct from consensus building. The govern-

ment will be well advised to repair the fracture." Gujral told India Abroad News Service in

an interview. He complained that the government was keeping the opposition in the dark about the ongoing New Delhi-Washington nuclear talks. "I notice that (U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Strobe) Talbott and (Indian Prime Minister's special envoy) Jaswant Singh have met four times, but the government has not conveyed the content of the talks to us."

He also thinks the government "overreacted" to South African President Nelson Mandela's remarks on Kashmir and lations.

has cautioned against making "hasty" inferences about the state of New Delhi-Pretoria re-Gujral denied that Mandela was advocating mediation in the India-Pakistan dispute in urging developing nations to

"lend all the strength we have"

to finding a solution to the In-

dia-Pakistan dispute.

The African statesman's reference to the Kashmir issue at the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) summit in Durban should not be seen as inconsistent with the principles on which the 112-nation forum conducts its business, Gujral insisted.

"I do not think it smacks of advocating any third party intervention. He has only counselled that the issue should be sorted out through peaceful negotiation," he said. "Since when have we felt that the word 'Kashmir' should not be mentioned? As a matter of fact, the Home Minister (L.K. Advani) himself has correlated the (nuclear) bomb with Kashmir," Gujral said.

It would be "immature diplomacy if we overreact," said Gujral, pointing out that Mandela's remarks had been pulled out of the context in which they were made. "I have seen the full text of Mandela's speech. I think it has to be read in full. It

is a statement of a very tall statesman of the world who has tried to look at the world situation with compassion and concern for peace," he said.

In his inaugural speech at the opening ceremony of the 12th NAM summit, Mandela said: "All of us remain concerned that the issue of Jammu and Kashmir should be solved through peaceful negotiations and should be willing to lend all the strength we have to the resolution of this matter". Gujral quoted extensively

from Mandela's speech which, he said, showed the African leader's commitment to the "twin issues of peace and development." Mandela referred to these as the "central point" of NAM. As current NAM leader, South Africa "has every reason to hope that the objectives of NAM will be fulfilled," the former prime minister said. "While looking at the world situation, he has identified various areas where the situation is cause for concern, be it Congo,

Lesotho, Angola or Sudan. He also talks about Cuba and tension in Korea," Gujral said. It was "in this stride" that Mandela expressed concern about Kashmir, he added. "India-South Africa rela-

tions are very abiding and very valuable. I think it will be a very hasty conclusion to either understate or underrate our friendship with South Africa,' he said. Gujral said he was "encouraged" to learn from news reports from Durban that India and Pakistan had sorted out differences over resuming their dialogue. "It is important for both sides to keep engaged in a dialogue...now that both have nuclear deterrents the question of any armed conflict should be ruled out," he said.

He advised the government to initiate action to "repair the damage" to Sino-Indian ties caused by statements made by government leaders after the nuclear tests.

The former prime minister, who was foreign minister during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the Gulf War, however, praised the initiative taken by the Vajpayee government to restore ties with Baghdad. Referring to Lok Sabha

Speaker G.M.C. Balayogi's visit to Iraq last month and the holding of the India-Iraq Joint Commission meeting this week in New Delhi after ten years, Gujral said these are "indicative of India's policy to sustain our historical relations with the people of Iraq who are suffering immensely (under the interna-tional sanctions)." He said that during the Gulf War, India had accepted all U.N. resolutions and "conformed to all Security Council resolutions.

"But that is now behind us. It is not only a question of the past, but we have to look at the present and the future. In these years, the situation has undergone a change and therefore India is pleading for lifting of the sanctions against Iraq," he pointed out.