

International

Suu Kyi to defy ban on travel outside Yangon

YANGON, Sept 15: Myanmar opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi today said she would make a trip outside Yangon within the next few days in defiance of the ruling military junta's ban on travel outside the capital, reports AFP.

"As I'm not legally restricted in any way we have decided that it is time for us to make this clear. I shall travel outside Rangoon (Yangon) within the next few days," the Nobel peace laureate said.

"But since the judicial organ is in the hands of the military authorities, we all know what would be the result -- even so we'll do it just to show that we cannot accept such unlawful and criminal acts," she said.

Previous NLD attempts at legal redress have all been unsuccessful.

Aung San Suu Kyi thanked the international community and the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan for their support during her roadside ordeal and house arrest.

"It is up to the SPDC to choose any line of action they like."

Aung San Suu Kyi looked thin and said she had lost about four pounds (two kilograms) during her nine-day roadside standoff with the military government.

No uniformed police were at the headquarters, although some plainclothes police were present.

A British and a US diplomat and members of the foreign press

attended the impromptu press conference after an NLD meeting.

Aung San Suu Kyi said she would take legal action against the junta for "illegally" restricting her and her group on the outskirts of Dalla, a Yangon suburb, putting the NLD leadership under house arrest and illegally searching the party headquarters.

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Sri Lankan army's Rapid Deployment Force search the site where a suicide bomber killed six people and injured 28 in Colombo yesterday.

— AFP photo

Stock exchange bombing Wahid orders arrest of Suharto's son

most delicate subject."

She held separate meeting with a Palestinian negotiating group headed by Saeb Erekat and, over dinner with Israeli Foreign Minister Sholomo Ben-Ami.

Albright's senior aide, Dennis Ross, also met with the two sides and planned to hold further talks with them on Saturday.

A senior Palestinian official, Nabil Shaath, was scheduled to meet with Sandy Berger, Clinton's national security adviser, at the White House.

"We will keep working, step by step," State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said.

The goal, Albright said, was to find a formula that the two sides can accept.

It was not clear how much longer the administration will persist in its uphill struggle. Ben-Ami is scheduled to return to Jerusalem on Monday night.

Wahid and several government

Suicide bomber kills six in Colombo

COLOMBO, Sept 15: A suspected Tamil Tiger suicide bomber blew himself up and killed six others today as police tried to search him outside Sri Lanka's main hospital complex here, officials said, reports AFP.

The bomber, believed to be a member of the separatist movement, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), detonated explosives strapped to his body as a constable was about to frisk him for hidden explosives, police said.

Officials said they believed the man may have been on a mission to assassinate a senior politician or a military commander although there was no firm evidence on who could have been the intended target.

Health Minister Nimal Siripala de Silva whose office is located close to the Eye Hospital had driven past the area just seven minutes earlier, but had taken a different route to approach his office, officials said.

"I don't know if I was the target," de Silva said. "But it was close."

De Silva escaped an assassination attempt in July 1996 when a female suicide bomber staged an attack in the northern peninsula of Jaffna. He suffered minor

injuries, but the region's top army officer was killed.

Friday's suicide bomber was killed instantly in the blast which happened at the tail end of the morning rush hour here.

Five civilians and a police officer identified as Nelson were killed while another 26 were wounded.

Of those taken to the hospital's emergency ward, police said six of them were employees from the eye hospital, including a nurse.

"Two people were dead on admission and three others died at the intensive care unit," said hospital director, Doctor Hector Weerasinghe.

Police were alerted to the suicide bomber by taxi drivers opposite the tightly-guarded Eye Hospital which is part of the country's main hospital complex in Colombo's Town Hall area.

"The bomber may have either been waiting for a VIP motorcade or trying to enter the hospital around noon when visitors are allowed," a police spokesman at the scene said.

Hospitals in the capital are under tight armed protection from large numbers of soldiers and police as government troops

wounded in the conflict against the separatist Tamil Tigers are sent here for specialist treatment.

Sand-filled barrels have been placed against the walls of the hospital complex to prevent drive-by bombings and visitors are usually body searched and their bags thoroughly examined for explosives and weapons.

The bombing came as police and troops tightened security ahead of the October 10 parliamentary elections.

Police had warned over the weekend that they had information of Tamil Tiger suicide bombers known as Black Tigers who were trying to infiltrate the capital to stage assassinations.

Friday's attack was a carbon copy of a blast outside the prime minister's office here on January 5.

A female suicide bomber detonated explosives strapped to her body as she was being searched outside the office on Flower Road. Twelve people were killed in that attack.

There was another suicide attack against an air force bus near the capital on June 14. Exactly a week earlier, an LTTE suicide bomber assassinated Sri Lanka's Industrial Minister C. V. Gooneratne.

11 killed in Kashmir gunbattle

JAMMU, India, Sept 15: Eleven people, including eight separatist militants, were killed in three different shootouts in the Jammu region within 12 hours, defence and police officials said today, reports Reuters.

Six militants, including two Pakistani nationals, were shot dead in separate encounters with Indian security forces near Kalidih and Budhal areas in Rajouri district on Thursday, the defence spokesman told Reuters.

Two security personnel and a member of Budhal village defence committee died after receiving bullet wounds, police said.

Rajouri is 176 km (110 miles) north of Jammu, the winter capital of the restive Jammu and Kashmir state.

Two separatist guerrillas were killed by the Indian army in a gunbattle near Banial in Doda district, 173 km (108 miles) east of Jammu, late on Thursday.

Taiwan plans to open transportation link with China

TAIPEI, Sept 15: Taiwan's plans to open direct transportation links between its outlying islands and China is a new goodwill gesture that should encourage Beijing to restart peace talks, a Taiwanese leader said Friday, reports AP.

Premier Tang Fei made the remarks one day after the government's top China expert announced that Taiwan is ready to end a 51-year ban on direct ties between the tiny islands and China.

The Taiwanese territories include Kinmen and Matsu, island groups less than 10 kilometers (6 miles) off China's southeastern coast.

Since the two sides split amid civil war in 1949, Taiwan has banned planes, ships and mail from going directly to China.

Tang told lawmakers the government is actively planning to open the "small three links" involving the outlying islands and eventually the "big three links," which would open ports on Taiwan's main island for direct transportation with China.

S Arabia urges Arafat not to back down on Jerusalem

NEW YORK, Sept 15: Saudi Arabia is urging Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat not to back down on Jerusalem as the Clinton administration pursues a desperate drive for a compromise on the city's future, reports AP.

As US Secretary of State Madeline Albright opened a new round of talks with Israeli and Palestinian negotiators, Crown Prince Abdullah said "there is nothing to negotiate about and compromise on when it comes to Jerusalem."

Speaking to a group of Arab-American and Muslim leaders, Abdullah said: "Jerusalem is important to the hearts of all Muslims and in fact it's in the heart of everybody with a sense of humanity. This is something on which there can be no compromise."

Hopes for an agreement between Israel and the Palestinians depend heavily on resolving

their dispute over Jerusalem.

Resisting compromise proposals from President Bill Clinton and other US officials, Arafat is demanding sovereignty over east Jerusalem while Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak has offered the Palestinians some local control over Arab neighborhoods.

Barak also has offered the Palestinians a state on virtually all of the West Bank and Gaza.

Saudi Arabia is considered one of the United States' best friends in the Arab world. Its leaders usually exert their influence privately.

The crown prince has been running the affairs of Saudi Arabia since King Fahd suffered a stroke in 1995. He is in New York for the UN Millennium Summit.

Syria has also backed "full Palestinian sovereignty" over East Jerusalem.

Albright, at a news conference Thursday, called Jerusalem "the

Kursk submarine crisis Rescue effort was inadequate, says top Russian minister

MOSCOW, Sept 15: A chastened Deputy Prime Minister Ilya Klebanov admitted today that Russia's rescue effort during the Kursk submarine crisis was woefully inadequate, as deputies grilled him over the disaster, reports AFP.

Klebanov side-stepped a question on whether he planned to resign over his handling of the affair, as he fielded a barrage of hostile questions during a sombre debate in the State Duma, the lower house of parliament.

And he denied the Russian authorities had deliberately misled a public transfixed by the unfolding drama into believing some of the 118 crew had survived two explosions which destroyed the prizewinning vessel.

Klebanov heads a government commission into the loss of the Kursk, a state-of-the-art nuclear-powered submarine which sank in the Barents Sea on August 12 after a still unexplained explosion during military exercises.

"We did not mislead anyone," said Klebanov, who nevertheless conceded that Russia must "overhaul our rescue resources."

But he defended the navy over its lack of necessary rescue expertise, saying the international diving teams sent by Britain and Norway to help in the rescue effort had been private contractors, not military experts.

Deputy Yury Schekochikhin from the liberal Yabloko bloc accused Klebanov of personally mis-leading the public by pretending Russia could rescue the trapped submariners without international help.

"Will there be an official explanation for the reasons for the misinformation and do the authorities intend to excuse themselves before public opinion for this misinformation," stormed his colleague Sergei Yushchenko.

A humiliated President Vladimir Putin was forced to appeal to Britain and Norway for aid after Russian rescue attempts failed.

Nikolai Kovalyov, a former FSB chief now a de-

puty with the Fatherland-All Russia bloc, demanded to know why the government claimed to have detected crew members tapping SOS signals on the stricken sub's hull.

Officials later claimed all the crew would have died within minutes of the sinking.

"The statements that I know about were not spreading misinformation, but on occasion they appeared like misinformation," Klebanov admitted.

"I personally heard a tape recording of an easily audible tapping sound," he said. "This tapping sound was incredibly clear."

"At that point we thought there were people still alive," he said, but added, "now I have difference evidence." Officials now believe the noise was created by a mechanical device aboard the vessel.

"Yes there was a tapping but almost certainly it was not a person tapping," he said. "There was not deliberate misinformation."

Klebanov repeated that his commission was studying three possible causes of the disaster: that the Kursk struck a World War II-era mine; collided with an underwater object, possibly a British or US submarine or was sunk by an explosion in one of its torpedoes.

"Our first task is the recovery of the bodies, but this is a very difficult operation," he said.

Divers should start work on bringing the dead to the surface in early October and must complete the operation by late November when weather conditions will deteriorate, he added.

Refloating the Kursk would cost tens of millions of dollars, he said, but if it was left at the bottom of the Barents Sea, "this will be a permanent problem for Russia."

Klebanov also dismissed a lawmaker's claim Thursday that the Kursk had been sunk in a friendly-fire blunder during August naval manoeuvres.

"This is crazy," he said of the claim by Sergei Zhekov, who is a member of a separate parliamentary probe into the disaster.

Russian ship fires missile at a town accidentally

MOSCOW, Sept 15: One of Russia's largest anti-submarine warships accidentally fired at a town on the far east coast, RIA-Novosti cited the Pacific Fleet press service as saying today, reports AFP.

Nobody was wounded when the large-calibre shell was mistakenly fired by the Admiral Pantilev at the Slavyanka settlement in the Khasanski region on Thursday during a naval exercise, the fleet said in a statement.

But the shell left a crater 1.5 metres deep after it exploded in marshy terrain 200 metres from Slavyanka.

The fleet denied reports in Russian media that the explosion had resulted in casualties, adding: "One local resident of Slavyanka, an elderly man, suffered concussion."

Election Commission Secretariat

Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka

Fax: 8119819, 8113156, 8117834

e-mail: cec@bol-online.com(CEC), cec@bol-online.com (General),

Web-site address: www.bd-ec.org

Date: September 11, 2000/Bhadra 27,1407

Tender Notice for preparing database of voters in computer and printing voter list in offset printing system

Sealed tenders are invited from interested offset printing establishments with facilities/experience in preparing database for printing voter list in offset printing method in Bangla of approximately 75,00,000 voters (seven crore fifty lakh) as per terms and conditions prepared by the Election Commission Secretariat.

2) Tender schedule can be procured from September 17, 2000 to 01 October 2000 on all working days during office hours (9.00 in morning to 5.00 in the afternoon) on payment of Taka 750/- (seven hundred fifty in cash (non-refundable) from all the offices of Divisional Commissioner, Deputy Election Commissioner and Election Sub-Section of the Election Commission Secretariat at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka.

3) Printing establishments purchasing tender schedule can submit their tenders in the tender box kept at the office of the Deputy Commissioner, Dhaka (Collectorate Bhaban, Dhaka) or Divisional Commissioner, Dhaka (1st 12-storeyed government building, Segunbagicha, Dhaka) or Election Commission Secretariat (Block 5, 6, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka) on 11 October 2000/26 Ashwin 1407 till 12.00 Noon. Tenders received in the office of Deputy Commissioner, Dhaka, Divisional Commissioner, Dhaka and Election Commission Secretariat will be opened by tender committee the same day i.e. 11 October 2000/26 Ashwin 1407 at 3.00 pm at Election Commission Secretariat Block 5 and 6, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka. Tenderer may remain present at the time of opening tender if they desire.

4) An establishment can submit tender for work of maximum 25,00,000 (twenty-five lakh). The work will be given on District Election Commission basis.

5) In case of giving work order the local offset printing establishment will be given preference. All printing establishments getting work order will have to set up offices in district headquarters concerned.

6) Voter list will have to be printed in A4 size (which is not less than 8.25" x 11.25") at least in 60 GSM white print and high quality green ink as per specimen attached with tender schedule and printing establishment will have to supply printing paper.

7) All establishments receiving work order will have to hand over in own expenses at the IT Section of District Election Office and Election Commission Secretariat 03 (three