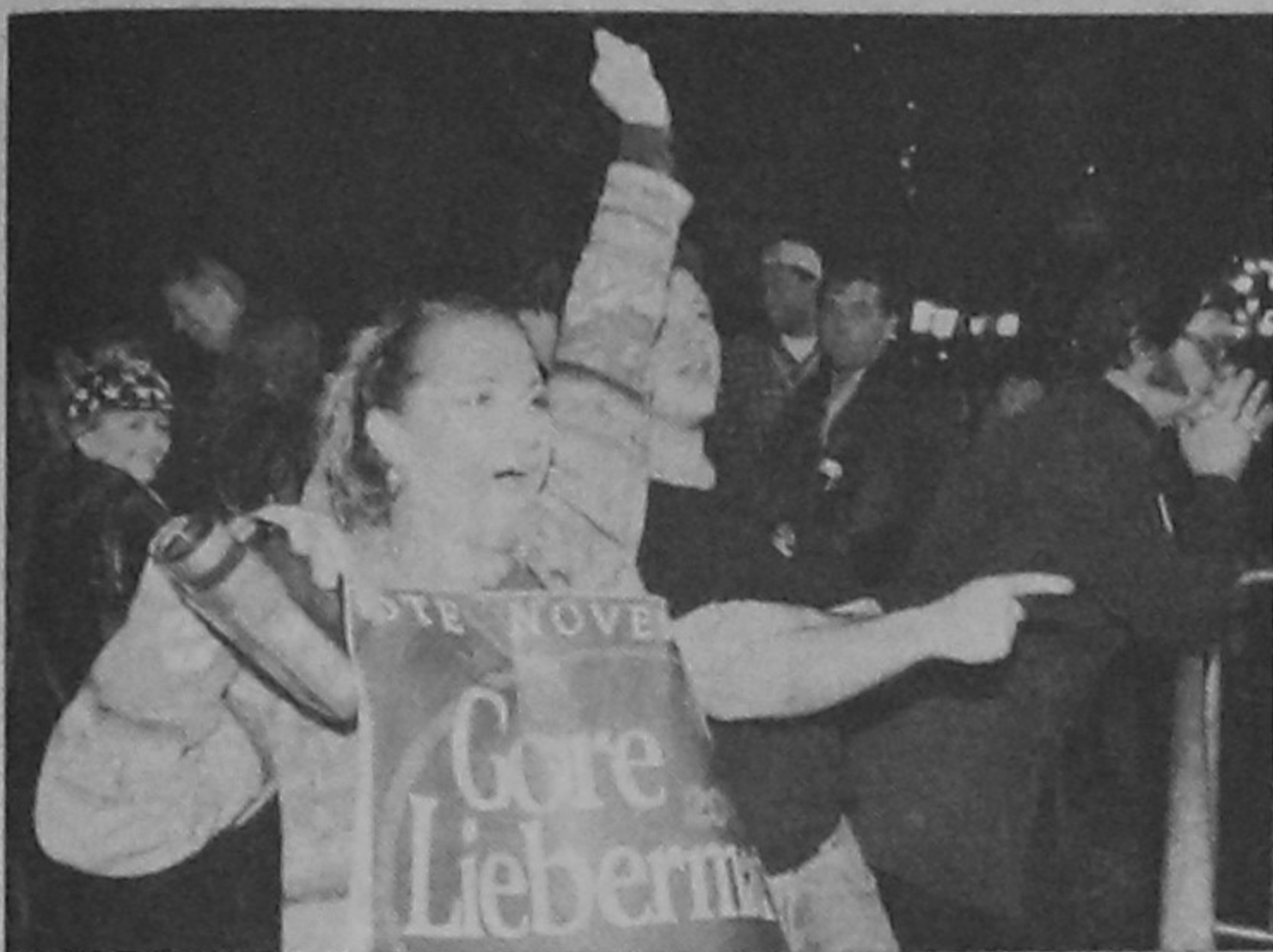


International



Revellers celebrate in front of the Tennessee State Capitol Building early yesterday in Nashville, Tennessee, after Democratic presidential candidate and US Vice president Al Gore retracted a message of concession to Republican presidential candidate and Texas Governor George W. Bush following confusion over the results in the key state of Florida.

World bewildered by US election

TOKYO, Nov 8: Japan's top newspaper put out a special edition then pulled it back. A Hong Kong teacher called the confusion "ridiculous." The German foreign minister just shrugged his shoulders, reports AP.

The cliffhanger presidential election in the United States on Tuesday fascinated and bewildered folks around the world, where many were waiting for word about who would take the helm in the globe's most powerful nation.

The announcement by US TV networks that Gov. George W. Bush had clinched the White House and that Vice President Al Gore had conceded sent newspaper presses rolling and foreign leaders congratulating.

Then Gore retracted the concession. In Japan, the country's largest newspaper sent out 20,000 copies of a special edition with a Bush victory in banner headlines to distribution points around Tokyo and then put on the brakes.

"We called the drivers and told them to stop," said Masayuki Miyashita, distribution official for the Yomiuri newspaper.

Others didn't make that call on time. The Japanese tabloid Gendai hit the streets Wednesday night with "Bush Barely Wins" as the headline and a colour photo of the Texas governor giving a gleeful thumbs-up.

Foreign leaders were also caught off-guard. South Korean President Kim Dae-jung was among the officials who sent a congratulatory message to Bush a little too soon.

British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook was more circumspect. "I congratulate George Bush, if it is confirmed that he was won," Cook said, adding that he looked forward to working with the new president.

The Germans were also hesitant. Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder had initially scheduled a news conference on Wednesday morning then kept reporters waiting when the apparent Bush victory fell into doubt.

Eventually, Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer appeared to say: "Before one of them concedes the election..." Without completing his sentence, Fischer just shrugged his shoulders.

On the streets, regular people seemed incredulous that the election



Supporters wave US flags and hold a sign in support of Florida Gov. Jeb Bush at a rally for his brother, Republican presidential candidate George W. Bush, outside the Capitol building early yesterday in Austin, Texas. The winner in the presidential election could not be announced due to confusion in the results in the key state of Florida.

of such an important post leader of the world's biggest economy and strongest military power could turn into such a guessing game.

"It's ridiculous," said 46-year-old Hong Kong teacher Anny Poon. "Hong Kong elections are much better in this aspect."

"How can they be so careless?" chimed in Jennifer Chueng, 36, a hotel supervisor. "I think we could forgive such mistakes in Hong Kong, but not in a big country like the United States."

The reaction reflected the interest the election has generated overseas for good reason. US foreign policy and trade posture have a decisive influence in many parts of the globe.

In Asia, where dead-heat race played on TVs all afternoon, many people pondered the effect that a possible shift from the Democrats to the Republicans in the White House would have on their region.

Hong Kong people wondered if a stricter China policy would hurt the territory's stock market.

An Indonesian official hoped for less meddling in Jakarta's affairs. The future of the US relationship with Israel was a top priority in the Middle East.

In South Korea, the leading worry was how Washington's attitude toward Seoul's efforts to draw communist North Korea out of isolation would change if a more conservative administration came to power.

The tight race kept many tuning in periodically to television and the Internet for updates.

Hundreds of expectant Americans gathered on Wednesday for a watch party in Hong Kong's luxurious Ritz-Carlton Hotel, in a ballroom decked out with American flags, with a Statue of Liberty outside the door.

"This is closer than anyone expected," said Amy Weaver, a 33-year-old lawyer from Seattle, as the suspense built early Wednesday. "I think it's going to be a very long morning."

The horse-race atmosphere was engendering excitement among foreign media as well. Japanese national broadcaster NHK had maps showing the states won by each candidate. New Delhi Television broadcast tallies of the electoral votes.

"It's a fantastic election," gushed Pranroy Roy, the Indian network's anchorman. "It's really right down to the wire. A few thousand votes could make all the difference."

Four killed as violence continues in Gaza Strip

GAZA CITY, Nov 8: Three Palestinians and one Israeli woman were killed today as clashes raged on in the Gaza Strip despite a US initiative to wrap a truce around the weeks of bloodletting, reports AFP.

Faris Ouda, 14, died after he was shot in the neck during fighting at the Karni crossing point between Israel and the Gaza Strip, a site of frequent confrontations over the past six weeks of fighting. Four others were wounded at the crossing used by both Jewish settlers and Palestinians for commercial transport.

Also Wednesday, an Israeli woman was shot and killed by Palestinian gunfire near the Rafah terminal at the border between the Gaza Strip and Egypt. Israeli army radio and Palestinian officials reported.

Israel responded by closing the terminal, which is jointly controlled by Israel and Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority.

Another Israeli and Palestinian there were seriously wounded at Rafah, a Palestinian source at the terminal told AFP.

The body count from the past six weeks of fighting also rose Wednesday, with two Palestinians dying from wounds sustained in clashes over recent days.

Gaza City's Shifa hospital said Mohammed Mahani, 24, died of a bullet wound to the head he received in clashes with soldiers at Karni on Tuesday.

Ibrahim Fouad al-Kassas, 13, also died after he was shot in the head on Saturday at confrontations at Khan Yunis in the Gaza Strip.

Canadian novelist wins Booker Prize

TORONTO, Nov 8: The fourth time proved to be a charm for Margaret Atwood, Canada's most celebrated author and poet, who won The Booker Prize, Britain's top fiction award on Tuesday for her novel, "The Blind Assassin."

Best known for her novels "The Edible Woman" in 1969, "Surfacing" (1972) and "The Handmaid's Tale" (1985), Atwood has written more than 36 books, including novels, short stories, children's books, works of literary criticism and social history.

Her works have been published around the world and translated into more than 33 languages.

It was the fourth time Atwood has been nominated for the 21,000 pound (\$29,980) prize that guarantees the author instant literary cult status and a place on bestseller lists around the world.

"This is all about books and reading and writing," she told a glittering dinner at London's Guildhall after accepting the prize, one of the most renowned in the world.

The book, about an 82-year-old woman who reflects on her far from exemplary life including the events surrounding her sister's tragic and early death, was picked from 120 entries. Atwood was the bookmakers' favourite to land the coveted prize with her 10th novel.

Pak religious parties warned against holding rallies

ISLAMABAD, Nov 8: Pakistan's military government has warned political-religious parties against organising public gatherings during upcoming local elections, reports said today, reports AFP.

An interior ministry spokesman told the state-run Associated Press of Pakistan that it was "imperative" all parties observed the government's ban on public rallies during the polls starting next month.

"Meetings organised by politico-religious parties not only create law and order problems but also cause inconvenience to the general public," he said.

The ban on public rallies, processions and demonstrations applied to "all registered political parties whatever their character or name may be," he said.

It was imposed a few months after the military coup in October last year, when General Pervez Musharraf toppled prime minister Nawaz Sharif.

The regime has scheduled local elections starting December 31 in some 18 districts, with polls in the rest of the country to be completed by the middle of the next year.

They are a key element of Musharraf's devolution plan aimed at empowering people at the grassroots level and steering the country toward "genuine democracy."

The district polls are to be held without the participation of political parties, who have sharply criticised the devolution plan as unworkable.

Musharraf has pledged to organise national and provincial parliamentary elections before October 12, 2002.

Pakistan's main fundamentalist party, Jamaat-i-Islami, organised a three-day assembly attended by hundreds of thousands near here last week and called for the speedy restoration of democracy.



Palestinians carry away an injured protester shot by Israeli troops during clashes in the West Bank town of Ramallah yesterday.

Republicans keep control of US Senate, Congress

WASHINGTON, Nov 8: Republicans retained their hold on the Senate and House early Wednesday by the slimmest of margins, barely turning back a ferocious, well-financed Democratic bid to gain a majority, reports AP.

Remarkably, joining first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton in the Senate winners' circle was Jean Carnahan, widow of Missouri Democratic Gov. Mel Carnahan, killed last month in a plane crash. Outpolling Republican Sen. John Ashcroft, she said she will accept the job for her late husband.

Some Republicans have said they might challenge the Carnahan victory, asserting that the late governor was no longer a state resident.

But for now, the Carnahan win and a Democratic win in Nebraska assured Democrats at least 48 seats in the Senate. That was more than enough to use the

minority's power to wreak havoc with the Republican's legislative agenda by forcing procedural delays.

In the race for the House of Representatives, Republicans picked up six Democratic seats in scattered states, enough to renew their hold for two more years. But their majority shrank when they gave back eight other seats elsewhere, including four in California.

Early Wednesday, the national trend showed Republicans had won 218 seats and were leading in three other races, with 218 seats required to seal control. Democrats had won 209 seats, and were leading in three other races. In addition, each party could count the support of one independent.

Republicans had won six seats formerly held by Democrats, and were leading contests for two more. Democrats had won eight

seats formerly in Republican hands, and were leading in two other races.

With Republicans retaining narrow control of the House, Senate Democrats with their constitutional ability to filibuster or delay bills with just 41 votes loomed as perhaps their party's best roadblock to Republican initiatives in Congress.

This year's Republican majority of 54-46 will become 52-48 in the next Congress at best.

The two remaining races in Michigan and Washington state were too close to call, with Democrats in both clinging to minuscule leads.

In an incredible night in which the presidential race was also unresolved because of cliffhanger returns from Florida, Republicans faced the possibility of controlling the Senate with only a 50-50 tie.

Dead man elected to US Senate

ST. LOUIS, Nov 8: Citizens of Missouri elected a dead man to the Senate, choosing Gov. Mel Carnahan who perished three weeks ago in a plane crash over Republican incumbent John Ashcroft. Carnahan's widow had agreed to take her husband's place, reports AP.

With 84 per cent of precincts reporting early Wednesday, Carnahan had 1,075,872 votes, or 50 per cent. Ashcroft, a Republican, had 1,039,409, or 49 per cent.

The plane crash that killed Carnahan, his son and an aide last month turned the nationally watched contest against Republican Sen. John Ashcroft from notoriously bitter to bizarre.

The crash occurred too late to revise the ballot. No one had ever posthumously won election to the Senate, though voters on at least three occasions sent deceased candidates to the House.

Gov. Roger Wilson, who took office after Carnahan's death Oct. 16, said he would appoint Carnahan's 66-year-old widow, Jean, to a two-years term should Ashcroft lose. Mrs. Carnahan became the implicit challenger when she declared herself strong enough to accept appointment.

Some Republicans had threatened a court challenge if that happened.

Biman BANGLADESH AIRLINES

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Ref: DACPL/26/2000-2001/ Dated: 02-11-2000

Tender Notice No 10/2000-2001

Sealed tenders are hereby invited by Biman Bangladesh Airlines from interested manufacturers/distributors/suppliers of the item mentioned below as per details/specifications mentioned in the schedule:

- Computer Paper Roll white 2ply self carbonized Qty 25200 Rolls
 - Air sickness Bag with Clip 1850000 Pcs.
- Tender schedule mentioning full details/specifications of items, terms and conditions will be available from the Manager (Cash & Banking), Head Office "BALAKA" & Accounts Officer (Cash Payment Unit), Admin Building, ZIA, Dhaka of Biman Finance Directorate, Dhaka and Office of the Divisional Commissioner (1st-12th storied Govt Office Building, 1st Floor, Room No 206), Segunbagicha, Dhaka on payment of Tk 500/- (five hundred) only per set (per group) non-refundable by applying own letter head pad during any working day up to 3-12-2000.

Sealed tenders should be dropped in the tender box kept in Local Purchase Section, Stores & Purchase Directorate, Admin Building, ZIA, Dhaka and Biman Press Building, Farmgate, Teigaon, Dhaka & Office of the Additional Divisional Commissioner (General), Room No 205, Segunbagicha, Dhaka latest by 1100 hours (BST) on 4-12-2000 and will be opened on the same day at 1230 hours at the premises of Stores & Purchase Directorate, Admin Building, ZIA, Dhaka in presence of the tenderers (if any).

Biman management reserves the right to increase or decrease the quantity of the items and can accept or reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Dy General Manager (Purchase)
Stores & Purchase Directorate.

GD-1029



Trading Corporation of Bangladesh

Principal Office
TCB Bhaban, Kawan Bazar
Dhaka

Telex: 642203 TCB BJ
642217 TCB BJ
Cable: STATETRADE
Phone: 9118157, 8111550
Fax: 880-2-8113582

E-mail: tcb@bdonline.com

Tender for Import of 500 M Tons of Onion under Cash

Tender No TCB/IMP-21/2000 Dated: November 07, 2000.

Trading Corporation of Bangladesh invites sealed tender in the prescribed form obtainable from Sonali Bank, TCB Bhaban Branch, Kawan Bazar, Dhaka on payment of Tk 500.00 (Taka five hundred) only per set (non-refundable) for import of 500 M Tons of Onion in bags of 20 Kgs. Offers are to be made on C&F (C) Chittagong by Sea and/or C&F(C) Benapole Border by Truck basis showing FOB price, Freight and commission separately. Delivery is to be completed within 15-12-2000. Offers are to be made for 100 M Tons and 500 M Tons separately.

Tenders to be dropped in the tender box kept in the Import Division of the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh, TCB Bhaban, Kawan Bazar, Dhaka-1215 before 11 AM on 19th November, 2000 and to be opened at 11:15 AM on the same day. Tenderers may remain present at the opening of the tenders. No tender scheduled will be sold on the day of opening of the tender.

The corporation reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason thereof or to purchase more or less quantities than tendered for.

AIM Amanullah
Senior Executive (Import)

GD-1027

BRIEFLY

Volcano erupts in Japan: A volcano erupted in northern Japan early Wednesday, causing ash to fall on a nearby town, the Meteorological Agency said. No injuries or damages were reported, AP reports from Tokyo. Mount Komagatake, on Japan's northernmost island of Hokkaido, erupted at about 7:38 am (22:38 GMT Tuesday), triggering volcanic tremors for 10 minutes, the agency said. Some ashfall was reported in the nearby town of Shikabe, the agency said.

7 killed in ROK road mishap: A tourist bus overturned on the South Korean resort island of Cheju yesterday, killing seven people and leaving 32 injured, police said, AFP reports from Seoul.

The bus swerved, hit a road sign and overturned after colliding with a taxi that had come out of a side road, Yonhap news agency reported. The nationalities of the casualties were not given.

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HEAD OFFICE: BALAKA, KURMITOLA, DHAKA 1229 BANGLADESH CABLE: AIRBANGLA. PABX: 897400-10 LINES. 897410-10 LINES. FAX: 880-2-893005. TELEX: 642649 DABG BJ

Corrigendum

Corrigendum is hereby issued to the tender notice published in the national dailies on 30-09-2000 and 01-10-2000.

- The last date of selling of tender documents for design and construction of Biman Housing Complex of Highrise Building at Ashkona, Kurmitola, Dhaka on turn-key-basis is hereby extended up to 11-12-2000. The offers (Technical & Financial proposal) will now be received up to 1200 hrs on 12-12-2000 and only the Technical offers would be opened at 1400 hrs on the same day. Eligibility of tenderer for participating in the tender will be as under.
- Real Estate Developers/1st class enlisted contractors of govt./semi govt./autonomous bodies or the joint venture consortium of developers/1st class contractors/firms fulfill all the following conditions:

- Designed at least one 10 storied RCC frame building.
- Completed the construction in all respect of at least one 10 storied RCC frame building.
- Constructed the frame structure building having pile foundation.
- Completed the construction of RCC building work minimum Tk. 15 crore in a single work.

All other terms & conditions of the tender will remain unchanged.

GD-1030

General Manager (P&W)