

## International

# US will search for every 'fallen hero' of Vietnam War: Clinton

TIEN CHAU, Vietnam, Nov 18 : President Bill Clinton today vowed the United States would search for every "fallen hero" of the Vietnam War, delivering a eulogy to peace in a rice paddy where a US pilot was shot down in 1967, reports AFP.

Before flying to the former Saigon, from where US forces staged their humiliating final retreat from Vietnam, Clinton toured the crash site northwest of Hanoi, seeking to lay to rest the ghosts of a conflict which still haunts America.

Watched by Daniel and David Evert, sons of the dead pilot Captain Lawrence Evert, Clinton pledged to bring "every possible fallen hero home."

"We believe we owe them, and all Americans like them, what they came here for -- a chance, finally, to take their father home."

Clinton, the first-ever American president to visit unified Vietnam, was later due to preside over a repatriation ceremony of suspected remains of American war dead at Hanoi's Noi Bai airport.

The search for soldiers still missing in action, or MIAs, is the cornerstone of Clinton's strategy of engaging Vietnam, as he seeks to reconcile the sensitivities of widows and families with key foreign policy goals.

The president thanked the American-Vietnamese excavation team at the site 26 km northwest of the capital, who stand in the mud to "try to find answers that are common to our humanity and go far beyond our differences."

Whether we are American or Vietnamese, we all want to know where our loved ones are

buried.

"This common endeavour we make as friends is unprecedented in all human history. Once we met here as adversaries, today we work as partners."

"By working together to recover those who were lost in a long-ago war we reduce the chances that any of our children will know war."

In return for the "kindness" shown by the Vietnamese in helping trace MIAs, he said Washington was aiding the communist authorities' search to find their 300,000 lost soldiers by releasing US military documents on the war.

Captain Evert was shot down as he attacked a railroad bridge and was hit by anti-aircraft fire.

His last recorded words before his plane crashed in a paddy field near the small village of Phuk Yen were: "I'm hit hard."

Because Evert went down so deep in enemy territory and did not appear to have ejected, a search and rescue was never attempted.

No parachute was seen, the area was totally defended and there was no chance for a search," said Clinton.

Three million Vietnamese, one million of them civilians, and 58,000 US soldiers died in the Vietnam War, which ended with America's ignominious embassy-roof exodus from Saigon, now renamed Ho Chi Minh City and reborn as the country's economic capital. Washington has gone to extraordinary lengths to recover MIAs from conflicts from Vietnam to Korea and World War II, spending more than 100 million dollars on the effort.

In Vietnam, search teams have accounted for 591 American dead since 1988.

Clinton's opposition to the war which threatened to tear America apart has made him a hero to young Vietnamese who make up the 60 percent of the population born after the last US bomb fell on Hanoi.

He and his wife Hillary received rapturous welcomes from crowds of thousands as they took separate walkabouts in Hanoi on the last scheduled foreign trip of Clinton's term of office.

The spontaneous outpouring of crowd enthusiasm, scenes never seen before in the capital, has taken communist authorities, who imposed an information blackout on the Clinton's arrival, totally by surprise.

On Friday, Clinton called for a new era of reconciliation after the "shared suffering" of the Vietnam War, in an unprecedented live address to the nation.

But he took also the chance to raise human rights and religious tolerance issues and made an impassioned plea for freedom of information as an integral part of economic development.

Clinton's foreign policy team believes they have got the balance right between sensitivity and engagement of the former enemy on the three-day visit.

The president's National Security Advisor Sandy Berger told reporters: "We said at the very beginning that we would do this in a way that was true to the families and true to the missing, and that the accounting for the past would be the bridge to the future."



US President Bill Clinton (C) is briefed by Dan Evert (R) and David Evert (L), sons of a pilot shot down in 1967 during the Vietnam War, at an excavation site for Missing In Action (MIA) in Huk Yen yesterday. Clinton is in Vietnam on the second day of a three-day visit, the first by a US president since 1969. --AFP photo

## 4 NATO states restore ties with Y'slavia

BELGRADE, Nov 18 : Yugoslavia on Friday restored diplomatic relations with the United States, Britain, Germany and France, some 20 months after ties were broken at the start of NATO's 11-week air war against the country last March, reports Reuters.

The restoration of links followed last month's ousting of former President Slobodan Milosevic and the democratic election of President Vojislav Kostunica.

"Today marks the formal end to a very difficult period between our two countries and the beginning of a new era," said William Montgomery, head of the US Office of Yugoslav Affairs and the man seen as likely new US ambassador to Belgrade.

Montgomery was speaking at a news conference held in the Yugoslav foreign ministry to announce the renewal of diplomatic ties.

Foreign Minister Goran Svilanovic told reporters: "We can understand well what great happiness it is to no longer be at war with any of the NATO countries and see that our decision ... to restore diplomatic relations with all these countries as soon as possible is normal."

Svilanovic said that while it was impossible to return the lives that were lost, peace would make it possible for all relatives of those who died to have a better future.

"With this act we want to enable the brothers and sisters of the children that have died to live in a better country which has the respect and the support of all our neighbours and all the countries members of the European Union and the United States," he said.

Yugoslavia severed relations with the four countries at the beginning of the NATO bombing campaign to halt Belgrade's repression of Kosovo's ethnic Albanian majority.

French envoy Dominique Lassus called for Yugoslavia to remember the closest the two countries had had and "not to forget but to forgive" the past.

Svilanovic stressed Yugoslavia's wish to live in peace with the four countries and with its neighbours.

"That is a debt to an entire generations which has left its country, those who stayed in it, suffered in it and to those who with their courage defended their votes... and succeeded in bringing changes to our country," he said.

Svilanovic was referring to a popular revolt on October 5 which forced Milosevic to recognise election defeat, clearing the way for democratic change in the Balkan country, shunned by the West during the Milosevic era.

## Castro alleges plot to kill him

Castro said the leader of the alleged would-be assassins was Cuban exile Luis Posada Carriles, and urged Panamanian authorities to catch him and his colleagues. He even handed out photos of Posada.

The 74-year-old Communist leader who alleges more than 600 assassination plots against him in the four decades since his 1959 Cuban Revolution made the accusation hours after arriving in Panama City for the regional meeting.

"It is my duty to inform you that, as on other occasions when I travel to these summits, terrorist elements organised, financed and led from the United States by the Cuban-American National Foundation (CANF)... have been sent to Panama with the aim of eliminating me," he said.

"They are now in this city (Panama City), and have brought in arms and explosives," Castro, dressed in military fatigues, told reporters gathered at a Panama City hotel.

"The CANF, the most militantly anti-Castro of Florida's numerous Cuban American groups, has in the past denied Havana's claims of sponsoring terrorism including a 1997 bombing campaign on the Caribbean Island.

## 14 Chinese jailed for trafficking migrants out

BEIJING, Nov 18 : A court in China's southeastern coastal province of Fujian sentenced 14 "snakeheads" to prison terms of two to 10 years for trafficking migrants out of the country, state media reported today, says AFP.

The 14 people smugglers, known in China as "snakeheads," were sentenced in Changde city on Thursday at a public sentencing rally in front of some 3,000 people, the China News Service said.

The group had been convicted of organising the illegal transportation of "large numbers of people" out of China.

### Male beauty queen!

BANGKOK, Nov 18 : Kesaraporn Duanqaswan captured the hearts of the judges and walked away with 6,000 baht (\$138) as first runner-up in a Thai beauty contest this month until organisers discovered the beauty queen was a man, reports Reuters.

A police officer told reporters some of the contestants had complained of unfair competition saying Kesaraporn was actually male.

## House receives impeachment complaint against VP Estrada hits back at opposition

MANILA, Nov 18 : The head of the House of Representatives said today he has received an impeachment motion against Philippine Vice President Gloria Arroyo but warned they may not have time to complete deliberations on the issue this year.

House Speaker Arnulfo Fuentabella said in a government radio show he had received papers for the impeachment case which Arroyo has said is merely harassment by forces loyal to President Joseph Estrada.

Fuentabella said the motion would have to be studied first by the House committee of justice, which would then have to give the respondent time to reply.

He warned that he had no power to influence the scheduling of the committee.

"I think that... we are not going to complete it (this year) unless the committee on justice finds some way of rushing this," he said.

The House is due to go into recess from December 17 to January 14.

He said it was not Estrada allies but a member of Arroyo's own party who raised the impeachment complaint into a motion.

## Flash floods kill 7 in KSA

RIYADH, Nov 18 : Flash floods in Saudi Arabia swept away 10 people, killing seven, after heavy rains, a newspaper reported today, says AFP.

Storm waters three metres deep flashed through Wadi Setarah drowning a husband and wife, her mother, a brother and the couple's three children, the said daily.

The family were caught in a valley bottom 150 km north of Jeddah as they battled to reach their homes in a pickup truck on Wednesday night, the Saudi Gazette reported.

A driver and two other relatives were rescued by civil defence workers.

Rescue work was going on around the clock to help hundreds of marooned people.

The eastern port city of Jeddah and the holy city of Mecca have been hit by flooding in the last three days from the rare rain storms.

On Thursday night, hundreds of people were stranded inside several Jeddah shopping malls as a torrential downpour left several feet of water running through the central streets.

An AFP correspondent reported traffic chaos with large areas of the city isolated, traffic lights out and dozens of cars abandoned.

## Mori threatens to dissolve parliament, call polls

TOKYO, Nov 18 : Japan's embattled Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori has threatened to dissolve parliament and call a general election if a vote of no confidence is pushed through parliament next week, reports AFP.

Dissolution is one of the premier's options," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda told reporters late Friday.

"It is possible that he will exercise that right, depending on the situation," the premier's right-hand man said, according to media reports.

After a week of speculation, opposition parties on Friday finally threw down the gauntlet by announcing they would move a no-confidence motion on Monday. A vote is expected on Monday evening.

Whether Mori survives hangs on the extent of a rebellion within his own Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) led by his rival Koichi Kato.

The opposition Democratic Party of Japan, Liberal Party, Japan Communist Party and Social Democratic Party have gained crucial backing from Kato who could swing the vote against Mori.

The ruling coalition -- the LDP, New Komeito Party and the Conservative Party -- holds 272 of the 480 seats in the lower house while

the opposition camp jointly holds 190.

In the LDP, the Kato faction has 45 seats, and the faction of his close ally Taku Yamasaki, 19.

Amid growing uncertainty over his fate, Mori has cancelled plans for a two-day visit to Malaysia from November 25 following the Association of Southeast Asian Nations summit, the Kyodo news agency reported.

If the motion is passed, the premier has 10 days to either step down or dissolve parliament, which would be followed by a general election.

Mori's threat to take the latter option appears to be aimed at bringing his own party rebels to heel.

Kato acknowledged that the LDP would likely be punished by the electors in an election.

"What would happen if we have an election when the support rate for LDP is sharply falling?" Kato said.

"It's useless to speak of such an unrealistic thing. They should not do it now," he added, according to Kyodo news agency.

An analyst agreed there were little merits for LDP's old guard to kick start fresh elections now, just five months after lower house elections in late June.

## UNSC asks Annan to consult with Israel, PA on observers

### Rocket attacks on WB, Gaza continue as Palestinian, Israeli soldier killed

had "sufficient flexibility."

They interpreted this as meaning that he would not be obliged to sell any particular proposals to either side.

Israel has repeatedly objected to any international force, insisting, despite the recent violence, that it deal with the Palestinians in direct bilateral talks, as it has done since the 1993 Oslo agreement.

Diplomats quoted him as telling the council: "we should find a creative way to get the fact-finding commission to help."

Annan is due to meet in New York this weekend with the chairman of the five-person commission, the former US senator George Mitchell, a UN source said.

Diplomats said he had agreed to act as a go-between only if he

would have to approve a UN observer force.

Meanwhile, a Palestinian gunman killed an Israeli soldier today and injured two others, one critically, before being shot dead at an Israeli military compound at Kfar Darom in the southern Gaza Strip, the army said in a statement.

The Israeli victim, 21-year-old Baruch Plum from Tel Aviv, was killed after a lone terrorist penetrated the compound and fired in the soldiers' direction, hitting one of them, the statement said.

They also said that shortly after the incident, Israeli helicopters fired rockets on an installation of Force 17, Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's elite private guard near the Gush Etzion Jewish settlement in the southern Gaza Strip, injuring four Palestinians, one of them seriously.



Cuban President Fidel Castro (C) stands with Panamanian President Mireya Moscoso (R) and Bolivian President Hugo Banzer (L) at the beginning of the X Ibero-American Summit on Friday in Panama City. Panamanian authorities increased security around Castro after he revealed an alleged assassination plot against him. --AFP photo

## Chittagong Port Authority Marine Division

### Tender Notice

Separate tenders in two sets are invited from firms experienced in respective work for supply of some spare parts for the Dredger Khanak of Chittagong Port Authority. Tender schedule can be collected at Tk 500/- (non-refundable) through Challan from the office of the undersigned or Liaison Office of the Port Authority at Dhaka, House No-49/C, Road No-4/A, Dhanmondi Residential Area during office hours on all working days. No tender will be sold on the date of opening tender. Tender should be dropped in the tender box kept at the office of the undersigned within 12:00 Noon of 13 December, 2000 and will be opened on the same day at 12:30 PM in presence of the tenderers (if any). The Port Authority reserves the right to accept/reject tender in part or full. Interested tenderers may contact the undersigned for detailed information. DFP-27635-14/11

Deputy Conservator

Chittagong Port Authority

## BRIEFLY

### 4 Filipinos beheaded in KSA:

Four Filipinos who killed an Indian guard during an armed robbery in the Red Sea city of Jeddah have been executed, a newspaper reported Saturday, AFP says from Riyadh.

The gang broke into the house of a Saudi family, killed the guard and made off with money and jewels after breaking into a safe, the Saudi Gazette said, quoting the Interior Ministry.

**Another quake hits PNG:** An earthquake of preliminary magnitude 7.3 on the Richter scale hit Papua New Guinea Saturday in the same area rocked by massive earthquakes two days ago, the US Geological Survey reported, AFP says from Auckland.

It said the quake at 7.01 am (20:01 BST) was around 150 km south of Rabaul in New Britain province. It said it was located in the same area as a magnitude 8.0 and a magnitude 7.7 event on Thursday.

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