

## 'Myanmar to uphold democracy road map'

9,000 prisoners to walk free

AFP, Yangon

Myanmar vowed yesterday to keep to its promised "road map" to democracy as Southeast Asian officials here cautiously welcomed the military regime's planned release of thousands of prisoners as a sign of progress.

Myanmar Foreign Minister Nyan Win told a briefing with the world's media here for a Southeast Asian leaders' summit that last month's dismissal of premier Khin Nyunt would not affect the regime's reforms in the isolated regime.

It had been feared that his dismissal and replacement by military hardliner Soe Win would disrupt the plan, which is supposed to end with multi-party elections but has been dismissed as a sham by the United States and Europe.

But Nyan Win stressed the leadership change would not affect the country's foreign and domestic

policy.

"The answer is clear, there will be no changes," he said. "Our objectives and priorities will remain the same as before."

"Individuals may come and go, but national policies will remain the same. The changes in the cabinet are but normal and mean that the torch has been passed on to a new generation," he said.

"We will continue to work ceaselessly to ensure the success of the seven-step road map," he said.

Noting that Khin Nyunt had been credited with the reform plan, he said the commitment to move towards democracy was a "collective decision" by the ruling junta.

Concern about the slow pace of reform in Myanmar was expected to be a key topic for leaders at the 10th Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) summit starting Monday, although there was little prospect of public censure because of the body's policy of non-interference in the affairs of member nations.

Asean leaders will be joined at the summit by Australia, China, India, South Korea, Japan and New Zealand.

Myanmar's Prime Minister Soe Win arrives in Laos today and is expected to brief his fellow leaders on developments, including the junta's decision to release 9,000 prisoners, among them political detainees.

The 9,248 Myanmar jail inmates promised freedom under the military regime's mass release programme was set to be out by last night but with only 40 political dissidents among them, according to the opposition and a senior prison official.

"Everybody that we said would be released will be released tonight," Zaw Win, prison department director-general, told reporters at the gates of Insein jail on the outskirts of Yangon.

"We have already released the first batch of 3,937."

He said inmates were being released from 41 prisons nationwide although reporters at Insein, the country's biggest jail, saw only about 1,000 released there on Friday.

The regime said through state media Thursday it would free 5,311 prisoners on top of the 3,937 planned releases announced a week earlier, taking the total to 9,248.

## Ban on night viewing of Taj goes

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Next time, you visit Agra, you will be treated to the splendour of the Taj Mahal, the 17th century monument of love of a Mughal emperor for his wife, in a moonlit night.

India's Supreme Court on Thursday lifted a 20-year ban on night viewing of the Taj Mahal with some conditions.

A three-member bench of the apex court said the permission to watch the monument on moonlit nights is initially being given for three months.

The court said only 400 people would be allowed to visit the Taj Mahal between 2030 hours and 0030 hours every night five times a month, full moon night and two nights prior to two nights after the full moon night.

The court made it clear that none, however high he might be, would be permitted to go to the red sand stone platform for night-viewing of the Taj without purchasing a ticket.

Even the VIPs would have to get off from their cars 500 metres away from the Taj and battery-operated vehicles alone would be to carry viewers who would be allowed to carry only still camera and binoculars after a thorough check, said the bench comprising Justice Ruma Pal, Justice S B Sinha and Justice S H Kapadia.



Nepalese political activists chant slogans during a demonstration in Kathmandu yesterday. The demonstrators gathered to demand the restoration of democracy and the sovereign rights of the people.

## Musharraf to seek Palestine, Kashmir solutions on tour

AFP, Islamabad

Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf said he would press for progress in key conflicts affecting Muslims as he left yesterday for talks with Western leaders as well as his first visit to Latin America.

He will meet with US President George W. Bush, British Prime Minister Tony Blair and French President Jacques Chirac on the second leg of his 12-day tour, the first part of which will see him visit Brazil, Argentina and Mexico.

Musharraf's encounter with Bush, expected on December 4, is his first since the US leader's re-election.

"The main subject that I would like to discuss when I meet President Bush and Prime Minister Tony Blair and President Chirac ... is that the resolution of political disputes must start," he said before leaving for Brasilia.

"I think both the Palestinian dispute and the Kashmir dispute are absolutely ripe for resolution and we have to resolve them."

"That will bring considerable stability into the world."

Musharraf said he advocated a strategy under which the Muslim

world should encourage moderation while the West must focus on settling political disputes affecting Muslims.

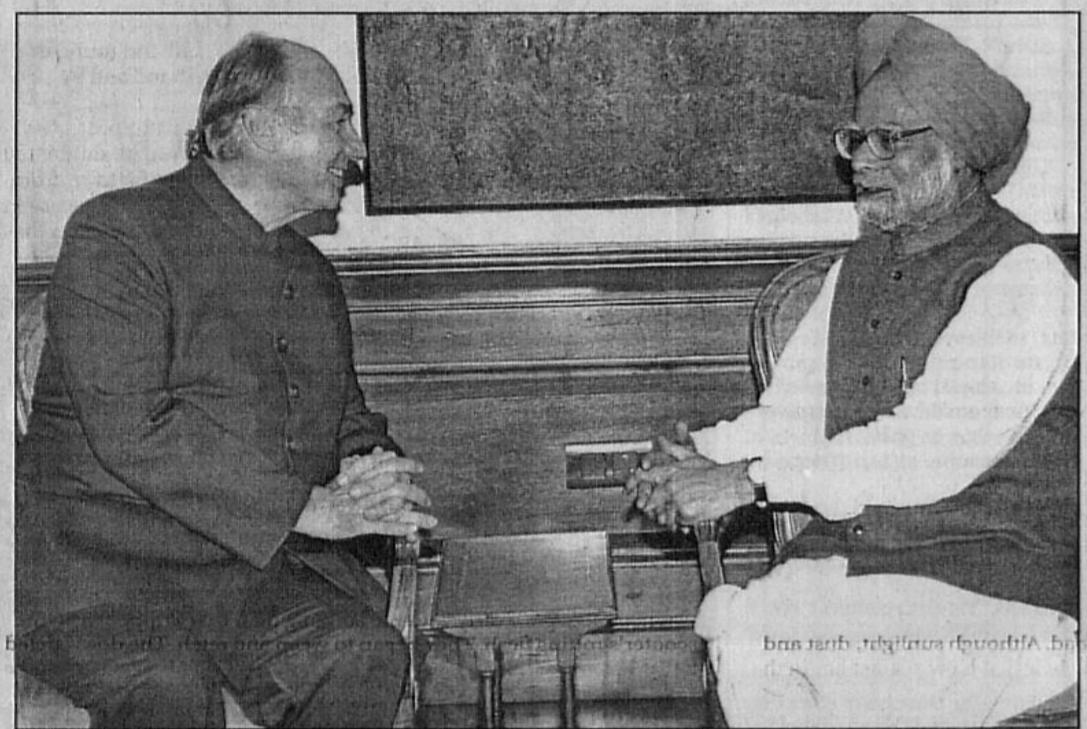
Musharraf, an army general who grabbed power in a bloodless coup five years ago, has earned Western acclaim because of Pakistan's pivotal role in the fight against terrorism as a key ally of the United States.

Pakistan has deployed more than 70,000 troops on the border with Afghanistan and has captured some 600 Al-Qaeda figures including several key operatives, though the network's leader Osama bin Laden remains at large.

Musharraf last month publicly floated alternative ways to deal with the decades-old dispute over Kashmir, which is divided between Pakistan and its south Asian neighbour India.

Since Bush's re-election and the death of Yasser Arafat he has highlighted the Palestinian issue, saying last week that it must be a top priority for the US if terrorism is to be defeated.

Meanwhile, the three-nation visit to Latin America is the first by a Pakistani leader and Musharraf told reporters he would seek to boost commercial ties with the region.



Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh (R) speaks with the Prince Aga Khan (L) during a meeting in New Delhi Thursday. The Aga Khan is in India on an eight day visit during which he will present the Aga Khan award for architecture.

## Curfew clamped on Lankan town

Tigers honour war dead

AFP, Colombo

A curfew was slapped on north-eastern Sri Lanka yesterday as pro-government activists clashed with Tiger rebels commemorating 17,800 comrades killed fighting government forces, police said.

Trincomalee, 260km north-east of the capital Colombo, was put under indefinite curfew after police fired teargas to disperse a mob led by the Marxist JVP, or People's Liberation Front, an official said.

"They wanted to march to an area where Tiger sympathisers were having a meeting," a senior officer said when contacted by telephone. "We dispersed the mob and declared curfew to prevent any violence."

The police move came as the defence ministry accused the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam

## Man breaks into school dormitory, knifes 8 to death in China

AP, Beijing

A man with a knife broke into a high school dormitory and killed eight students in the deadliest of a series of knife attacks at Chinese schools in recent months, the government said yesterday.

Police were searching for the man following the attack late Thursday at the No. 2 High School in the city of Ruzhou, which also injured four students, the official Xinhua News Agency said. It didn't give a possible motive but said police believe they know the man's appearance.

The attacker broke into the dormitory at 11:45 p.m. and "choiced eight people to death and four to injury," Xinhua said. It had said earlier that the attack in central China took place Friday morning.

## UN panel urges Britain to publish findings of Iraq torture probes

AFP, United Nations

The UN's anti-torture panel urged Britain to publish the findings of investigations into alleged cases of torture by British forces in Iraq and Afghanistan, according to a report yesterday.

Britain should also "as a matter of urgency" review "potentially indefinite detention" of foreign suspects allowed under the 2001 Anti-Terrorism Act, the UN Committee against Torture said in draft conclusions on Britain's respect for international anti-torture rules.

It called on London to report back on those issues and other concerns as appropriate.

British officials told the Committee during a public hearing last week that a total of 17 cases involving allegations of torture and

mistreatment by soldiers in Iraq had been investigated.

Eight cases were dropped after no crime was established while eight others are still being investigated or evaluated and one has been put to trial.

Britain "should make public the result of all investigations into alleged conduct by its forces in Iraq and Afghanistan, particularly those that reveal possible actions in breach of the Convention," the panel said.

It also called for an "independent review of the conclusions where appropriate".

Britain has said that courts-martial would be public but declined to give details to the panel of allegations which were unfounded, while other cases were still subject to legal proceedings.

## US-led forces retake lawless Latifiya

Iraqi govt woos Sunnis ahead of vote

AFP, Latifiya

US forces and Iraqi national guardsmen yesterday reclaimed control of the lawless enclave of Latifiya, south of Baghdad, an AFP correspondent there said.

The troops started patrolling the town, where the rebel groups who had controlled this majority Sunni town only 40 km south of the capital in recent months could no longer be seen.

US snipers were posted on roofs, while traffic started to flow again through the town, which lies on the main road linking Baghdad to the south, including to holy Shiite sites in Najaf, Karbala and Kufa.

US marines, backed by British forces brought in from Basra and Iraqi troops, kicked off "Operation Plymouth Rock" on November 23, in a bid to root out the insurgency in the so-called "death triangle".

"No resistance so far during the raids, but we have seen an increase in the number of IED (roadside bomb) attacks," marine spokesman Captain David Nevers said.

"This tells us that our operation is having an effect on the enemy. We're starting to suffocate them, and they're not liking it. We have a large target list, and we're going to continue to stay after them," he added.

Latifiya has been the site of countless attacks and ambushes on US and Iraqi forces and other convoys carrying officials or foreigners.

Two French reporters, who will mark their 100th day in captivity on Sunday, were captured near the town, where several other foreigners are thought to have taken hostage in recent months.

More than 100 suspected insurgents have been rounded up since the start of the sweep, which came quick on the heels of an assault on Fallujah -- Iraq's largest post-war operation -- and was the latest push to reclaim rebel enclaves ahead of January polls.

Meanwhile, as the Iraqi government tried to warm up to the Sunni Arab minority ahead of January polls, its troops continued joint raids with US forces yesterday.

against insurgent bastions across the country.

Faced with a threatened boycott by Sunni Muslim parties of the landmark elections, which they say are premature and jeopardised by relentless nationwide violence, the government has made two gestures towards the former ruling minority.

Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari announced Thursday that his cabinet would engage in contacts with members of the opposition who were excluded from an international conference on Iraq held earlier this week in Egypt.

The government will initiate contacts in Amman in the near future with representatives of the Iraqi opposition to encourage them to take part in the polls, he told reporters.

Zebari said that among those who would be consulted over the January 30 elections would be members of the former Baathist regime, many of whom were booted out of top jobs after the 2003 US-led invasion to remove Saddam Hussein from power.

## Mystic crocodiles draw thousands of devotees

AFP, Karachi

gave him lice which grew into crocodiles.

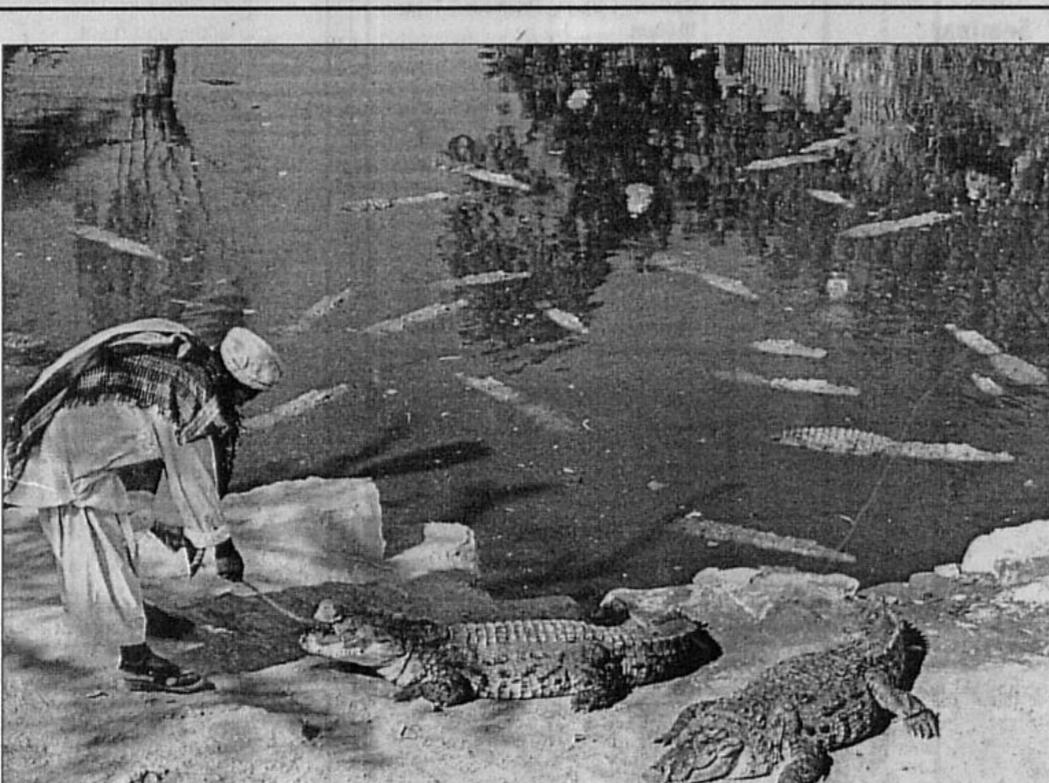
The compound surrounding his shrine swarms with some 150 crocodiles. Devotees regard the deadly reptiles as sacred, and potential fulfillers of their most fervent wishes.

It is one of thousands of Sufi shrines in this Islamic republic, where millions of devotees set out on pilgrimages, from all corners of the country, to pray, chant, dance, sing, occasionally smoke hashish, and seek healing.

Sufism is the most artistic, liberal strand of Islam, embracing song and dance as expressions of love for God.

The 700-year old Mango Pir shrine, 25 kilometers (15 miles) southwest of the city centre, is believed to be the resting place of a Hindu bandit who tried to rob the caravan of Baba Farid Shakar Ganj, a 13th century Sufi saint.

According to local legend, Mango Pir converted from Hinduism to Islam when he realised his sin, and in reward Ganj



This picture taken on November 11 shows a Pakistani crocodile keeper (L) feeding a crocodile at the 700-year old Mango Pir Shrine, some 25km southwest of Karachi. Crocodiles with huge teeth-filled mouths lie in the sand and slap their snouts on the edge of sulfur springs, greeting worshippers who journey to the Mango Pir shrine on the outskirts of the southern Pakistani city.

PHOTO: AFP

## বাংলাদেশ উন্নত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়

গাজীপুর-১৭০৫

### ভর্তি বিজ্ঞপ্তি

সার্টিফিকেট-ইন-পিসিকালচার এন্ড ফিস প্রসেসিং (সিপিএফপি)

প্রোগ্রাম জানুয়ারী-জুন, ২০০৫ (০৫) টার্ম

আকাশিক কেন্দ্রের ঠিকানা	ছাত্রী ক্ষেত্রের নাম ও ঠিকানা	টিউটোরিয়াল কেন্দ্রের নাম
আকাশিক কেন্দ্র-চার্চায়াম	কর্মসূচীর ক্ষেত্রে নির্মাণিত আকাশিক কেন্দ্র ও কেন্দ্রিক নির্মাণিত অকাশিক কেন্দ্র	বাংলাদেশ মাঝের গোড়ে যাবে।
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