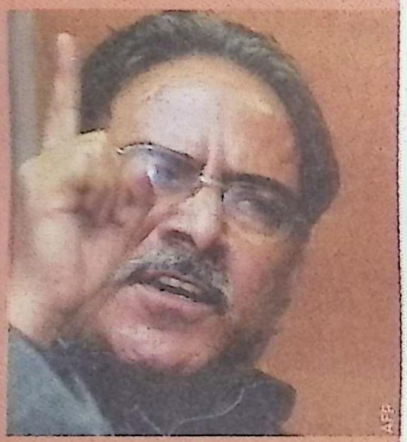
Global alarm bells ring over food crisis

As Asian countries struggle to cope with record rice prices, international agencies from FAO to WTO and World Bank echo the alarm over a global food crisis. The UN World Food Program calls it "a silent tsunami which knows no borders sweeping the world" with an extra 100 million people plunged into poverty by some estimates. The global crisis, deemed a dangerous threat to stability, triggers riots in Egypt, Cameroon, Indonesia and Haiti where the government falls in the aftermath of shortages.


AFP

Nepal's Maoists to rule

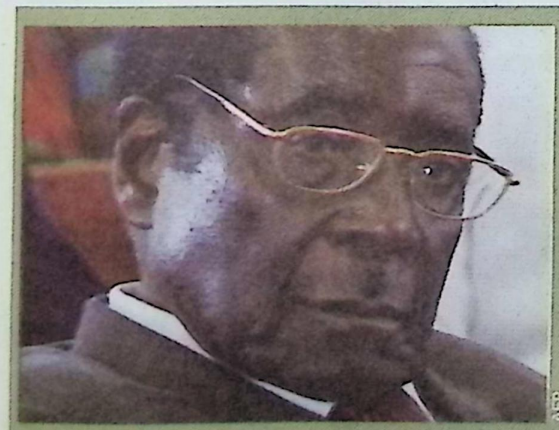
Nepal's former rebel Maoists win 220 of the 601 seats, giving them the chance to form a minority government, as final results are published following the April 10 elections to a new constituent assembly. The Nepali Congress party and Communist Party of Nepal (UML) win 110 seats and 103 seats respectively. Maoist leader Prachanda says he wants to be president, though since there is no provision in the present constitution "we will have to reach some agreement with the other political parties." The Maoists say King Gyanendra would be accorded economic, social and cultural respect as a citizen if he steps down, ending centuries of monarchy in the Himalayan nation.


AFP

Olympic torch relay dogged by protests

The Olympic torch, setting out from Beijing at the start of April, may have the theme "Journey of Harmony" but it is dogged by pro-Tibet protests on its journey through Turkey, Russia, Europe, the Americas, South and Southeast Asia. China slams the Dalai Lama for trying to "upstage" the torch relay and the forthcoming games. Meanwhile, Interpol issues a warning that there is a "real possibility" that the Beijing Olympics will be targeted by terrorists or that anti-China groups could attack athletes.


AFP


AFP

Mugabe ruling party loses majority

A month after Zimbabwe's elections, a partial recount shows the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) wresting a parliamentary majority from President Robert Mugabe's ruling ZANU-PF for the first time since independence in 1980 -- though results of a parallel presidential poll are yet to be released. There are concerns in the West and among the opposition that Mugabe is trying to rig the results and the MDC has said it will not accept the recount. Meanwhile, MDC leader Morgan Tsvangirai flees Zimbabwe, fearing for his safety. African and other global leaders suggest the UN should consider sanctions on Zimbabwe in the wake of the post-election crisis.