

Ban to stand for new term as UN chief

AFP, United Nations

Ban Ki-moon announced yesterday that he will stand for a second five-year term as UN secretary general and diplomats said he could win a vote before the end of the month.

Ban told a press conference he had sent a letter to UN member states to "offer, humbly, myself in consideration for a second term as secretary general of the United Nations."

Ban has led the global body since January 1, 2007 and his term ends on December 31. Diplomats say that with no rival for the position, the UN Security Council is expected to give its approval and the UN General Assembly will hold a vote before the end of June.



PHOTO: AFP

Supporters of Indian spiritual guru Swami Baba Ramdev cover their mouths with black cloth in a sign of protest at the Pitanjali Yogpeeth in Haridwar, some 240kms from New Delhi, yesterday.

India faces outcry over yoga protest crackdown

AFP, New Delhi

India's government faced new protests and pressure from the Supreme Court yesterday after it ordered police to crush a peaceful anti-graft demonstration at the weekend led by a famous yoga guru.

The main opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), emboldened by an opportunity to revive its flagging fortunes, started a demonstration attended by its leading figures amid an outcry over the raid on Sunday morning.

Local television channels broadcast new footage of police using batons on supporters of television yoga star Swami Baba Ramdev, who was on hunger strike with thousands of followers in New Delhi to protest against corruption.

"Our agitation against the crackdown on Baba Ramdev's supporters will continue until the government admits their mistake. They will have to pay for this," BJP president Nitin Gadhkar told reporters in the capital yesterday.

India's Supreme Court also weighed in on yesterday, asking the police and home ministry to explain their decision to send hun-

dreds of officers to detain the eccentric Ramdev, leading to a melee that left more than 70 injured.

A political analyst at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, Sanjay Kumar, told AFP that the government had mishandled Ramdev after first trying to appease him and then adopting heavy-handed tactics.

"They are responsible for giving the issue fresh momentum. The midnight crackdown was a big mistake," he said. "More and more supporters are joining the movement now and the opposition parties will capitalise."

Hardline Hindu nationalist groups joined the BJP in slamming the administration of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, saying the crackdown on Ramdev, a devout Hindu and spiritual leader, was an insult to the religion.

"By insulting Baba Ramdev they have insulted all the Hindu gurus and saints," the hardline Vishwa Hindu Parishad (World Hindu Council) said in statement on Sunday.

Anger about corruption is high in India after a series of scandals involving the government and the ruling Congress party, notably a \$39-billion telecom scam that saw a minister arrested.

Man tries to hurl shoe at Indian Congress general secy

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

High drama was yesterday witnessed at the headquarters of India's ruling Congress party here when a young man, posing as a journalist, tried to attack party General Secretary Janardhan Dwivedi with a shoe.

The person, who was carrying an identification as Sunil Kumar of a Hindi newspaper in northern Indian state of Rajasthan, went close to Dwivedi, removed his shoe and stopped short of hitting him with it.

The man, wearing a striped T-shirt, was heard telling Dwivedi that "you cannot stop us from asking questions."

The man was immediately caught by a Congress staffer and some journalists and was removed from the briefing hall while being beaten up. He was then taken away by police.

Dwivedi described the incident as "pre-planned" attack as he was to speak against

Ramdev and his agitation which Congress leader said was conducted at the behest of RSS.

As the press conference was winding down, the man got up from his seat and went closer to the exit door from where he asked a question whether Congress party was happy that the opposition is weak in the country.

Dwivedi answered that nobody should ever be in the misconception that there is no opposition.

However, the man was heard murmuring that his question was not answered.

The press conference continued for a few minutes more.

As it was about to conclude, the man took out one of his shoes and climbed on the podium, from where Dwivedi was addressing the media, and rushed towards him. He, was, however overpowered by Congress workers and journalists.

US forest fire threatens town

BBC ONLINE

More than 2,300 firefighters are battling one of the largest blazes ever to break out in the state of Arizona.

The rapidly moving fire, covering 287 sq miles (743 sq km), is threatening mountain communities in the east of the state.

Smoke from the burning pine forests can be seen in the neighbouring states of New Mexico and Colorado.

Forecasters said conditions could get worse on yesterday as winds are expected to pick up.

Arizona Governor Jan Brewer, who flew over the fire, described it as "horrific".

PERU PRESIDENTIAL RUNOFF Leftist Humala claims victory

AFP, Lima

Leftist ex-military man Ollanta Humala has claimed victory in Peru's presidential runoff after a tight, polarised campaign against Keiko Fujimori, daughter of a jailed former strongman.

"We've won the elections in Peru," Humala shouted over a cheering crowd of supporters in central Lima late Sunday, many waving red and white Peruvian flags, as final results trickled in.

Official results showed his slight lead over his right-wing rival Fujimori creep upwards after quick counts by three polling companies predicted it would be between two and 4.4 percent.

Humala's victory "is irreversible," Manuel Saavedra, director of pollster CPI, told AFP earlier.

A downbeat Fujimori told a crowd of supporters Sunday night: "If the ONPE (electoral authority) ratifies the quick count, I'll recognize the results."

Both Humala, 48, and Fujimori, 36, drew support with populist promises to



Ollanta Humala

help around one third of the population of 29 million still living in poverty despite Peru's record growth on the back of mineral exports in the past decade.

Many remaining votes from remote Andean provinces were expected to favor Humala over Fujimori, who drew a chunk of support from a conservative, city-dwelling elite in the nation stretching from the Amazon to the Pacific.

Humala promised to share out Peru's mineral wealth -- including gold, silver and copper -- and sought to play down his former ties to anti-liberal Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez while turning toward Brazil's more moderate left.

\$615m ADB loan

FROM PAGE 1 interest rate for 27 years including a grace-period of seven years.

The government has earlier signed deals of \$1.2 billion with the World Bank (WB), \$400 million with Japan International Cooperation Agency (Jica) and \$140 million with Islamic Development Bank (IDB) to arrange fund for the Padma bridge project.

Although components like rehabilitation, resettlement and construction of approach roads of the mega project are making good progress, two most important components -- construction of the main bridge and river training -- are being delayed for various reasons.

Evaluation reports by aspiring firms on the main bridge construction and river training have been sent to the WB five months ago and the bank is yet to give approval, said officials concerned.

"We are expecting World Bank's approval by June," said Communications Minister Syed Abul Hossain at a post-deal briefing.

Without the WB concur-

rence, Bangladesh cannot float tender for the main bridge construction and river training.

Speaking at the briefing, S Hafeed Rahman, director general of ADB's South Asian Department, said the Padma bridge will be a landmark achievement for Bangladesh. "The main challenge, however, lies ahead, that is ensuring successful and timely completion of the project."

ADB had earlier provided Bangladesh with \$27.6 million for feasibility study and detailed design of the bridge.

Prime Minister's economic adviser Moshir Rahman, Communications Minister Syed Abul Hossain, ADB Vice President (Operations 1) Xiaoyu Zhao and representatives of the WB, IDB and Jica also spoke at the function.

The country's longest 6.15 kilometre bridge, including 3.68km land-based approach viaducts on both sides of the river, will connect 19 south-western districts with the capital. The government has targeted to complete the bridge by 2015.

Nigerian militants threaten to attack Italy's oil plants

AFP, Lagos

Nigeria's most prominent militant group MEND yesterday threatened to attack facilities of the Italian oil firm Eni in the country accusing it of "theft" and of backing NATO-led air raids on Libya.

The Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) in an emailed statement blamed Eni of "theft" of oil in the southern oil-rich region and aiding a special Nigerian military unit deployed there.

"The Eni group has actively participated in the theft of oil in the Niger delta for decades, assisting the Nigerian military in its scorched earth and genocidal actions against the justice-seeking citizens of the Niger delta," said MEND, which claims to be fighting for a fairer share of the oil wealth for area residents.

"MEND observes with outrage the involvement of the ENI group of Italy in the attacks on the innocent citizens of Libya by western nations intent on plundering the mineral resources of that nation," it added.

A defining moment

FROM PAGE 1

Awami League leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in February of the year. The programme, fundamentally a charter of demands which outlined a broad range of autonomy the Awami League thought should be accorded to Pakistan's eastern province (in time to become the independent state of Bangladesh), had been announced by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, subsequently to be honoured as Bangabandhu, in early February in Lahore. Mujib had planned to make the programme public at the national conference of Pakistan's opposition political parties then being held in Lahore, the capital of West Pakistan at the time. However, strong opposition from his fellow politicians led him to make the announcement at a press conference in Lahore the next day.

The reaction was swift. For one thing, leading Pakistani opposition figures, despite their anathema toward the Ayub Khan regime, denounced the Six Points as a plan that would weaken Pakistan. For another, President Ayub Khan lost no time in telling people that those behind the programme would be handled through the language of weapons. Foreign Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto challenged Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to a public debate on the Six Points at Dhaka's Paltan Maidan. On Mujib's behalf, Tajuddin Ahmed took up the challenge. In the event, Bhutto never turned up for the debate.

Meanwhile, the regime quickly went into rounding up Awami League leaders and followers. Mujib, who had been in and out of prison many times over, was arrested on May 8, 1966 under the Defence of Pakistan Rules (DPR). In similar manner, his senior colleagues in the party -- Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmed, Khondokar Moshtaque Ahmed, M Mansoor Ali, AHM Quamruzzaman -- were whisked away to prison. Hundreds of Awami League workers were carted off to jail. Bereft of leadership and hounded by a ferocious regime represented in the

province by the ultra-loyalist Bangalee governor Abdul Monem Khan, the Awami League nevertheless called a province-wide general strike on June 7 as a way of drumming up support for the Six Points. A young Awami League politician, Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, then a member of Pakistan's National Assembly, and Amena Begum, a diehard Awami Leaguer, played a pivotal role in organising the strike.

On June 7, the people of East Pakistan observed a total general strike all over the province. Offices, factories, educational institutions and businesses remained shut. Spontaneous processions were brought out in Dhaka, Narayanganj and other towns. Predictably, the police fired into the crowds, killing dozens and injuring scores of others. But nothing the regime did on the day would induce citizens into calling off the strike. It was a splendid demonstration of popular unity the likes of which had not been seen before in the nineteen-year history of Pakistan.

June 7 was thus a harbinger of things to come. The regime would implicate Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in the so-called Agartala conspiracy case in 1968 but would then implode as a result of a mass upsurge in 1969. The Awami League under Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman would contest the general elections of December 1970, which it said would be a referendum on the Six Points. It would win decisively on an all-Pakistan basis, securing 167 out of a total of 313 seats in the National Assembly. And yet the path would remain a tortuous one, with a genocide by the Pakistan state claiming the lives of three million Bangladeshis in 1971. By December 1971, East Pakistan would be reborn as the sovereign state of Bangladesh.

June 7, 1966 started out as a movement in support of a Six Point demand for autonomy. Five and a half years later, on December 16, 1971, it would translate into a One Point triumph, that of national freedom, for the Bangalee nation.

Table with columns for application details, including name, address, and contact information. It lists various applicants and their details for the 'উন্নুক্ত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি' (Unpublished Tender Notice).

Advertisement for 'কমন সার্ভিসেস ডিপার্টমেন্ট' (Common Services Department). It includes contact information for Bangladesh Bank, Dhaka, and lists several officials like Shyamal Kumar Das and Kaman Sarbisess Dipartment.