



World Briefs

Gorbachev asks court to dismiss summons

MOSCOW — Mikhail Gorbachev asked Russia's Constitutional Court on Monday to excuse him from testifying in a trial on his disbanded Communist Party, saying it would worsen the country's political situation.

The former Soviet president, expressed his objections in a letter to the court in response to its Sept. 21 order that he testify. ITAR-Tass and Interfax news agencies reported.

The 13-judge panel is considering the legality of Russian President Boris Yeltsin's ban on the former ruling party.

Gorbachev, the party chief from 1985 until his resignation in August 1991, was among the former Communist leaders ordered to testify.

An aide to the chief judge has said the court could fine Gorbachev 100 rubles — about 40 cents — if he refuses to testify.

Gorbachev wrote that he respects the court but that his appearance would make him a pawn in a political struggle between two sides which, apparently, he disdains equally.

"One side is striving to destabilize the situation, covertly trying to rehabilitate the members of the party leadership, the secretariat and other party structures which supported the August putsch," Gorbachev wrote of the Communist side.

On the other side is the Yeltsin government, which Gorbachev said is "losing social support for its course" and so wants to use the party trial as a "scapegoat."

Gorbachev wrote that the court "has ... become a hostage of political controversy (which) hurts its authority and at the same contributes to the aggravation of the political situation in the country."

Gorbachev said the court decided to call the new witnesses because its trial, now weeks old, has failed to produce a clear verdict.

Court officials could not be reached Monday night. It was not known if the court would fine Gorbachev, let him be excused or try to force him to appear.

Russia orders soliders to war-plagued republic

MOSCOW — Russia on Monday ordered more troops to Tajikistan, a Central Asian republic where a virtual civil war has encroached on Russian bases and the Afghan border.

Russia's Defense Ministry was increasing its troop strength reportedly to as much as 10,000. A ministry spokesman said the forces were only there to defend Russians, but the deployment angered some local leaders.

The troops have orders to seal the Tajik-Afghan border and fight only if attacked, said the spokesman, Vladimir Uvatenko. He said they also might help evacuate ethnic Russians.

Tajikistan is one of several ex-Soviet republics wracked by ethnic fighting that has worsened since the Soviet collapse last December. The deployment further demonstrated Russia's concern about the Afghan border and its desire to remain a force in the troubled region.

It wasn't immediately known how many Russian troops have been stationed in Tajikistan before the latest deployment.

Fighting erupted in Tajikistan, a poor, mountainous state, after democratic and Islamic groups began taking power from ex-Communist President Rakhman Nabiyev in recent months. They ousted him in August.

Driven largely by clan and territorial disputes, farmers and rural workers in the southern Kulyab and Kurgan-Tyube regions rebelled against the new leaders last month.

Russian officials have said smugglers were bringing in arms from Afghanistan and raiding Russian military bases responsible for guarding the Afghan-Tajik border.

Ethnic Russian and Ukrainian residents have been streaming from Tajikistan in recent months, fearing a backlash against them because of rising nationalist and religious passions.

Although the Russian deployment was sanctioned by a mutual defense pact signed this year with Nabiyev, Russia's larger presence could inflame anti-Russian feelings in the republic, which is more than 80 percent ethnic Tajik or Uzbek.

Liberian rebels attack citizens during fighting

ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast — Liberia's interim government Monday claimed rebels burned homes and killed at least 300 people during factional fighting north of the capital Monrovia, but the rebels denied it.

The fighting further weakens a nearly 2-year-old cease-fire.

ULIMO, a rebel group based in neighboring Sierra Leone, launched an offensive against rival rebel leader Charles Taylor's forces a month ago, saying only force would make him disarm and demobilize his men.

Liberian Information Minister Lamini Wariyat said that according to about a dozen eyewitnesses who fled to Monrovia at least 300 people were killed in the Friday morning attack in Klay, about 27 miles north of the capital.

"They just opened fire, burned down the houses," said Wariyat, contacted in Monrovia by telephone from the Ivory Coast. Quoting the witnesses, he blamed most of the killings on Taylor's fighters.

"It's an international scandal," said Wariyat, speaking for the interim government of President Amos Sawyer that is protected by a West African peace-keeping force of 7,000 troops.

Taylor's group, the National Patriotic Front of Liberia, accuses the interim government of backing ULIMO, the United Liberation Movement of Democracy for Liberia. Officially, the government denies this, but privately they criticize Taylor viciously for prolonging the conflict.

One woman who said she witnessed the killings, Dudu Kamara, said she escaped the fighting but that more than 300 others were killed.

Joseph Taybiar, ULIMO secretary general, accused Taylor's men of killing 15 to 20 people, but he denied any large-scale massacre took place.

"It is unfounded and misled that we massacred civilians," said Joe Mulbah, Taylor's minister of information, in a telephone interview from Taylor's headquarters in Gbanga, in southeastern Liberia.

Mulbah acknowledged the area was extremely dangerous because of the fighting. ULIMO and other rebels "are losing the battle," he said. "They want international sympathy. We are driving ULIMO from the territory."

Iliescu wins Romanian presidential election

BUCHAREST, Romania — Partial results released Monday appeared to confirm exit polls showing President Ion Iliescu, a former Communist, captured the lion's share of votes in an election test of his go-slow reform.

But the results from Sunday's presidential and parliamentary elections also backed projections that he failed to garner enough votes to avoid a runoff. His main challenger, Bucharest University Dean Emil Constantinescu, backs a quicker shift toward capitalism.

With nearly 20 percent of the 12.1 million votes counted, Iliescu was leading with about 44.5 percent of the vote.

Constantinescu had 31.7 percent, and radical nationalist Gheorghe Funar had 12.3 percent.

Iliescu's party, the Democratic National Salvation Front, won 25 percent of the vote for the 471-seat Parliament, compared to 19 percent for Constantinescu's Democratic Convention, according to the partial count.

The results disappointed Romanians weary of Iliescu's Communist past who had accused him of foot-dragging on reforms. Pre-election surveys predicted a much closer race but were believed not to reflect rural voters who fear a rush toward capitalism.

Rules require a runoff Oct. 11 if none of the six presidential candidates receives an outright majority of the total eligible electorate of some 16 million. But Iliescu appeared headed for certain re-election.

Iliescu's backing has dramatically eroded, however. He came to power in the violent overthrow of Communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu in December 1989, and overwhelmingly won by 85 percent in May 1990.

Former Iliescu ally Silviu Brucan, also an ex-Communist, suggested Iliescu should appoint a premier from the opposition Democratic Convention to appease strengthened internal rivals and win trust internationally.

The parliamentary election results appeared to place the Front in the best position to form a coalition with nationalist parties, which won about 13 percent, and leftists.

—The Associated Press

STATE

Both sides claim victory after debates

By Bruce Robinson Staff Writer

Both Democrats and Republicans were claiming victory after the state gubernatorial and U.S. Senate debates at the Benton Convention Center in Winston-Salem Sunday.

The debates, sponsored by the N.C. Association of Broadcasters, each lasted 45 minutes and were televised statewide.

During the debates, the candidates sparred about their goals for the future and attempted to denigrate the past performances of their opponents as businessmen and politicians.

N.C. gubernatorial debate

The main focus of the gubernatorial debate was the records of the Republican candidate for governor, Lt. Gov. Jim Gardner, and the Democratic challenger, former Gov. Jim Hunt.

Both candidates accused the other of misleading the public about their records.

During the debate, Hunt questioned Gardner about debts from his businesses. Gardner responded, "No companies that I controlled or that I am responsible for owe anything."

Hunt then warned voters to listen carefully to what Gardner had said.

"The truth is he owes \$37 million," Hunt said. "They owe it to the employees for wages. They owe it to small-business people, some of whom were put in terrible straits and almost went out of business He likes to pretend that's not his debt."

"Mr. Gardner," Hunt said, "the governor has to be responsible."

Gardner responded to Hunt's words by referring to Hunt's failure to pay



Jim Gardner

fully for the use of state planes during political trips. These trips were taken in 1984 when Hunt was governor.

"Is that the same responsibility that you had, Jim, when you got confused and thought the state helicopter and state airplane belonged to you and not the people of North Carolina?" Gardner asked.

Although the candidates traded attacks, both campaigns said the debate had helped their campaigns by giving voters a true picture about their ticket.

Paulmer Sugg, campaign director for the Gardner campaign, said the debate had accomplished their goal of depicting Gardner's vision for the future.

"I felt like we won," he said. "In the first debate, we wanted to go out about Jim Hunt's record. The second debate was about the lieutenant governor, what he wanted to do over the next four years."

Sugg said Gardner's goals were to improve education by fully funding HeadStart, a comprehensive preschool program, and by textbook allotment.

Gardner also would reform the prison system by getting rid of good-time amendments and making prisoners work, Sugg said.

Rachel Perry, press-secretary for the Hunt campaign, said she thought Hunt had won the debate by focusing on his agenda.

"I think we did win," she said. "He laid out his positive plan for North Carolina's future. He talked about education goals, crime-fighting goals, and the two candidates compared issues on the environment."

Both campaigns accused the other candidate of avoiding the real issues.

Perry said Gardner failed to answer questions during the debate.



Jim Hunt

"It's hard to talk issues with a junkyard dog," she said. "I don't think that Mr. Gardner wants to debate the issues."

"(Gardner) didn't answer a single question," Perry said. "He just chose to attack instead of answering questions."

Sugg said Hunt could not support his record as a failed governor.

"Hunt was caught a bit off guard and unprepared to defend his record," he said. "The campaign should be about his record, eight years as governor."

The debate was the second between the two candidates in an election that has been full of mud-slinging. Both campaigns said they thought the second debate was less mean-spirited than the first, held in Charlotte Sept. 10.

Christopher Geis, spokesman for the N.C. Democratic Party, agreed that the second debate was tamer than the first.

Sugg thought both debates had been hard fought, which helped spell out the differences between the two candidates.

"Both debates were hard-hitting at times," he said. "But, I wouldn't call it nasty."

At this time, future debates have not been scheduled and both gubernatorial campaigns are claiming the other side is reluctant to debate further.

U.S. Senate debate

The Sunday debate between Democrat U.S. Sen. Terry Sanford and Republican Lauch Faircloth somewhat mimicked the gubernatorial debate as both campaigns declared victory.

This U.S. Senate debate was the only scheduled debate between the two candidates.

Anna Driver, press spokeswoman for the Sanford campaign, said the senator remained focused on the issues.



Terry Sanford

"We think the senator did very well," she said. "We said we would talk about the issues, and we did."

"We talked about jobs and the economy, the free trade agreement and education," she said.

John Preyer, campaign director for Faircloth, said he disagreed that Sanford won the debate and claimed the confrontation allowed Faircloth to delineate his differences with the senator.

"I think that Lauch Faircloth won the debate because he conveyed his message of wanting to cut taxes and cut wasteful spending," he said. "Sanford just dodged the issues."

"I think that it provided the voters with a clear choice between a big-spending Washington politician, Terry Sanford, and a former businessman who wants to cut spending, Lauch Faircloth," Preyer said.

Geis said Sanford's performance in the debate was far superior to that of Faircloth's.

"I give Faircloth an F-plus, the plus because I like his tie," he said. "He was incoherent, stumbling and didn't show any knowledge of any of the issues."

However, Geis said Sanford did not perform to his potential during the debate.

"Sanford wasn't his usual top-notch self," he said. "But he showed he has an understanding of the issues."

Preyer said Sanford failed to tell the full truth to voters.

"Sanford tried to hide his record," Preyer said.

"He voted to keep a pay raise, he denied that ... He clearly was trying to hide his record," he said.

Preyer said Faircloth's main focus for the November campaign and the debate was to cut taxes and control spending.

"His main emphasis is that Lauch Faircloth wants to cut taxes," he said.

Driver replied that Faircloth did not do as well as Sanford at the debate.

"I don't think he was as well prepared as Senator Sanford," she said. "He didn't stray far from the themes from his television ads ... He talked about welfare and work fare."



Lauch Faircloth

NCCU cancels high school games

By Leila Maybodi Staff Writer

N.C. Central University's decision to end nighttime high school football games at their campus has forced local schools to share Durham County Stadium, where they previously had played a portion of their games.

The decision to cancel the games was made after a shooting occurred on a game night, said David Witherspoon, director of the NCCU News Bureau.

The shooting occurred Sept. 12, approximately one hour after an NCCU night football game.

Gerald McCants, consultant to NCCU Chancellor Donna Benson, said the decision to halt the night games was made "in order to provide security for the campus."

"More man power is needed for the evening than during the day," McCants said. "The safety of students and guests is important to us, and daytime games would be safer."

NCCU plays all of its football games during the day, so the administration thought the high school games should

follow the same pattern, said Richard Hicks, principal of Hillside.

The cancellation primarily affects Hillside High School because the school used to play many of their football games at night on the university field, Hicks said.

"Benson wanted to take a good look at the security on their campus, and we respect their decision," Hicks said. "We'll just have to adjust. That's what life is all about."

Hillside, Northern Durham and Durham high schools now play their games at the Durham County Stadium.

"When I came here six years ago, only one or two games were played at NCCU," Hicks said.

Hicks added that after Benson offered Hillside the use of NCCU's facilities, all of Hillside's basketball games and most of its football games were played at NCCU. "This was an alternative to sharing Durham County Stadium with Durham High and Northern, and it meant more Friday games for everyone."

Hillside still plays games on Friday night, though now it must coordinate its

schedule with those of the other schools.

Hicks said he hoped some basketball games would be played at NCCU.

"We have 2 1/2 months, October and November, until basketball season. We have not been told we can't play (basketball games at NCCU)," he said. "Once we sit down and talk, we will probably be able to play some of our games (at NCCU)."

Hicks said Hillside officials had not taken any new security measures after the games were moved to Durham County Stadium.

"We're doing what we've always done," Hicks said.

Anthony Price, coach for the Durham High School football team, said there had been problems with uninvited people coming to high school and college games played at NCCU.

"There were lots of outsiders who would come to the games. For security reasons, NCCU saw it necessary to cancel the night games," Price said.

Price also said the NCCU administration had apologized for the inconvenience.

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