

# International Intelligence

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## ***Mahathir's coalition wins Malaysia elections***

Malaysia's ruling Barisan Nasional (BN) coalition, headed by Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad, won a total of 149 out of 193 seats in the country's parliament in the Nov. 29 national elections, but failed to break the grip of the opposition PAS party over the state of Kelantan and, in fact, lost the neighboring state of Terengganu to PAS control. The four-party opposition coalition, Barisan Alternatif (BA), won 44 seats. The result, however, signals erosion in BN's support, down from 166 seats in the 1995 election, whereas the opposition doubled its seats in 1999.

Dr. Mahathir's UMNO party led the vote with 72 seats; PAS won the most opposition seats, securing 27, up from 8 seats previously. Dr. Mahathir easily retained his seat in Kedah for a seventh term, but his majority slipped to 10,138 votes from 17,226 in 1995.

A sympathy vote swept Wan Azizah, the wife of jailed former Finance Minister Anwar Ibrahim, into his vacant seat in Penang. But the National Justice party (Keadilan), which she founded, did far worse than expected, winning only five seats. The BN took all six seats in Kuala Lumpur, a severe blow to the Keadilan party, which had bid to win three of them.

There were surprising upsets in individual races: Lim Kit Siang, head of the opposition Democratic Action Party and a 30-year veteran in Parliament, lost his seat, as did fellow DAP member Karpal Singh, the most flamboyant of Anwar's attorneys. Chandra Muzaffar, a close ally of Anwar, who is well connected to Western non-governmental organizations, and a guiding figure in the BA, lost his race.

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## ***Probes of Netanyahu's finances heating up***

Following another ten-hour police interrogation of Benjamin Netanyahu on Nov. 28, police sources told the Israeli daily *Ha'aretz* that there is enough evidence to indict the former Israeli Prime Minister. He could face several charges, including bribe taking, de-

frauding the Prime Minister's Office, and breach of trust. Others involved in the case are his wife Sarah, the former Director General of the Prime Minister's Office, Moshe Leon, and former head of the Prime Minister's Bureau, Uri Elitzur. Elitzur used to be a leader of the Yesha Council of settlers in the occupied territories.

The Nov. 29 issue of *Ha'aretz* also reported that Knesset (parliament) Member Ophir Pines-Pas, chairman of the One Israel bloc (formerly the Labor Party), called for a probe of 19 non-profit organizations working for Netanyahu's party, the Likud, or for the National Union party, as well as his re-election campaign. Pines-Pas made the appeal to State Comptroller Eliezer Goldberg. Pines-Pas told a news conference: "There are associations that were directly or indirectly involved in the 1999 elections, including Chabad Youth, Lev Ha'aretz, Golan Tourism, Revivers of Jewish Settlement in Hebron, the Yesha Council, and others, that were directly financed by the Prime Minister's office. The associations worked directly for Netanyahu, the Likud, and the National Union, and allegedly broke the party financing law."

Pines-Pas also called for an investigation of Netanyahu's relations with foreign millionaires, including Americans Ronald Lander, Irving Moskowitz, Sheldon Edelson, and Marion Josephson, and Australian Joseph Gutnick.

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## ***ASEAN, EU uphold a unitary Indonesia***

On Nov. 27, during a dialogue in Manila between leaders from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and China, Japan, and South Korea, Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong urged the group to draft a statement expressing support for Indonesia's territorial integrity. The general topic of the ASEAN plus three meeting was regional security, with special focus on combatting separatism. Goh told *Asiaweek* in an interview released on Nov. 29, "Indonesia is a huge anchor. If it begins to break up, we are going to have general instability in the whole region for many years to come."

The result of Goh's initiative was re-

flected in the Chairman's Statement, point 7: "President Abdurrahman Wahid of Indonesia briefed the meeting on the latest developments in Aceh [province]. In this connection, the heads of state/government reiterated their full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Indonesia." Philippines President Joseph Estrada later underscored the message, insisting to reporters that "Aceh is part of the territory of the Republic of Indonesia. . . . This is different from East Timor. We are supporting Indonesia to protect its territorial integrity." President Wahid assured his interlocutors that independence will not be an option for Aceh, saying, "We will defend our territorial integrity at all cost."

On Nov. 29, the Finnish Embassy in Jakarta released a statement declaring, "The European Union wants to see a strong, united, and democratic Indonesia." The statement endorsed Wahid's efforts to find a peaceful solution to the situation in Aceh and other provinces, and called on all parties to refrain from violence.

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## ***Kazak, Uzbeki leaders on state visits to China***

China received state visits from both Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev and Uzbekistan President Islam Karimov in November. Nazarbayev arrived in Beijing on Nov. 23 for a five-day visit, during which he and President Jiang Zemin signed the "Joint Communiqué of the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Kazakhstan on the Complete Resolution of All Border Issues." The communiqué stated that "all border issues between China and Kazakhstan have been resolved completely." The two also signed a joint statement emphasizing economic cooperation, including to "complete an assessment of a China-Kazakhstan oil pipeline project as soon as possible"; "improve cooperation in transportation areas along the Silk Road"; and push forward "negotiations that will lead to the signing of governmental agreements on water resources."

In broader areas, the statement said: "Both sides will coordinate efforts to effectively combat national splittism, religious

**LIPENG**, Chairman of China's National People's Congress (parliament), arrived in Israel on Nov. 25, the highest Chinese official to visit since diplomatic relations began in 1992. As a snub, however, Avraham Burg, Speaker of the Israeli Knesset (parliament), met with Tibet's Dalai Lama on Nov. 24, despite his government's request to cancel the meeting. In turn, Israel upgraded Li's trip to an official state visit, from that of a parliamentary visit.

**THE IRANIAN** Intelligence Ministry arrested 34 members of the radical Shi'ite Muslim Mahdaviat movement who were said to be planning political and sectarian violence, including assassinating the President and former President. "Among its aims and objectives were creating plots to murder and plant bombs in Sunni areas of the country in order to fan differences and religious strife," said a ministry statement on Nov. 25.

**CROATIA'S** 11-member Constitutional Court, on Nov. 26, authorized the automatic transfer of the powers of President Franjo Tudjman to Speaker of the Parliament Vlatko Pavletic, for an interim period of 60 days. Tudjman underwent emergency surgery for possible intestinal cancer on Nov. 1.

**KURDISH PKK** terrorist leader Abdullah Ocalan will appeal a verdict upholding his death sentence, asking for a review by Turkey's Chief Prosecutor Vural Savas. If that fails, his lawyers announced on Nov. 26, they will appeal to the European Court of Human Rights. Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit, a strong opponent of capital punishment, responded, "We will have to consider the [European] court's decision."

**IRAQ** agreed on Nov. 27 to six more months of the UN's oil-for-food regime, while the UN Security Council debates how to resume inspections, but lift sanctions. Meanwhile, British and U.S. bombers struck a primary school on Nov. 28 in the northern Kurdish oil city of Mosul.

extremism, terrorism, illegal arms trafficking, drug smuggling, illegal immigration, and other types of crimes. Both will actively implement the Bishkek statement signed by heads of state of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan on Aug. 25, 1999."

It added, "Both sides are willing to make joint efforts to promote improvement of the situation in the Asia-Pacific region to ensure peace, security, and stability," and that the two countries "will participate in bilateral and multilateral consultations on security issues in Asia."

Uzbekistan's President Karimov arrived in Beijing on Nov. 8 for three days, and met with Jiang to discuss new economic cooperation. Karimov stressed the importance of joint efforts to fight against national separatism and religious extremism. Also, Prime Minister Zhu Rongji emphasized to Karimov, the importance China places on developing economic relations with Uzbekistan and other Central Asian countries, especially in the context of China's development of its western region.

## **Lee Teng-hui hits popular Taiwan candidate**

Taiwan independent Presidential candidate James Soong, former Secretary General of the ruling Kuomintang (KMT) during 1988-92, appointed Governor of Taiwan (1992-96), and then elected Governor until the end of 1998, was expelled from the party on Nov. 16, along with six of his closest advisers and members of his gubernatorial government. The heavy-handed act was taken by the KMT's Evaluation and Discipline Committee, because of Soong's decision to run as an independent Presidential candidate, rather than back President Lee Teng-hui's hand-picked successor, Vice President Lien Chan, one of the richest men in Taiwan. A special rule was put together regarding KMT legislators who publicly support Soong, because the KMT fears losing its majority in the Taiwan Parliament. A decision will be taken *after* the election whether to expel them.

Soong is the leading candidate, with a 13-17% lead in all the polls. He is against the

theater missile defense provocation against Beijing, and wishes to develop three links with mainland China: open trade, travel, and communications.

According to two KMT legislators, the Military Intelligence Bureau (MIB) was assigned to wiretap Soong's phone immediately after Soong returned from a trip to the United States in March. Three MIB officers, requesting anonymity, told KMT legislator Chen Chao-jung about this order. The KMT leadership has also issued an order prohibiting police officers from publicly supporting Soong's candidacy.

## **Bouteflika blasts murder of Algerian FIS leader**

Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika denounced the Nov. 23 assassination of Abdelquader Hachani, a leader of the opposition Islamic Salvation Front (FIS). "This criminal act proves that the enemies of peace . . . whether inside Algeria or abroad, want to harm the Algerian people, who are healing their wounds."

Algeria has been torn by civil war since 1992, when the military cancelled the second round of general elections after the FIS had won the first round. Since then, gang-countergang bloodletting, between a faction of the military called the "eradicators" and the London-based Armed Islamic Group, has left more than 300,000 dead, many of them FIS leaders or their families. Since his election this year, Bouteflika has committed himself to ending the violence, in concert with the FIS.

Bouteflika promised, "All means will be mobilized to unmask the forces of evil and treachery." Hachani's death "is a tragedy for Algeria that will aggravate the crisis."

Sources have told *EIR* that the killing was carried out by the eradicators as a warning to Bouteflika, who was elected with the military's backing, to reverse course on his peace effort, which has included a recent meeting with the Pope. A few days earlier, individuals wearing army uniforms ambushed a bus, killing 19 people, including women and children, near an army base outside of Algiers. The source characterized this incident too, as a warning.