

# Parliament seal on Yushchenko choice

Associated Press

KIEV, (Ukraine), Sept. 22. — Ukrainian President Mr Viktor Yushchenko forged an awkward alliance yesterday with his arch rival and Orange Revolution enemy to get his choice for new Prime Minister through Parliament.

Parliament approved Mr Yuriy Yekhanurov with 289 votes, well above the 226 he needed. The extra backing came after Mr Yushchenko signed a formal truce with losing presidential candidate Mr Viktor Yanukovych's Party of the Regions, help that Mr Yushchenko needed to offset the defection of some of his Orange Revolution allies after the ouster of former Prime Minister Ms Yulia Tymoshenko. "It's time to bury the war hatchet and to forget where it lies," Mr Yushchenko said before the vote. Later, he said that a "unique understanding" had been found.

The parliamentary hall erupted in applause, and Mr Yushchenko, who had come to the session to make one final plea, immediately stood up and warmly hugged the



Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko (centre), next to Prime Minister Yuri Yekhanurov (right) and Speaker of the Parliament Volodymyr Lytvyn on Thursday — AFP

Russian-born Mr Yekhanurov, widely seen as a moderate, Mr Yanukovych, who has complained of political repression against his supporters, also had reasons to celebrate. The agreement, signed by Mr Yushchenko, Mr Yanukovych and Mr Yekhanurov, pledges not to allow any political persecution. It also gives the Opposition, leadership of a spe-

cial parliamentary committee on privatisation and the fight against corruption. The memorandum calls for introducing changes to the law on amnesties, which will reportedly offer amnesties to all former members of election commissions.

"We have passed through a difficult path of reconciliation of the political elite," Mr Yekhanurov

said after the vote. The former Governor from eastern Ukraine said he would unveil his plans for his new team next week in Dnipropetrovsk, a region that overwhelmingly backed Mr Yanukovych over Mr Yushchenko in last year's heated race. "We have no time to warm up," Mr Yekhanurov said, adding that at least one-third of his new appointments would be technocrats with no relation to politics.

Mr Yushchenko dismissed Mr Tymoshenko on 8 September, but he failed on Tuesday to win approval for Mr Yekhanurov. Mr Tymoshenko had pleaded to return as Prime Minister, but Mr Yushchenko stuck by Mr Yekhanurov, an economist whom lawmakers called a neutral choice. But with parliamentary elections that could redraw Ukraine's political landscape just six months away, some lawmakers have complained his would be an ineffective, transitional government.

The new vote came after a series of consultations between Mr Yushchenko and parliamentary faction leaders. Mr Yanukovych's Party of the Regions gave Mr Yekhanurov 50 crucial votes.

# Ukraine govt sacked as Orange revolution sours

Kiev, Sept. 8 (Reuters): Ukraine's President Viktor Yushchenko sacked his government today as the team which led the "Orange Revolution" less than a year ago broke apart amid infighting and accusations of mass graft.

Yushchenko, who has pledged to stamp out the corruption widespread under his long-serving predecessor Leonid Kuchma, said he would ask regional governor Yury Yekhanurov, 57, to form a new team.

But he sought not to completely alienate the charismatic Yulia Tymoshenko, a key figure in the mass protests late last year that propelled him to power and who until today had been Prime Minister since his election in January. The sackings could set the stage for a standoff between Yushchenko and Tymoshenko, who heads her own party, when Ukraine votes in a parliamentary election in March 2006.

"These people remain my friends. It is very difficult but today I must remove this Gordian knot," Yushchenko said, accusing his outgoing government of lacking team spirit.

"I set one task for the new team — to work in a united team. I do not want any more of the intrigues between two or three people that were determining the state policy."

The sacked Prime Minister was due to make her first public comments on Ukrainian television tomorrow.

Some analysts said they hoped Yekhanurov, a low-key technocrat and Yushchenko

loyalist, would bring discipline to Ukraine's economic policy, which under Tymoshenko was characterised by public rows and inconsistency. Yekhanurov was meeting members of the old cabinet this evening.

In sacking Tymoshenko, whose fiery oratory brought thousands out on the streets in last December's pro-western "Orange Revolution", Yushchenko moved decisively to end a crisis that has threatened his credibility.

The crisis follows months of tension between Yushchenko and Tymoshenko over Ukraine's economic direction and came to a head last Saturday when his chief of staff quit alleging deep corruption in the administration.

"We need to halt the disappointment in society and make sure that the ideals (of the Orange Revolution) are not cast into doubt," he said.

The allegations of graft hurt a government already tarnished by sharply lower economic growth, rising inflation and inconsistent policies.



Viktor Yushchenko and Yulia Tymoshenko at a pro-democracy rally in Kiev in December 2004. (AFP)

# Yushchenko sacks Government

My trust has been betrayed, says Ukraine President

Vladimir Radyuhin

**MOSCOW:** Ukraine's President Viktor Yushchenko dismissed the Cabinet of Prime Minister Yulia Timoshenko on Thursday amid a snowballing political crisis that has hit the seven-month-old administration.

Citing infighting as the reason for the decision, Mr. Yushchenko appointed Governor of Dnepropetrovsk Region Yuriy Yekhanurov, a politically neutral figure, as Acting Prime Minister.

"We see the country is sliding back before our eyes," he said in a televised address to the na-

tion. "All those processes we have launched are being rolled back. My friends, who stood by me in the hour of trial, have had vast powers, but betrayed my trust."

The crisis has been triggered by struggle over the re-carving of key industrial assets between two rival groups which helped Mr. Yushchenko come to power in January in the wake of the pro-Western "Orange revolution." One group is headed by the sacked Prime Minister, the other by National Security and Defence Council Secretary Petro Poroshenko, who resigned on Thursday as well over charg-

es of corruption. The accusations of corruption among key allies of the President came from his chief of staff, Olexander Zinchenko, who quit five days ago, and Deputy Prime Minister Mykola Tomenko, who resigned on Thursday. The scandal is believed to have been orchestrated by the former Prime Minister, Timoshenko, who saw her influence being eroded by the Poroshenko group.

The crisis has erupted amid growing disillusionment with the "Orange revolution" leaders as prices are rising and the economy is slowing.

THE END

# Bush backs Georgia as Putin slams Baltic states

Tbilisi, May 10

**PRESIDENT BUSH** on Tuesday saluted Georgia's fledgling democracy as a "beacon of liberty" and backed efforts by the ex-Soviet republic to regain sovereignty peacefully over two pro-Moscow separatist regions.

This move came even as President Vladimir Putin angrily accused the Baltic states on Tuesday of "political demagoguery" in churning up historic resentments towards Moscow, souring a summit designed to cement relations between the EU and Russia. He was speaking minutes after Russia signed a long-awaited agreement with the EU to strengthen ties that have frayed since 2004 when accession of new states brought the bloc to Russian borders.

President Bush — during a 19-hour visit, in which he was acclaimed by cheering crowds — significantly avoided open backing for his host, President Mikhail Saakashvili, in his demand for the speedy closure of two Russian bases on Georgia soil. "The path of freedom you have chosen is not easy. But you will not travel it alone," Bush told at

at Kremlin support for the two rebel Georgian regions, Bush said: "The territory and sovereignty of Georgia must be respected by all nations."

Saakashvili has made the return to Tbilisi's control of separatist South Ossetia and Abkhazia central to his government's program to lift Georgia out of years of decline.

Introducing Bush, the US-educated Saakashvili thanked the US for standing up for Georgia.

The Caucasus is home to a string of local conflicts arising from the collapse of the Soviet Union. Georgia borders Russia's troubled Chechnya region and is on the route for a US-backed pipeline linking Caspian Sea oilfields to world markets.

Bush told a joint news conference with Saakashvili the Georgian leader could phone him any time to seek his help on the disputes but suggested he also work with international bodies such as the UN to resolve the issue peacefully. "The President has put a way forward that encourages autonomy and self government but does not encourage dividing up this country. This seems to me ... to be a very reasonable proposition," Bush said.

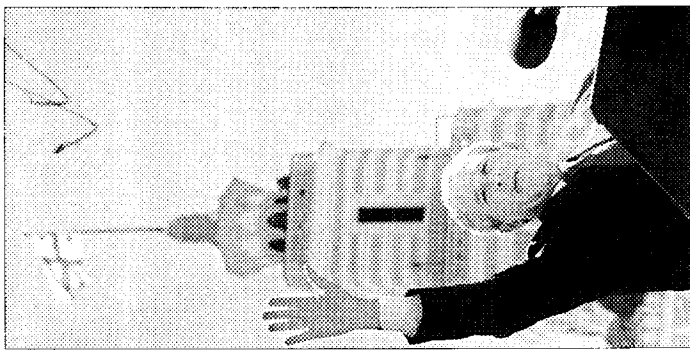
**Reuters**

## GHOSTS OF THE PAST

At least 60,000 people at Freedom Square, focus of a "Rose Revolution" that installed Saakashvili's pro-Western government almost 18 months ago. The crowd, squeezed into the square and flowing beyond it, responded enthusiastically to the first visit by a US president. Groups of people sat behind the podium wearing red, white and blue outfits to form the US flag and the red-and-white Georgian banner as Bush recalled Georgia's long independence struggle that led to its "people's power" revolution.

"You gathered here armed with nothing but roses and the power of your convictions, and you claimed your liberty. And because you acted, Georgia is today both sovereign and free and a beacon of liberty for this region and the world," Bush said.

He said Washington encouraged Georgia's closer cooperation with NATO, something Russia finds uncomfortable for a country in its own backyard and which it once ruled. And, in what appeared to be a swipe



**REUTERS**  
President Bush waves to a large rally at Freedom Square in Tbilisi.

1 MAY 2005

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

# Putin praises East Europe's liberators...

Press Trust of India

MOSCOW, May 7. — Amid recent debates on Stalin's occupation of three Baltic states, President Vladimir Putin today said the Soviet Union's Red Army made a decisive contribution to the victory over Nazism by liberating 11 countries of eastern Europe.

"Our people not only defended their homeland, but also liberated eleven countries of Europe. The aggressor's military machine was crushed on the fields of gigantic battles from the Barents Sea to the Caucasus," the Russian President said unveiling a memorial here to mark the victory of the Red Army in World War II.

Mr Putin earlier refused to apologise for the Soviet occupation of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, saying that in 1989 the Soviet parliament had already deplored the 1939 Molotov-Ribbentrop pact.



THORNY ISSUE: Mr Vladimir Putin attends the unveiling of a new World War II memorial in Moscow on Saturday. AFP

...Bush differs

Associated Press

RIGA, May 7. — Mr George W Bush today saluted the leaders of fledgling democracies in three Baltic nations that endured Soviet oppression for half a century, and said they could help Mr Vladimir Putin see the benefits of living in a free society.

"I will continue to speak as clearly as I can to President Putin that it's in his country's interests that there be democracies on his borders," he said at a news conference with the leaders of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. "We recognise your painful history."

Mr Bush's visit to Latvia and Georgia during his trip to Moscow to mark the 60th anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany prompted a letter of protest from Moscow, which viewed it as meddling in Russia's backyard.



Bush with Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus.

## *Bush visits Baltic states*

PRESIDENT BUSH on Saturday saluted fledgling democracies in three ex-Soviet republics, saying the US will never forget the communist oppression they endured for half a century.

"We recognise your painful history," Bush said after meeting the leaders of Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia. His visit here, on his way to Moscow to mark the 60th anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany, has rankled Russian President Vladimir Putin.

It prompted a letter of protest from Moscow, which was upset Bush was visiting both Latvia and Georgia during his European trip. Asked about criticism that the US is meddling in Russia's backyard, Bush said freedom is a universal right.

"The idea of countries helping others become free, I hope that would be viewed as not revolutionary, but as rational foreign policy, as humane foreign policy," Bush said. "I will continue to speak as clearly as I can to President Putin that it's in his country's interests there be democracies on its borders." Bush also said he understands the lingering resentment against Russia among the people in the Baltic nations.

AP, Riga

# Bush hails democracies in the Baltics

10088  
10088

## Putin opens victory memorial

**RIGA (LATVIA):** United States President George W. Bush on Saturday saluted the leaders of fledgling democracies in three Baltic nations that endured Soviet oppression for half a century, and said they could help Russian President Vladimir Putin see the benefits of living in a free society. "I will continue to speak as clearly as I can to President Putin that it's in his country's interests that there be democracies on his borders," Mr. Bush said at a news conference with the leaders of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

"We recognise your painful history," Mr. Bush said.

Mr. Bush's decision to visit the Latvian capital and Georgia on his trip to Moscow to mark the 60th anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany prompted a letter of protest from Moscow,

which viewed it as meddling in Russia's backyard.

"The idea of countries helping others become free, I hope that would be viewed as not revolutionary, but rational foreign policy, as decent foreign policy," Mr. Bush said. In Moscow, inaugurating a memorial on Poklonnaya Hill on Saturday on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the Soviet victory over Nazi Germany, President Vladimir Putin said Soviet Union made a "decisive contribution" to the victory over Nazism.

"Our people not only defended their homeland, but also liberated eleven countries of Europe. The aggressor's military machine was crushed on the fields of gigantic battles from the Barents Sea to the Caucasus," Mr. Putin said. - AP, UNI



**REMEMBERING THE HEROES:** Russian President Vladimir Putin looks on as guards lay a wreath during the unveiling of a war memorial in Moscow on Saturday. - PHOTO: AP