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Political climate and rapid growth in S-E Asia

TEXT OF THE PM'S SPEECH: PAGE 10

BIGGEST PLUS FACTOR by Lee

By CHIA POTEIK

MR. LEE KUAN YEW yesterday told a packed gathering of top executives and officials from various parts of the world that the political climate in South-east Asia today is the biggest plus factor for rapid development in the region.

The Prime Minister, who was making the closing speech at the end of the three-day conference at Shangri-La Hotel on Business Opportunities in the Pacific Basin, said:

Devastation

"South-east Asia has learnt the terrible lessons of conflict. The ruin and devastation that have overwhelmed both North and South Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, are in striking contrast to the steady and rapid progress of Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore.

"This is very much in the consciousness of the leaders and of the peoples of the countries in South-east Asia.

"Then there is the experience of the Indonesian people. After nearly 20 profligate years under the late Dr. Soekarno, Indonesia, after painful beginnings, has now set course for economic development, seeking investments and rapid growth."

Optimism

Indicating his optimism about the region's continued stability, Mr. Lee said: "The prospect for stability and rapid growth is more than fair on the western rim of the Pacific Basin.

"For South-east Asia in particular, inputs of capital and technology from Japan, America and Western Europe will increase this rate of growth."

Only two riders clouded the horizon, population growth and the problem of guerrilla insurgency.

Population growth rates in most South-east Asian countries were still too high, running at between 2% and 3% per cent. This did not bode well for long-term progress and political stability, though this trend might

FINAL DAY OF THE CONFERENCE: SEE PAGE 11

change with the spread of education.

Of guerrilla insurgency, the Prime Minister said that the outlook was fairly optimistic when the Paris Agreement was signed in February this year. But the situation looked much grimmer by August, even before the American bombing of Cambodia was halted by a compromise between the White House and U.S. Congress.

Economic

He said that unexpectedly the Cambodians seemed better able to fight without, than with American air support, but it was difficult to predict the future.

Given time, Mr. Nixon's Guam doctrine of economic and military aid for countries to

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Quote

A CHINESE proverb says: Sai wung shih ma, yen chih huo fu. Literally, it means: Old man of frontier lost horse, who knows misfortune or good fortune? He lost his horse, a misfortune. But then his horse came back, accompanied by another horse, good fortune. His son mounted the new horse, fell and broke his thigh, another misfortune. Because of this injury, he missed a battle in which his friends were slain.

Of course, this is a most non-Marxist, pre-Marxist proverb. But that does not invalidate its philosophical basis. If I could elaborate on the proverb, the son, from this experience, learnt prudence, without losing his nerve. For those of you who have, like the son of the old man of the frontier, learnt from past experience, and acquired prudence and judgment without losing the gumption to take calculated risks, there are opportunities to be seized, for fortune awaits the enterprising in this part of the Pacific Basin.

— MR LEE

100 accidents

THERE were 100 road accidents, one serious, on Wednesday.

21 PAY CLAIMS

Ministry notices on Vashi flat door

By GERALD PEREIRA

THE Ministry of Labour yesterday posted notices of wage claims by 21 employees of four of Vashi's department stores on the front door flat of its managing director, Mr. Vashi C. Mahtani, 40, at Emerald Mansions, off Orchard Road.

The claims, totalling \$15,994, were for salary, overtime pay and bonuses of the employees who included book-keepers, salesmen, salesgirls, a cashier and a woman clerk.

The workers were made jobless when the Vashi stores closed for business over the weekend.

On Mr. Vashi's door were pasted four Labour Ministry notices, signed by the Assistant Commissioner of Labour, Mr. Lee Chung Pak, and also details of complaints by employees.

The notices said that Mr. Vashi was required to be at the Labour Department at 2.15 p.m. on Oct. 18 where the complaints against him would be "inquired into."

The management declined comment. However, it was learned late last night that the company closed for the day, immediately after the girls were taken ill at noon.

Business is expected to resume today. The company, which produces dried cuttle fish, employs about 120 workers, mostly women.

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MR. LEE

UPROAR AFTER SOVIET-CHILEAN CLASH AT UN ASSEMBLY

UNITED NATIONS, Thursday

'Fool' and 'liar' shouts by shoving envoys

SHOVING and shouting diplomats screamed "fool" and "liar" at each other across the General Assembly podium yesterday after the Soviet bloc made an appeal against the execution of a communist leader by Chile's military junta.

Soviet Ambassador Yakov A. Malik touched off the situation by demanding that Assembly President Leopoldo Benites, of Ecuador, and Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim intercede with the Santiago regime to prevent the execution of Senator Luis Corvalan Lene, secretary of the outlawed Chilean Communist Party.

This brought Chilean Ambassador Raul Bazan Davila to the dais with an objection. Mr. Malik interrupted the



Battlescene... at left, Mr. Davila; right, Mr. Baroody—UPI photo.

Chilean, contending he was not confining himself to a point of order.

At this juncture, Saudi Arabian Ambassador Jamil M. Baroody, who has a long reputation of moving into such situations, asked the Assembly to drop the debate.

Mr. Davila stood at the side of the rostrum while Mr. Baroody talked.

When the Saudi Arabian Ambassador referred to the post-revolution conditions in Chile, Mr. Davila was heard to say "fool."

Referee

Mr. Baroody, who is over 70, pushed his way to the side of the speakers' stand where Mr. Davila stood, and thrusting his body toward the younger man, vigorously shook his finger at him. "Say you apologise," he demanded "Nobody has ever called me a fool."

"You are a liar," Mr. Davila retorted. Mr. F. Bradford Morse, the American Under-Secretary in charge of the General Assembly affairs, left his seat on the high dais and interceded, acting like a boxing referee.

The President eventually ruled that Mr. Davila must wait his turn to speak after Mr. Malik and the Soviet bloc delegates were heard. When he gained the microphones, Mr. Davila denied Mr. Malik's report that Corvalan was to be executed. He said he was in good health awaiting a military tribunal. — UPI.

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Boy's killings, 151 robberies

SAO PAULO, (Brazil). Thurs. — A 14-year-old boy arrested here has confessed to two murders, four attempted murders and 151 armed robberies — all committed within a year.

5 executed

TEHRAN, Thurs. — Army firing squads have executed five men for trafficking in smuggled opium and heroin, a Government spokesman announced yesterday. — AP.

Game of death.

JOHANNESBURG, Thurs. — A policeman died in hospital here after shooting himself in the head while playing Russian roulette with a group of friends. — Reuters.

Terror threat to Russians

BEIRUT, Thursday
PALESTINIAN guerillas have threatened terror attacks against Soviet embassies unless the Kremlin bans Jewish emigration to Israel, according to a Beirut newspaper. The Soviet Union has never been a guerilla target before.

The An Nahar said today the Eagles of the Palestine Revolution issued a "warning to the Soviet Union" in a letter sent to the newspaper.

An Nahar quoted the letter as saying "Russian embassies and interests in the Middle East and the world will be a target for the strikes of our fighters if the Soviet Government does not stop the immigration operation into Israel."

Strained

The Soviet Union has always voiced support for the guerilla movement and has been their main source of arms.

However, its relations with some of the more militant Arab governments like Syria have been strained lately as a result of the Soviet detentions with the US.

In STOCKHOLM Austrian Chancellor Bruno Kreisky said today his Government closed the Jewish refugee camp at Schoenau Castle last week because police uncovered a Palestinian

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Tories in third place

LONDON, Thurs. — An opinion poll, published only hours after Opposition leader Harold Wilson pledged no coalition with the minority Liberals, today put both his Labour Party and the Liberals ahead of the Conservative Government.

The poll, published in the London Times and the Guardian, credited the Labour and Liberal parties with 34 and 32 per cent respectively in voters' popularity ratings. The Conservatives

were listed with 31 per cent — only the second time a British government party has been placed third by an opinion poll in modern times. The findings by the Opinion Research Centre were published after Mr. Wilson told his party's annual conference here he would fight the general election — due within the next 20 months — on a basis of "no electoral treaty, no political alliance, no deal, no fix."

The poll held little comfort for either the Labour or Conservative parties, who between them hold all but a few of the 630 seats in the House of Commons.

But for the Liberal Party, which has only 10 elected parliamentary representatives, it marks a key step in its fight to regain the major role in British politics it ceded to Labour in the 1920s.

For the first time in 11 years the Liberals have overtaken one of their major rivals in an

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Traffic jams

TRAFFIC came to a crawl for more than three hours along busy Paya Lebar, Upper Paya Lebar, Mountbatten and Old Airport Roads last night as residents in Paya Lebar area celebrated the ninth moon festival with processions.

Worst film

BOSTON, Thurs. — Bernard De Vore's "Last Tango in Paris" was named the worst movie of the year yesterday by the Harvard University Lampoon, a humour magazine. — AP.

LATEST

No rally

NEW YORK, Thurs. — Stock prices failed to respond immediately to Government reports of a break in the inflation trend and were mixed in active trading today on the New York Stock Exchange.

The Dow Jones industrial average was off 2.93 at 961.62 shortly before 11 a.m. There were 874 advances and 521 declines among the 1,515 issues traded. — UPI.

'Speculation'

WASHINGTON, Thurs. — State Department officials today labelled as "wild speculation" reports that the main purpose of Dr. Kissinger's trip to Beijing later this month is to pave the way for full diplomatic relations between China and the United States. — AP.

Suspended

UNITED NATIONS, Thurs. — Africa states today succeeded in suspending the meeting of the General Assembly and thus prevented the South African Foreign Minister from speaking. — UPI.