Two killed, 50 hurt in London blast

LONDON, Apr 11: Irish guerillas opened a new bombing campaign against London killing two people just hours after Britain's general election. reports Reuter.

Police said a huge car bomb exploded late on Friday near the Baltic exchange international shipping market in the heart of London's financial district.

The ambulance service confirmed two dead and 80 in-

Staff at Guys Hospital said two little girls were brought in with their faces covered in blood. One, aged seven needed surgery to save an eye.

Workers in the city - the hub of London finance - had been celebrating a jump in share values that followed the right-wing Conservative Party's victory in the election.

The lights went out and all the glass shattered. It was like an earthquake, said Kinji Matsuo, a Japanese employee of Sanwe Bank

ln' a second incident to cause chaos early today, a warning directed police to a van with a bomb in it at Staples Corner, a key north London highway intersection. Nobody was hurt when they blew it up.

The blitz appeared to be the answer of the Irish Republican Army (IRA), fighting to end British rule in Northern Ireland, to the return to power of Conservative Prime Minister John Major.

Churchill-Coleman, head of the British police anti-terrorist squad, said the first bomb comprised at least 100 pounds (50 kg) of high explosive. It was very large.

of El Paraiso.

No immediate claim of responsibility was made but he said an IRA code word was used when a warning was given. But this warning directed police to the wrong

Warning of the second bomb was given, also with a code word, to the telephone exchange at Protadown, Northern Ireland. Both warnings were given in an Irish

Home Secretary (Interior Minister) Kenneth Baker declared: "We have just had an election and democracy is about debate and not bombs. I have nothing but contempt for their cowardly and callous disregard for the lives of innocent people.

The British election saw Gerry Adams who is the president of Sinn Fein, the IRA political wing, lose his seat in parliament.

Hardliners may see this as a signal to step up their campaign of violence, sources in Northern Ireland have said.

The first bomb shattered the facades of office buildings that included the Hong Kong and Shanghai bank. Ceilings collapsed in several other buildings.

Steve Marshall, a Reuter technician working in a nearby office, said: "It has wrecked loads of buildings. The Commercial Union Insurance Building is in tatters."

In other recent IRA actions Commander George linked with political events police on February 11 defused a bomb planted in telephone box near Major's office just before he held talks with Northern Ireland political leaders.

12 killed in school bus mishap:

Colombian school bus plunged off a road on Friday, killing 11

children and one adult, police said, Reuter reports from

The bus, carrying pupils from a school in Cali, 300 km

Police said one adult and 11 children, aged between 11

and 15, were killed in the crash. Another 26 people, mainly

children, were injured and were being treated in hospitals in

Newsman 'manhandled': The

international news agency Reuter has complained to the

Foreign Ministry about what it said was intimidation of a

reporter who covered political developments since the March

four unidentified men accosted an employee of the television

rogated him about the home address, car and future move-

ments of Reuter correspondent Suthin Wannabovorn, a Thai

searching for Khun (Mr) Suthin with the intention of doing

Salvadoren rebels to meet Ghali:

Salvadoren rebels said on Friday a delegation would visit UN

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali this month and ask

him to save the country's troubled peace process, Reuter

tored peace treaty, and said top rebel commanders had al-

ready requested a meeting with Boutros Ghali for the last

Front (FMLN) would not demobilise the first 20 per cent of

its members by May 2, as laid out under the treaty, unless the

government disbanded two paramilitary police forces which

were formally dissolved last month but continue to exist un-

Crime jumps 31 pc in Russia: The

number of crimes committed in Russia in the first two

months of this year jumped 31 per cent over the same period

last year, a news agency reported Friday, AP says from

Three out of four of the 337,000 crimes registered in

A total of 12,200 crimes were committed against individ-

The Russian Ministry of Justice said that during the entire

year, 594,000 people were convicted of crimes, 56,000 more

than in 1990. And for the entire year, 2.1 million crimes

China to sell N-reactors to Ghana

China is to sell small nuclear reactors with a generating

capacity of about 30 kilowatts to Ghana and Syria for scientific

The export deals, which include necessary nuclear fuel,

The contract with Ghana was said to be worth about US

Last December China agreed to sell Pakistan a 300,000

were made by the Chinese Atomic Energy Research Institute

with the approval of the International Atomic Energy Agency,

dollar 1.1 million. No figure was given for the Syrian contract.

Mexksi new Albanian PM: President

Sali Berisha on Friday nominated a construction engineer

with little direct economic background as premier of

Europe's most impoverished country, AP reports from Tirana.

Mexksi premier-designate and asked him to draw up a cabi-

net in the next few days. The government then will be pre-

of medieval architecture for the Albanian Institute of

the legacy of xenophobic Stalinist rule. His paramount task

will be to stop the economic deterioration that has left half of

Albania's 3.2 million people without work and forced many to

Berisha, in his first full day in office, named Aleksander

From 1962 to 1990, the 53-year-old Mexksi was a restorer

The country he has been asked to run is struggling with

research, the official New China News Agency said on Friday,

uals, it said. That included 2,700 murders and attempted

murders, a 12 per cent increase over the same period last

January and February involved property, according to the

ITAR-Tass news agency. It provided no figure for 1991.

were reported, the Interfax news service said.

Reuter reports from Beijing.

kilowatt nuclear power plant.

sented for approval by Parliament.

Monuments of Culture.

depend on foreign food aid.

the Agency said.

The accused the government of violating the UN-moni-

He told reporters the Farabundo Marti National Liberation

In a letter Friday, Reuter bureau chief Kevin Cooney said

Cooney wrote they "manhandled" the employee and inter-

The men "left the clear impression that they were

the nearby towns of Palmira and Cali, the police said.

22 election, reports AP from Bangkok.

news service Visnews on April 5.

him harm," he wrote.

week of April.

der new names.

reports from San Salvador.

(190- miles) southwest of Bogota, crashed as it was returning

to the city along a mountain road from the nearby tourist spot



MOSCOW, Apr 11 : President Boris Yeltsin, who scored a first major victory over Conservatives in Russia's supreme legislature on Friday. returns today to press for an extension of his strong executive leadership, reports Reuter.

Yeltsin needs approval from the Congress of people deputies, which started a nineday session on Monday, for his radical economic reform programme, a new constitution and an extension of his sweeping executive powers.

On Friday, he won deputies approval for one tenet of reform — a loser Russian federation which gives ethnic minorities a first test of self-rule. Hostile conservatives had intended to torpedo it.

Today, Yeltsin will try to

push the reluctant rightwingers into granting him vital extra months in his second job as Prime Minister overseeing in person the shock economic reforms which have aroused deep conservative enmity.

him to present them with a draft law on his cabinet within one month. He would also have to step down as prime minister and propose a new candidate for the job. Yeltsin firmly opposes this, saving he wants to remain at

Hardliners want to force

reforms designed to end 70 years of communist central planning are irreversible. He told the Congress he intended to stay on as Prime Minister for three months, and submitted a written proposal

later under which he would

present the draft law on the

MOSCOW: Deputies react to Russian President Boris Yeltsin's speech at the Russian

EC envoy in Bosnia to

broker peace talks

help, and Austria and Hungary

called for urgent talks on

Bosnia at the Conference on

Security and Cooperation in

is aggression on Bosnia-

Herzegovina as a peaceful

country," Bosnia's Muslim

President Alija izetbegovic

"I appeal to the inter-

national Community and

Institutions, the United

Nations Security Council, the

European Community, the

CSCE and all governments to

use their influence to prevent

killed since Muslims and

Croats voted for Independence

last month, fighting has wors-

ened since the EC and United

States recognised Bosnia's in-

Some of the worst clashes

in the last two days were

around Zvorník, a strategically

dependence last week.

Dozens of people have been

"What we are talking about

Europe (CSCE).

this aggression.

Congress of people's deputies in the Kremlin on Friday.

the helm of government until

cabinet no earlier than September.

Congress sources said they felt Yeltsin and the liberal deputies backing him, spearheaded by the influential democratic Russia movement, were likely to win the extra time they want.

His liberal backers form democratic Russia have followed Yeltsin's lead by threatening the Conservative opposition with a referendum on reform if it tries to block change.

Yeltsin now seems set to strengthen his executive presidency and retain emer gency authority to rule the economy by decree and appoint governments.

The Burly, 61-year-old engineer says Russia needs strong rule to endure political and economic crisis in a transition from communism to a

-AFP/UNB photo.

valuable town on the Serbian

border which was seized by

Serbian paramilitary forces on

forces had trapped 3,000 peo-

ple, including women and

children, in Zvornik and were

threatening to kill them unless

But the Yugoslav army

Meanwhile, AFP adds, the

federal Yugoslav army admitted

Friday that one of its shells had

knocked out the main TV sta-

tion in Bosnia-Herzegovina

saying the soldier responsible

had acted without orders and

It was believed to be the

first time that federal forces

had admitted and apologised

for any mistake since the

Yugoslav civil war began in the

which says it now controls

Zvorník, issued a statement

they gave up their weapons.

denying the allegation.

would be punished.

middle of last year.

lzetbegovic said Serbian

Wednesday.

free-market economy. But many deputies, remembering Soviet and Tsarist dictatorships, are keen to keep power in parliamentary hands.

Yeltsin adviser Sergei Shakharai said this vision could turn into 'a nightmare of governmental crises".

"I do agree dictatorship is bad," Itar Tass news agency quoted him as saying. "But insist that the concentration of all powers in the hands of parliament is no better than the concentration of all power in the hands of the president.

"It is worse," Shakhrai

Deputies will also debate amendments to the constitution today, a safeguard in case the draft for the new version fails to get the two-thirds majority needed.

UK becoming one-party state?

becoming a one-party state ? No. But the Conservative Party's fourth consecutive election victory has cast doubts on Labour's prospects for a singlehanded return to power, reports AP.

been in power for 13 years. Britain was mired in a recespolls gave Labour the edge. But still the Conservatives

be more difficult for Labour. A commission redrawing parliamentary boundaries, due to report by early 1995, is expected to remove some 20 Labour scats because of popuation shifts.

dominates, has 72 seats while its five million people would control only a few more than 50 seats in southern England.

Russia calls to halt N-test

MOSCOW, Apr 11: The Russian parliament on Friday called on Britain, the United States and China to join a moratorium on nuclear weapons testing after France announced it was halting nuclear tests for this year, re-

congress of people's deputies praised the French decision, announced Wednesday, and noted that Moscow had also suspended nuclear testing under an earlier decision.

On Thursday a Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman Sergei Yastr Zhembski, said Moscow welcomed the French decision with great satisfac-

LONDON, Apr 11: Is Britain

Thursday's national election was the Labour Party's golden chances the Conservatives had sion. Labour had revamped and shifted center and opinion

pulled in 41.9 per cent of the vote to Labour's 34.4 per cent. Next election it will likely

Scotland, where Labour

Britain, US, China

ports AFP.

In a resolution, the

The resolution was addressed to the British, US and Chinese legislatures.

February 1986 when her small intestine was removed. For eight hours every night she takes intravenous feedings manufactured by a Sino-Swedish company in order to live a near-normal life.

When Zhou learned that she was pregnant and insisted on having the child, which weighed two kilograms (about four pounds) at birth, doctors increased her daily feeding, China

Off the Record

US women victim of

gender discrimination

men because of entrenched gender discrimination, the

United States National Committee on Pay Equity (NCPE) said

Releasing poll findings at the US capital, Susan Bianchi-

Sand, executive director of NCPE, said that in 1990 White

women earned only 69 per cents for every dollar earned by

Hispanic women 54 per cents of the White man's dollar, she

entials between men and women amounted to over 240 bil

to determine pay," said Congresswoman Mary Rose Oakar at

large, women remain in the low-paying traditionally female

Woman on intravenous

feeding gives birth

BEIJING: A Shanghai woman who has lived exclusively on

intravenous feedings for six years has given birth to a healthy

The China Daily, quoting doctors, said the birth - by cae

The mother, Zhou Yisi, 33 has eaten no solid food since

sarian section Wednesday at Zhongshan hospital in China's

baby girl, a Chinese newspaper said Friday, reports AFP.

African-American women earned only 62 per cents and

Bianchi-Sand said, in fact, in 1990 alone, the wage differ-

"For decades, employers have been using gender and race

The problem has been exacerbated by the fact that, by and

Friday, reports Xinhua.

lton dollars.

occupations.

today's conference.

biggest city -was a world first.

WASHINGTON: American women were paid far less than

500-yr-old oak tree survives

chain saw attack

MANGOLIA SPRINGS: Spring is bringing signs of recovery to a 500-year-old live oak tree that drew wide attention when someone tried to kill it with a chain saw, reports AP.

New leaves are covering the giantlimbs as the tree enters its second-spring since a 4-inch (10-cm) wide gash was cut through the bark all the way around its 29-foot (10 meter) circumference. New tissue was grafted on to bride the gap so sap could flow.

But the healing process — aided by thousands of tourists and T-shirt sales - is a slow one for the tree, 65 feet (22 meters) tall with limbs spreading 150 feet (50 meters) across.

"I would say there is a chance the tree will survive", said Auburn University forester Bill Goff, who examined the tree about three months ago. However, Goff said, it could take years for the tree to recover.

Stan Foots, a retired Navy captain, helped organize supporters of the tree to raise funds for its protection and to nurse it back to health.

Foote said pieces of smaller trees were grafted onto the tree to provide the bark that carries water and nutrients between roots and leaves.

An irrigation system provides constant watering and the tree is partially enclosed by a greenhouse. A chain-link fence has been erected for security.

The tree was attacked in October 1990 during a dispute over ownership of the site.

Court summons Noriega's wife for shoplifting

MIAMI, Apr 11: Manuel Noriega's wife was arraigned on Friday for allegedly shoplifting buttons, one day after the former Panamanian dictator was convicted of dealing drugs for a Colombian cocaine cartel, reports Reuter.

Felicidad Noriega, who has kept a low profile since the button-theft incident made headlines last month, did not show up for her morning arraignment in a Florida court. A lawyer entered a not-guilty plea on her behalf and for her alleged partner, a friend named Rosa Busto.

Noriega and Busto were arrested and held overnight in a county jail last month after detectives at a department store saw the two women snip a core of buttons of several expensive jackets and walk out of the mall Dade county circuit Judge

Allen Kornblum set trial for June 15, but prosecutors offered the women a plea bargain arrangement, which court officials said is routine for first offenders. "We're offering her a with-

hold of adjudication, PTI (Pretrial Intervention).

to form neutral council WASHINGTON, Apr 11: President George Bush welcomed news Friday of an

Bush welcomes

Mujahideen move

agreement by Afghanistan's warring factions to form an impartial governing council to replace the regime of President Najibullah, reports

"We welcome signs of progress on Afghanistan," said Bush at a news conference.

He said the United States has long supported a political settlement to end 13 years of civil war in Afghanistan, and said he considered the agreement a result of "our sustained support" for Afghan self-determination.

UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali said in Geneva that the parties to the conflict had reached an agreement to form a 15-member council to govern until a transitional regime was in Once the council assumes

power, fighting would end and a general amnesty would be declared. Najibullah said Thursday we

would turn over power to the council.

Sharif urges Mujahideen to bring back peace and many of the western-

ISLAMABAD, Apr 11 Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif urged Afghans on Friday to stand united and seize the opportunity to bring peace back to their country, reports AFP.

Sharif was reacting to UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's announcement in Geneva that all sides in 13year civil war in Afghanistan had agreed to form a transitional council to replace the Soviet-installed government in

Kabul. All the objectives of the heroic Afghan Jihad (holy war)

have been achieved, the Prime Minister said. Alghans, he added, were

ready to turn a new page in their history. On Boutros Ghali's an-

nouncement, Sharif said: "We welcome this development. Pakistan has given sanctuary

to both Afghan war refugees

backed Mujahideen groups that had been fighting to overthrow Najibullah. Sharif said that, as

Najibullah has agreed to resign and make way for the Council, the peace process will soon lead to the establishment of an Islamic interim government. He appealed to all Afghans

to unite and seize the oppor-

tunity for peace. We hope that the historic transition to be materialised

shortly will be smooth and peaceful and bring to an end the great tragedy suffered by the Afghan people, Sharif said in a statement. in Karachi, the news from

Geneva was simflarly welcomed by former Pakistani Prime Minister Mohammad Khan Junejo, whose government had signed first UN sponsored Geneva accords on Afghanistan in 1988.

Gorbachev in Japan

SARAJEVO, Apr 11: A

European Community envoy

has arrived in Bosnia

Herzegovina to try to broker

peace talks after fresh battles

erupted across the newly-in-

Reuter.

country.

dependent state, reports

voy Jose Cutilheiro from

Portugal met Muslim and

Croatian leaders, who support

Serbian minority, who oppose

independence, did not attend

the discussions on Friday

evening but were expected to

The EC-brokered talks on

Bosnia's future arranged before

fighting crupted last week,

took on greater urgency as

new battles involving rival eth-

nic groups and the Serb-led

Yugoslav army flared across the

on Friday for international

Bosnia's leaders appealed

join them at the weekend.

It said members of the

Bosnia's split from Yugoslavia.

Sarajevo television said en-

TOKYO, Apr 11: Former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and his wife, Raisa, arrived in Japan Saturday for private meetings with Japanese leaders, reports AP.

Though not considered a state guest, Gorbachev is scheduled to meet with Emperor Akihito, Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa and other top-level government officials and business leaders during his 11-day stay.

Gorbachev, who one year ago became the first Soviet leader to visit Japan, is here at the invitation of a major media group and a private welcoming committee headed by former Japanese Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone.

He is expected to discuss his views on a longstanding territorial dispute over severa small islands north of Japan that have kept relations between Tokyo and Moscow cool since World War II.



TUNIS: PLO Leader Yasser Arafat (L) and Tunisian President Zine-el-Abidin ben Ali salute the honour guard upon PLO chief's arrival at Tunis airport on Friday. Arafat received a hero's welcome when he arrived back from Libya after surviving a plane crash in the Libyan - AFP/UNB photo.

S Korea welcomes North's Nuclear decision

SEOUL, Apr 11: South Korea, still suspicious of its northern neighbour's Nuclear intentions, today formally welcomed North Korea's decision to open its atomic facilities to international inspection, re-

ports Reuter. "We welcome the fact the north is putting the nuclear safeguards agreement it signed with the IAEA on January 30 into effect," the South's foreign ministry said.

But its brief statement warned communist North Korea to be "sincere" in submitting nuclear data to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Viennafor inspections.

it would "soon" submit details of its nuclear facilities and stocks of nuclear materials to the IAEA and pledged to ensure the inspections go smoothly.

For South Korea and its allies, the first test of the North's sincerity will come when it hand over the list. They are waiting to see if it names the Yongbyon facility, 90 km North of Pyongyan.

North Korea says it has built a research centre at Yongbyon for the purpose of nuclear power generation.

Washington, Seoul, and

ground, political analysts say. IAEA regulations require a

Council but, so far, indications are that North Korea wishes to cooperate," he said. Naming Yongbyon will not completely alleviate concerns

Council if it failed to open all

nuclear facilities to inspection.

"It could go to the Security

that North Korea, like Iraq, may have nuclear facilities hidden away, perhaps underreconciliation.

country to submit a list of all its facilities within 30 days of

North Korea said its parliament ratified the accord on Thursday. Both countries, still techni-

Korean conflict ended, see the nuclear issue as the greatest obstacle to putting a historic reconciliation treaty clinched late last year into practice.

The north calls southern fears "artificial obstacles" and accuses Seoul of whipping them up to block progress on

which it ratifies the safeguards accord. yesterday his agency would take North Korea to the United Nations Security

cally at war 39 years after the

Tokyo suspect it is close to based organisation responsible producing a crude nuclear the last day of the month in North Korea said yesterday bomb there. William Dircks, IAEA Deputy Director General, said