Kidnapped US diplomat freed

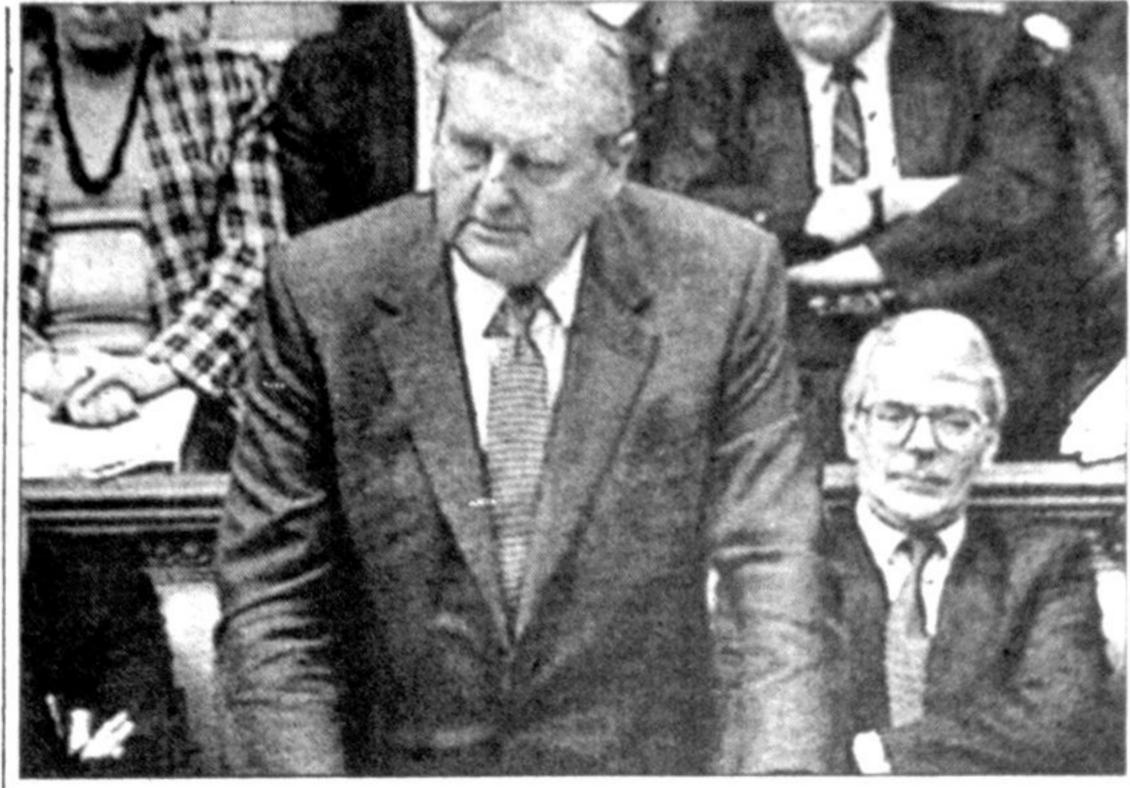
SANAA, Nov 30: Kidnapped US diplomat Haynes Mahoney was released after five days of captivity following the Yemeni government's agreement to respond to his abductors' financial demands, an official source said today.

The source told Reuters that Mahoney. Director of the US Information Service office in Sanaa was released at 10:30 PM (1930 GMT) on Monday but gave no details.

Mahoney was seized by five armed gunmen on Thursday evening in Sanaa. He was driven to the Marib desert area about 120 KM (75 miles) east of the Yemeni capital.

Tribal sources named the chief who ordered the abduction of Mahoney as Mubarak Al-Mashan of the Jahm tribe in the Marib area. Mashan is an exarmy officer and former leader of a pro-iragi political group.

The official source said financial demands made by Mashan and agreed upon by the government included paying a rent for a pumping station.



Ulster Secretary, Sir Patrick Mayhew makes a statement in Parliament on Monday on Ulster and the news which came to light recently about communications between the British - AFP photo government and the IRA.

UK ready for more talks with IRA

LONDON, Nov 30: Britain. forced into revealing secret exchanges with the IRA, appears to have kept the door open for more dialogue with Republican guerrillas in Northern Ireland. reports Reuter.

Britain's peace initiative looked to be back on track after Northern Ireland Secretary Patrick Mayhew rode out a storm of protest on Monday over contacts with the Irish Republican Army.

The line of communication is still open. We are determined to keep trying," a senior British official said.

IRA's political wing Sinn Fein. accused the London government of being inflexible liars.

Gerry Adams, leader of the

But Adams also kept hopes altve: "There could be dialogue today. Let us not wait until January.

Adams said Sinn Fein was prepared to forgive the government and engage in dialogue "

provided honestly replaces the

" I want to see an end to the IRA but that would only come about when the causes and reasons for its existence are removed. It's my task to help do that. I cannot do it on my own. he told Britain's Channel Four News on Monday.

Mayhew, his political future on the line, was forced to show his hand in parliament on Monday after a newspaper revealed details of secret contacts between the IRA and the British government stretching back to February.

Mayhew said the contacts began with a startling message from the IRA after 25 years of fighting the British: "The conflict is over but we need your advice on how to bring it to a

But Adams insisted that Britain initiated the contacts and that Sinn Fein had never said the conflict was over.



Shabana Azmi (L), Indian actress who with Mother Teresa received an international human rights award from French President Francois Mitterrand in 1989, kisses ANC President Nelson Mandela after presenting him with a newsmaker of the year award on behalf of a Cape Town newspaper on - AFP photo Monday.

Miss Poland now PM's secv

WARSAW: The winner of the 1992 Miss Poland crown was

Ewa Wachowicz, 23, who finished third in that years Miss

Wachowicz's candidacy for the post sparked a wave of

Born of farming stock, she worked for seven months as a

Criticised by leaders of Poland's peasants party. Wachowicz

Miss Poland 1992 has always stressed her deep attachment

named Monday as Prime Minister Waldemar Pawlak's new

World contest, was named as 34-year-old Pawlak's secretary in

controversy in political and press circles, and an anguished

debate over her capacity to explain the actions of a fledgling

government brought to power during a difficult transition

journalist and presenter on a private television channel before

received staunch backing from senior Pawlak aide Michal Strak.

to the countryside and that merits particular attention. Strak

Clintons Christmas tree?

music of Barbra Streisand for her Vogue photo shot-but not

enough to go off-the-shoulder with the little black number,

WASHINGTON: "Hillary Rodham Clinton loosened up to the

embarking on an agriculture course at a Warsaw college.

media spokeswoman, the PAP agency said, reports AFP.

charge of Press Relations, the agency added.

sanctions on Australia

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 30: The Malaysian cabinet is to discuss possible sanctions against

meeting Wednesday." Deputy Foreign Minister Abdullah Fadzil Che Wan told AFP, insisting that Keating owned

hathir a "recalcitrant" and said he was sick of hearing about the Malaysian Prime Minister's refusal to attend the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Forum summit in Seattle.

"Mister Keating has to search his own Soul if he wants good relations and he should make attempts to clarify his position." Fadzil said following Keating's refusal Monday to apologise for remarks prompted by Mahathir's decision to stay slights.

The interview was broadcast two days after the Malaysian government imposed an indefinite ban on all Australian radio and television programmes and bilateral cooperation in broadcasting services.

Government members of parliament cancelled a visit to Canberra over the issue and the powerful youth wing of Mahathir's political party, the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO), demanded diplomatic and trade sanctions if Keating did not

Mahathir, expressing disappointment over Keating's remarks, said there would be no

Malaysia may impose | Clinton wants UN to maintain | Off the Record sanctions against Iraq

WASHINGTON, Nov 30: President Clinton said on Monday it was extremely important to maintain current United Nations sanctions against Iraq until it has a track record of compliance on scrapping its weapons-building potential, reports Reuter.

Clinton, in report to Congress on the sanctions, said he believed Iraqi President Saddam Hussein remained committed to rebuilding his weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, despite Iraq's acceptance on Friday of longterm monitoring of its weapons programmes.

Such monitoring, required under the 1991 Gulf War ceasefire agreements, is one of the conditions for the early lifting of an oil embargo that was imposed on Iraq along with other sanctions after its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Clinton said his administration also believed that Saddam is most likely continuing to conceal weapons related activities from the UN.

"It is therefore extremely important that the international community maintain current sanctions and continue its efforts to establish the long-term monitoring regime required by UN Security Council Resolution

"Although Iraq has said that it is ready to comply with that resolution, it still must take significant steps, including the provision of new data about the suppliers of its (weapons of mass destruction) programme." Clinton wrote.

Rolf Ekeus, chairman of the UN Special Commission in charge of scrapping lraq's deadliest weapons, has told lrag that it must establish a clear record of compliance before he can report favourably to the Security Council.

"We strongly support this approach," the President said.

His remarks were contained in a report he must send to congressional leaders every 60 days on efforts to obtain lragi compliance with UN resolutions.

Clinton also faulted Iraq for its continued refusal to sell 1.6 billion dollars in oil, a step authorised by the Security Council. The United Nations would let the proceeds be used to buy food, medicine and supplies for essential civilian needs, subject to UN monitoring of sales and the equitable distribution of humanitarian supplies, inclu 1ing to rebel areas.

Iraqi authorities bear full responsibility for any suffering in iraq that results from their refusal to implement," such oil sales, Clinton said.

Earlier in the day, the US ambassador to the United Nations. Madeleine Albright, told reporters: "We have said the same thing over and over again We're looking for a sustained pattern of compliance by Iraq.

Albright and other permanent members of the Council Britain, France, China and Russia, were briefed by Ekeus

France has said it would agree eventually to lifting the embargo if UNSCOM, as Ekeus's commission is known. deems it had completed its work. China is known to have a similar position. Britain and Russia are more cautious but envoys said they recognised that Iraq's formal acceptance of the long-term monitoring constituted progress.

The Americans are being tougher than anyone else," said one envoy at the Council brief-

"One has to recognise the monitoring was a positive step as we have been asking for it. so let them get on with implementing it," he added. "One cannot always say that whatever the Iraqis do is wrong."

reports AP.

replied.

"You're all dressed up like a

Christmas tree," President

Clinton was quoted as saying

to his wife during the session

for the magazine's December

tree." Hillary is said to have

accompanying the photos

taken by Annie Leibovitz, as

the couple walked away

Hillary pulled the top of the

black velvet evening gown past

her shoulders and said in

mock horror. They wanted me

to wear it like this."

According to a story

"YOU look like a Christmas

Amnesty urges Yangon to end

killings, torture LONDON, Nov 30: Amnesty International, the London-based human rights group, on Monday urged the Myanmar government to end torture and political killings in the country following the presentation of a

damning U.N report, says AFP. The group demanded the release of Nobel Peace Prize laureate Aung San Suu Kyi. founder of the National League for Democracy in Myanmar. who has been under house arrest since July 1989.

"Despite the lifting of some martial law decrees in 1992, severe restrictions on rights to freedom of expression and association, the use of torture. disappearances and political killings are ongoing. Amnesty

the recorded strains of Streisand and posed in the dress and in a turtleneck. The clothes were designed by Donna Karan of New York. Life for him an endless cycle

BEIJING: China's oldest living man, 131-year-old Gong Laifa.

The story says the First lady was tense at first, but relaxed to

credits has exceptional lifespan to clean living, hard work and the benefits of bachelorhood, reports Reuter. Following the same routine for the past 100 years has been the key, the official China daily said on Tuesday in a report on

Gong ... "life for him is a simple and endless cycle." Gong was born in March 1862 and until recently worked 11 hours a day in his rice fields in southern Guizhou province, it

"He has remained single and has never drunk alcohol or

taken any medicine, the newspaper said. He eats two meals of rice and corn every day and is in bed by 8.30 pm.

Decades of nude games

GOLETA: At least 34 boys were sexually abused by a dozen Roman Catholic priests during decades of nude games, fondling and sex acts at a now-closed seminary, a panel organised by the Franciscan order concluded Monday, reports AP.

"The abuse perpetrated by our own brothers on the victims and their families is truly horrific," said Joseph P Chinnici. provincial minister of the Oakland-based Province of St. Barbara and leader of Franciscans in seven Western states.

"We totally abhor what has occurred," Chinnici said. An independent panel was set up in January by the St. Barbara Province of the Franciscan Order to examine molestations from 1964 to 1987 at St. Anthony's Seminary, which operated a high school boarding school for aspiring

priests in Santa Barbara County. The seminary opened in 1898 and closed because of financial

problems in 1987. The friars were involved in a variety of offences, including nude games, nude photographs, fondling, masturbation, oral copulation and examination of genitals under the guise of hernia exams, the panel's 72-page report said.

The youths ranged in age from 7 to 16. Of the 12 priests, whose names weren't disclosed, eight are

being treated by therapists, one left the order, one died, and another's case with the board is still open.

Australia as the government insisted today that Prime Minister Paul Keating apologise for critical remarks against Malaysian leader Mahathir Mohammad, reports AFP. The cabinet will definitely discuss the issue at its weekly

Malaysia an apology. Keating last week called Ma-

1973 Arab-Israeli war.

captured the activists.

IRNA reports from London.

Arabic peninsular republic.

yesterday, AFP reports from Bangkok.

away from the APEC summit.

In a televised interview with the Australian Broad casting corp, Keating hinted that official demands for an apology were based on "feigned indignation" and suggested that Kuala Lumpur owed "multiple" apologies to Australia for unspecified

apologies.

official protest.

REF

SC extends UNDOF's term: The

Security Council unanimously approved on Monday a six-month renewal, until May 31, 1994, of a force which keeps

(UNDOF), which for the past 19 years has served as a buffer

Austria, Canada, Finland and Poland, was established to

monitor a troop disengagement agreement that followed the

Benazir goes to Iran Dec 8:

Pakistan Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto will pay an official

three-day visit to Iran from December 8, Iran's IRNA news

Muslim issues including the civil war in Bosnia-Herzegovina

with President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and other officials, it

Israel captures 3 PLO men: Israel

captured three activists loyal to PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat in

the occupied Gaza Strip, raising the specter of continued unrest

ahead of the December 13 date for the start of an Israeli

refugee camp clashed flercely with soldiers on Monday as troops

withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and Jericho on December 13 as

agreed. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has said Israel might

BA resumes flight to Aden: British

Airways (BA) has resumed flights to Aden almost 25 years after

the proclamation of the People's Republic of Southern Yeman,

Twice-weekly non-stop flights started last week to the former

capital of South Yemen from London's Gatwick Airport. The

flight then goes to Sana'a, the capital of the recently reunited

Rains claim 6 in Thailand: Six

people were killed and at least 25 were reported missing as

storms and heavy rains hit Southern Thailand, officials said

coastal provinces, according to the meteorological department.

Local newspapers reported flooding in two additional provinces.

the six deaths, told reporters he would be travelling soon to

Rainfall since Saturday has caused flooding in at least three

Interior Minister Chaowalit Yongchaiyudh, who confirmed

AIDS Day.

delay the pullout due to violence in the occupied territories.

Palestinian and Israeli sources said residents of Gaza's Rafah

Arafat warned of unrest if Israel failed to begin its troop

Bhutto would discuss trade and bilateral ties as well as

agency said yesterday. Reuter reports from Nicosia.

withdrawal. Reuter reports from Jerusalem.

between the Syrian and Israeli armies on the Golan heights.

The Council extended he Disengagement Observer Force

The 1,115-member force, comprising contingents from

peace between Syria and Israel, Reuter reports from UN.

Escobar's family returns to Bogota amid tight security

BOGOTA, Nov 30 : Cocaine King Pablo Escobar's wife and two children returned to Colombia on Monday after their bid to seek refuge in Germany from underworld enemies failed

reports Reuter. A Lufthansa airlines plane carrying the family touched down at Bogota Airport amid heavy security early on Monday evening. The family's immediate destination was unclear but they were expected to continue to their home city of Medellin on a domestic flight.

Fugitive Medell in cartel boss Escobar and his family are living in fear of the Pepes,a shadow paramilitary group financed by rival drug traffickers

and dedicated to wiping out the Escobar clan. The group has murdered dozens of Escobar associates and blown up family

Hours before the aircraft arrived, Escobar's mother Ermilda Gaviria issued a statement pleading with the government to respect what she claimed were the trampled human rights of her family. Escobar's brother. Roberto, filed a lawsuit to try to force the government to protect the Escobars.

Colombia's Interior Minister Fablio Villegas said in a lunchtime television interview that the government would protect Escobar's wife and children after they returned but both the

the security police said they would not participate. Meanwhile, Bogota's German community has asked

prosecutor general's office and

Colombia's government for protection, fearing reprisals from the drug lord after Germany refused to admit his family. A tank and heavily armed

police were outside the German embassy in Bogota and Bonn's Foreign Ministry warned Germans living in Colombia to be careful. Escobar sent a recorded

message, addressed to Germany's ambassador to Colombia, which was also aired on a Medellin radio station that said in part.

UN honour guards carry a US soldier's remains Tuesday from northern to southern Panmunjom,

the border truce village straddling the last front line of the Cold War. - AFP photo

DPRK returns remains of 33 US soldiers

PANMUNJOM, Korea, Nov 30: In an apparent peace gesture. North Korea handed over to the United States Tuesday what it said were the remains of 33 American soldiers killed in the 1950-53 Korean War, reports AP.

But in a conflicting move. the North also denounced the United States for trying to stifle its Communist leadership and threatened to nullify its earlier decision to stay in an international nuclear controls treaty. The United States, closely

allied with pro-Western South Korea, has no formal ties with the Communist North. Tuesday's transfer of re-

mains would be the largest since the end of the Korean

Fiji Parliament to be dissolved in January

inspect the inundated region.

SUVA, Fiji, Nov 30: Parliament will be dissolved in January and elections held in March, acting head of state Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara said

Tuesday, reports AP. Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka, a former army commander and coup leader, called for the election Monday after a majority of lawmakers rejected his government's annual bud-

Acting President Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara described the rejection of the budget as "a sign of no confidence in the government."

Fiji's constitution gives the head of state final say on whether an early election is

Clinton forms Task Force to speed discovery of AIDS drug WASHINGTON, Nov 30: The federal health officials and AIDS scientists.

Clinton administration is recruiting top AIDS experts from Dr. Philip R. Lee, Assistant government, industry and Secretary for Health and head academia for a new effort to of the Public Health Service. speed the discovery of drugs to was named to chair the 15stop the epidemic that is killing member panel, which will in-92 Americans daily, reports AP. clude members from AIDS-af-"It is time to refocus and refected communities as well as energise our best minds for a researchers. Shalala will select

concerted attack on this killer." the 14 others later. Health and Human Services Gebbie, who oversees the fed-Secretary Donna Shalala said eral efforts on AIDS research. Tuesday in announcing a care and prevention, worked National Task Force on AIDS with HHS officials on plans for Drug Development. the task force, but it will report The Health Secretary unto Shalala.

veiled the initiative at the This represents unprece-National Institute of Health in dented high-level collaboration Bethesda, on the eve of World among leaders in the field." Shalala said in prepared re-Joining her were Kirstine M marks.

Gebbie, the national AIDS pol-The task force will have "a icy coordinator, along with top clear and critical mission: to

identify and remove any barriers or obstacles to developing effective treatment," said the

Health Secretary. The announcement drew praise from advocates for AIDS patients.

"It's really significant," said Derek Hodel, treatment issues director for the AIDS Action Council. "It represents a level of commitment that we haven't seen yet from the federal government .

"It's absolutely a step in the right direction," said Marj Plumb, health policy director for the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. But she expressed some concern the Clinton administration may be taking a piecemeal approach to the AIDS crisis.

AIDS is the killer of

American men aged 25 to 44 and the eighth-biggest killer overall.

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates 1 million to 1.5 million Americans have been infected by the virus that causes AIDS. Some 339,250 Americans have gotten full-blown AIDS and 60 per cent- 204,390- had

died as of September 30. Only three antiviral drugs have been approved for patients with the human immunodeficlency virus: AZT, DDI and ddC. None can stop the disease from following its fatal course. Other compounds, including d4T and CD4, are undergoing clinical

The Clinton administration and Congress this year boosted

trials.

the AIDS research budget at NIH by 21 per cent to 1.3 billion

"But the sad fact remains that not a single new drug application for an antiretroviral drug is currently before the Food and Drug Administration." Shalala said.

Some other drugs are prescribed to fight the opportunistic infections that commonly strike AIDS patients, including ganciclovir and foscarnet to prevent blindness and aerosol pentamidine to prevent pneumocystis carinii pneumoia, the most common fatal AIDS infec-

The virus is usually spread through contact with blood or with semen from infected people. Most victims have been homosexuals or intravenous

drug abusers, but heterosexuals can also be infected. Pregnant women have passed the virus to their offspring.

Lee is a former Professor at the university of California, San Francisco. He also was president of San Francisco's health commission and chair of the policy committee at the American Foundation for AIDS Research.

"Despite the advances that have been made, it is a fact that no cure has been found and the treatments available are limited in their effect," Lee said in a statement. " We can and must do better.

Shalala is seeking nominations from the public for 30 days on who should serve on the task force.

Iraq-Kuwait border calm

BAGHDAD, Nov 30: The lrag-Kuwait border is calm with no significant clashes reported since Iraqi demonstrators erossed into Kuwait two weeks ago, the U.N mission observing the ceasefire between iraq and Kuwait said on Monday, reports

"The situation is calm at the moment, we have not had any major incidents," a spokesman for the U.N Iraq-Kuwait observer Mission (UNIKOM) told Reuters by telephone from the demilitarised zone.

A Kuwaiti officer was quoted in a published interview in Kuwait on Monday as saying there were almost nightly clashes on the border.