Kesri blames BJP for horse-trading in UP

GOHANA, Haryana, Oct 27: Congress president Sitaram Kesri on Sunday charged the BJP with giving a new dimension to the politics of defection by indulging in large-scale horse-trading in Uttar Pradesh, reports PTI.

Addressing a party rally organised by the Haryana Pradesh Congress Committee here, Kesri came down heavily on BJP leadership for betrayal of its commitment that they would not indulge in horsetrading when Kalyan Singh took over as chief minister of UP.

Despite a clear assurance by BJP president LK Advani and leader of the opposition, AB Vajpayee, the party enacted a drama of defection in UP, Kesri alleged.

He claimed that votes of even those MLAs, who did not vote in favour of the confidence motion in UP assembly were counted.

He said when the BSP leaders raised the issue of changing the Speaker simultaneously with that of the chief minister. Advani, Vajpayee and Murli Monohar Joshi had given a categorical assurance that their party would not indulge in horse-trading.

BJP keeps all options open in Gujarat

Meanwhile, the BJP is keeping all options open in Gujarat and would take steps to see that the RJP-Congress ministry is not formed in the state when the Vaghela government faces a confidence vote, party spokesperson Sushma Swaraj has said.

Mrs Swaraj told PTI here today that the party president, LK Advani, had held discussions with the state unit leaders, including Suresh Mehta, on measures to be taken by the party in the assembly.

The state leaders were of the view that the BJP should stake its claim for the formation of the government if the Vaghela ministry fell, she said.

The BJP leadership, however, felt that the only way out of the prevailing situation in the state was to go in for a midterm poll because of the unstable situation in the state. Mrs Swaraj said.

Leaders turn down 3 nations' bid to join C'wealth

ST ANDREWS, Scotland, Oct 27: Commonwealth leaders on Saturday turned down bids from Yemen, Rwanda and Palestine to join the 54-nation group but said that they would be reviewed at a later date, reports AFP.

British officials said: "There certainly was a feeling that Yemen and Rwanda do not meet the criteria and Palestine is not in a position to make an application.

However, a British govern-ment spokesman stressed that the bids would be reviewed at a later date.

There was a consensus the leaders "did not went to reject any of these applications," said a Commonwealth spokesman.

The Palestinian National Authority was turned down because it was not yet a full state. the officials said.

Rwanda has no formal link with the Commonwealth which is an association of nations mainly made up of Britain and its former colonies. It is a former Belgian colony where a 1994 genocidal civil war killed between 500,000 and 800,000 people.

Taliban commander defects to United Islamic Front

DUBAI, Oct 27: Taliban commander in the besieged province of Kunduz defected to the United Islamic Front fighting for liberating Kabul, the Iranian news agency IRNA said, reports PTI.

Commander Amir Gholam together with his brother Besmellah, father-in-law Ali Mohammad and a guard fled Kunduz and joined Ahmad Shah Masood's force, the agency said quoting sources close to Tal-

Meanwhile, sources in the United Islamic Front told IRNA that commander Gholam and 200 of his men defected Taliban and joined the front. According to Taliban

sources, Kunduz province is under full control of Taliban and Gholam's defection will not alter the military situation in the region.

Kunduz is the sole province in northern Afghanistan still under the control of fundamentalist Taliban.

Ruling party loses in Argentina polls

BUENOS AIRES, Oct 27: Argentina's ruling Peronist Party suffered its first election defeat in 10 years on Sunday at the hands of a new opposition coalition that reaped votes of protest against its record on jobs and corruption, reports Reuter.

President Carlos Menem's government conceded defeat in the legislative vote after nationwide television exit polls give it 35 per cent of the vote against 51 per cent for parties

forming the centre-left alliance. Early official results confirmed that trend, with 33 per cent of votes counted, the alliance partners were ahead by

48 per cent to 35 per cent. The government looked set to lose its majority in the lower house of congress, where half of the seats were at stake, and would be forced to seek the support of small provincial parties to get legislation passed. It will still control the Senate. which was not up for election.

Arafat in Cairo ME peace talks

going nowhere CAIRO, Oct 27: Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat told the

Egyptian and Yemeni presidents Sunday that Middle East peace talks were "going nowhere", reports AP.

Arafat stopped in Cairo on his way to Gaza after visiting France and Germany, where he sought increased European support for the peace talks.

"President Arafat basically talked about the crisis in the peace process, which he described as going nowhere, Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Moussa told reporters after Arafat met with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and visiting Yemeni President Ali Abdellah Saleh.

Moussa said Arafat feels there is "a chronic crisis" in the peace process.

US-brokered talks between the Palestinians and Israel resumed this month after a seven-month suspension.

C'wealth leaders won't soften line on Nigeria

ST ANDREWS, Scotland, Oct 27: Commonwealth leaders said on Sunday they would not soften their line on Nigeria, but differed over how best to prod it into improving human rights.

reports Reuter. During two hours of informal talks in the Scottish coastal town of St Andrews, leaders rejected a proposal from South African President Nelson Mandela to send a new ministerial team to Nigeria to press for the release of political prisoners.

On Saturday the Commonwealth extended Nigeria's suspension from the 54-nation grouping and threatened it with expulsion unless military leader General Sani Abacha stuck to his timetable for the restoration of democracy. The sun shone down on the

luxurious old course hotel at St Andrews, the home to golf, as Mandela urged his fellow leaders to find more ways to exert pressure on Nigeria.

"One of the proposals was that another team of ministers

should go out to Nigeria and see what could be done. But I don't think that idea really took off," a British official told reporters.

The decision to suspend Nigeria and threaten it with a series of tough sanctions was contained in a report by a special Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) which visited Nigeria last year.

"There was unanimous agreement that we have to keep up the pressure for change there," British Prime Minister Tony Blair told reporters.

Blair has been trying to make the Commonwealth more relevant to the modern world by focusing its attention on boosting economic ties. But despite his best efforts. Nigeria has dominated proceedings at the group's biennial summit.

Mandela is said to be particularly worried about Olusegun Obasanjo, a former military ruler who handed the reins of power back to a civilian government in 1978, and Moshood Abiola, presumed winner of presidential elections in June

Obasanjo was jailed in 1995 for allegedly trying to mount a coup, while Abiola was imprisoned in 1994 for proclaiming himself president after the elections were annulled.

British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook denied the Commonwealth had given into Nigeria by deciding not to impose immediate tough sanctions.

"Nigeria is to all intents and purposes outside the Commonwealth and if will stay there until we have a democratic government to deal with." Cook told BBC Television.

Despite the criticism levelled at the Commonwealth, whose members are mostly former British colonies, there is still to shortage of applicants to join.

the group's 1991 summit which commits Commonwealth nations to democracy, the rule of law and respect for human

"Harare principles" drawn up at

China can help build bridges between India, Pakistan: Clinton

WASHINGTON, Oct 27: US President Bill Clinton declared here that China can be a catalyst in healing the estrangement between India and Pakistan and in the process improve its own relations with New Delhi and Islamabad, reports India Abroad News Service.

In his first-ever foreign policy speech devoted exclusively to US-China relations, setting the stage for his summit with Chinese President Jiang Zemin, Clinton said, "As a neighbour of India and Pakistan, China will influence whether these great democracies move toward responsible cooperation, both with each other and with

He said that from "the Persian Gulf to the Caspian Sea. China's need for a reliable and efficient supply of energy to fuel its growth can make it a force of stability in these strategically critical regions."

The two leaders would "Discuss our vision of the future and the kind of strategic rela-

tionship we must have to promote cooperation, not conflict, Clinton said.

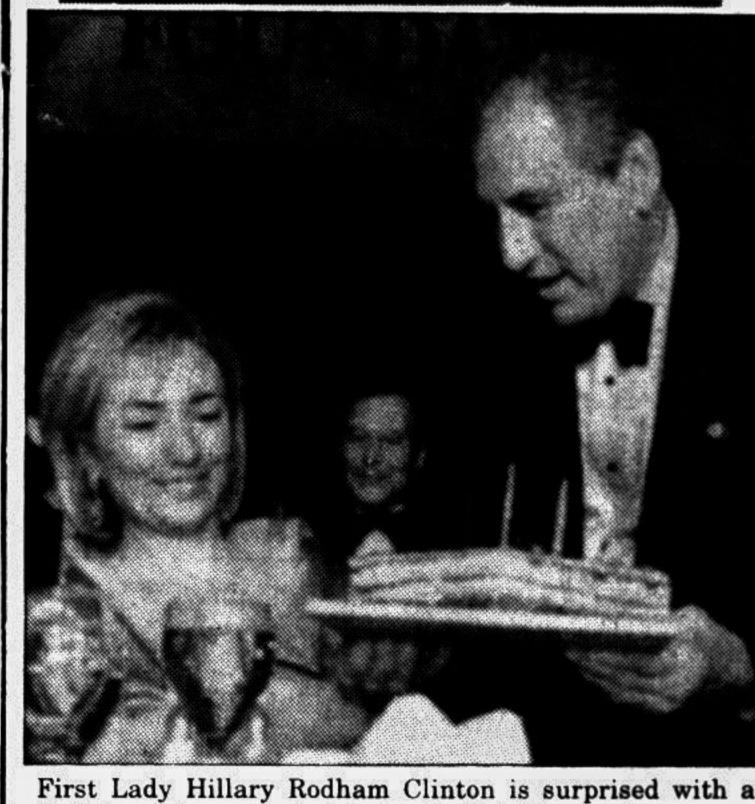
He said, "Territorial disputes that could flare into crises affecting America require us to

curity presence in Asia." In his speech delivered at the Voice of America under the aegis of the Asia Society and the U.S.-China Education Foundation. Clinton said. "We want China to be a powerful force for security and cooperation" in

maintain a strong American se-

The President, who five years ago as candidate Clinton accused then President George Bush of "coddling China's dictators" and pandering to an authoritarian regime, said Friday that during his meeting with Jiang, "We'll look at ways to strengthen our military-tomilitary contacts, decreasing the chances of miscalculation and broadening America's contacts with the next generation of China's military leaders."

BRUTTLY



birthday cake presented to her by hotel banquet manager George Pulles while attending the National Italian American Foundation dinner in Washington, Saturday. Mrs Clinton marked her 50th birthday muetly Sunday, ensconced at home with her husband and daughter after a surprise party that had her dancing until the wee hours of the morning. - AP/UNB photo

Surinam coup bid foiled: The Surinamese government said on Sunday it had foiled a coup attempt on Saturday night, attacking and capturing a group of plotters in an hour-long gunfight in the capital Paramaribo,

Reuters reports from Paramaribo. "We managed to frustrate the attempt and arrested 13," President Jules Widenbosch told a news conference on Sunday. adding that there were no casualties in the fighting. Residents of the former Dutch colony in South America said the attacks began at 0130 GMT on Saturday and they had believed the heavy shooting to be an anti-drug raid.

4 Colombian rebels killed: Clashes between Colombian troops and leftist rebels who have pledged to disrupt local and municipal elections Sunday left four guerillas dead and four soldiers wounded, officials said, AFP

reports from Bogota. But the "day was very peaceful," according to General Manuel Bonett, commander in chief of Colombia's armed forces. who said the violence had not affected the vote. There were armed clashes in four provinces. Guerillas bombed five electrical towers and attacked ambulances on several highways.

Mandela to visit Libya again: President Nelson Mandela plans to visit Libya again on Wednesday on his way back to South Africa from the Commonwealth meeting in Scotland, a foreign affairs spokesman said Sunday, AP reports from Johannesburg.

"President Mandela's visit on 29 October will be a very brief visit touching on matters arising out of his recent visit there,' spokesman Tony Trew said in a statement. The South African president visited Libya just before going to the summit of the 54-nation Commonwealth that groups Britain and its former colonies.

Israel to free 27 Palestinians: Israel was to free 27 Palestinian prisoners yesterday as part of a deal reached with Jordan last month to obtain the release of Israeli agents caught trying to assassinate a Palestinian leader in Amman, Israeli radios reported. AFP says from Jerusalem.

The army and public radio networks said the 27 Palestinians would be brought from various prisons to an air force base late yesterday before being released.

ROK test fires missile: South Korea yesterday test-fired a short-range surface-to-air missile (SAM) in what defence officials touted as a "landmark event" in the country's bumpy history of independent missile development. AFP reports from Seoul.

"The missile was successfully test-fired," a Defence Ministry spokesman told AFP. Defence Minister Kim Dong-jin and top military officials attended the ceremony at an unidentified shooting range on the West Coast, he said.

Lankan govt keeps option open for talks with LTTE

WW II Sino-US ties

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka, Oct 27 : Sri Lanka's government said Monday that it will not ban the top Tamil rebel group because it wants to keep open any possibility of a peaceful end to

the civil war, reports AP. "It is important for the Sri Lankan government to keep a door ajar for possible negotiations at a future date," Justice Minister Lakshman Peiris told reporters.

Banning the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) would prevent government officials from having any contact with the rebels. it would also make it a crime for anyone to join the guerilla group.

At present, hundreds of Tamils are detained every month by government troops on suspicion of being linked with the LTTE, but most are released within days or weeks, because belonging to the group is not il-

HONOLULU, Oct 27 Chinese

President Jiang Zemin evoked

Second World War images of al-

lies China and the Untied

States working together as he

began a state visit to repair a

tattered relationship while po-

lice kept demonstrators from

crossing his path, reports

Williamsburg, Virginia, today

before travelling on to Wash-

ington tomorrow and a state

dinner and summit talks with

sions have not yet begun, Jiang

has already, with a few short

statements, set the stage for

what he hopes to accomplish —

a relationship with the United

States that puts to rest the bit-

terness caused by the 1989

crackdown on pro-democracy

demonstrators in Tiananmen

state to visit the United States

in 12 years, he started his visit

Out of the gaze of cameras

MANILA. Oct 27: A US lobby

group today called for the cre-

ation of a fund to speed up the

search for an AIDS vaccine, re-

Washington-based Interna-

tional Aids Vaccine Initiative

told an AIDS conference here

the world needed a "push strat-

egy to try to get financial re-

based Institute for Interna-

tional Vaccine Development,

told the meeting that even if the

west finally developed a vac-

cine, it could still take five

Y Lou, director of the US-

Margaret Johnston of the

mixing pleasure and business.

and journalists, he went for a

swim on Hawaii's famed

Waikiki Beach and at an offi-

As the first Chinese head of

Square.

ports AFP.

sources".

But while the serious discus-

US President Bill Clinton.

Jiang heads for colonial

Earlier this month, the United States listed the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) among 30 terrorist groups worldwide. The ban prevents the LTTE from raising

funds in America and its mem-

bers from entering that country. Since then, pressure has been mounting on the government to ban the group, which has been fighting for 14 years to set up a homeland in the northeast of the Indian Ocean island for minority Tamils. More than 50,000 people have been killed

"We are waging war against the LTTE, which is a stronger move than just banning it," Peiris said.

The Sri Lankan government has repeatedly said that it will only talk to the Tigers if they law down their weapons.

defall luncheon, he danced the

hida with 100 schoolchildren

something no one could picture

predecessors Mao Zedong or

of the USS Arizona, one of eight

battleships sunk during the

Japanese attack on Pearl Har-

bour, and said the visit re-

minded him of the close ties

that existed between the United

States and China during the

war, a cooperation he indicated

given by the Mayor of Honolulu,

Jiang said, "in that war which

brought untold suffering to

mankind, the Chinese and

American peoples once fought

shoulder to shoulder against

the United States share broad

common interest ... on impor-

tant matters which bear on

peace and development of

mankind. I am confident that

through the joint effort of the

two sides, the friendship and

mutually beneficial coopera-

tion between China and the

United States will develop fur-

Fund for AIDs vaccine urged

years to become widely avail-

able in the Asia-Pacific, where

infections are forecast by the

UN to double to at least 14 mil-

ation of a fund from where de-

veloping nations can borrow so

that they can "purchase" the

AIDS vaccine once it has been

the private sector is stifling

medical research for a vaccine

against human immunodefi-

ciency virus (HIV) which causes

the acquired immune deficiency

"It's a very unfavourable

Lou said scant support from

Johnston suggested the cre-

lion cases by 2000.

syndrome (AIDS).

developed.

"In today's world, China and

In remarks at a luncheon

He visited the watery grave

Deng Xiaoping doing.

needed to be revived.

fascist aggression.

ther."

Arrives in Honolulu Israeli planes Jiang hopeful of reviving

MARJAYOUN, Lebanon, Oc 27: Israeli warplanes fired missiles at two suspected guerilla bases in Lebanon, the third at tack in less than 24 hours

reports AP. The jets raided an Iranianbacked Hezbollah base near the village of Louayzeh in south Lebanon. An Israeli-allied Lebanese militiaman was seri-

the officials. The air strike followed an ambush of an Israeli patrol in the village of Sojod. The officials said two Israeli soldiers were wounded in the attack, but the Israeli army reported no in-

The Israeli army confirmed the air raid, saying the "pilots reported exact hits on targets" and that all planes returned safely to base.

fired four missiles at a base belonging to the radical Palesfor the Liberation of Palestine-General Command, near the ported.

ROK, US begin wargames

SEOUL, Oct 27: The United States and South Korea began their largest joint military exercise of the year Monday despite protests from North Korea, reports AP.

The annual two-week field training exercise, called Foal Eagle, began with most of the 650,000 South Korean troops and 37,000 US soldiers sta tioned here participating.
US and South Korean mili-

tary officials defended the exercise, the 36th since 1961, as defensive, but North Korea called it an offensive manoeuvre to prepare for war against it. The Foal Eagle maneuver is

fraught with unprecedented danger." North Korea's Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of the Fatherland, said in a statement issued over the weekend.

"In view of its size and char acter, the manoeuvre is a war exercise for a pre-emptive at tack on the northern half of Korea," said the committee, which handles Pyongyang's anti-Seoul

raid 2 guerilla bases in Lebanon

Lebanese security officials said

ously injured in the attack, said

juries.

Also Sunday, Israeli jets

tinian group, the Popular Front town of Naameh. 10 miles (15 kilometres) south of Beirut, state-run Lebanon Radio re-

Off the Record



their Halloween costumes Sunday evening, at the Vice President's residence in Washington. The Gores were dressed up for their Halloween party. — AP/UNB photo

1,600-yr-old roadway found TAIYUAN: The traces of a 1,600-year-old roadway built along a rock face on China's Yellow River in Shanxi province,

were discovered recently, reports Xinhua. Archaeologists say that stretch of the Yellow River has long been a difficult one and in ancient times, when boats were going upstream, they had to be pulled by people on the bank. The roadway was built for that.

The roadway is about 5,000 m long and 1.2 to two metres wide, but was eroded in parts, over the centuries. Most of it was built about halfway up the rock face. Archaeologists say, however, that inscriptions from the eastern Han dynasty (25-220 AD) and the Tang dynasty (618-907 AD) can still be made out. About 40 inscriptions and some ancient coins and iron nails were found along it.

Findings suggest that it was used from the eastern Han to the Qing dynasty (1644-1911), but a large part of the construction work seems to have been organised by the eastern Han and Tang governments, according to the inscriptions.

'Black Christ' returns home after 30 years in exile

CAPE TOWN: The 'Black Christ', a painting banned by South African censors in the 1960s that became a symbol of the antiapartheid movement, has returned home after over 30 years in exile, reports Reuter.

The work, which was lost after being smuggled to Britain. was unveiled in Cape Town's St George's Cathedral on Sunday. "This painting is an icon of our lord's continuing suffering in the toils and sorrows of creation in this age," Rowan Smith, the

cathedral's dean, told the congregation. The painting by Cape Town artist Ronald Harrison, now 59, depicts Nobel Prize-winner and former African National Congress (ANC) leader Chief Albert Luthuli as a crucified Christ at the hands of two of apartheid's most infamous leaders - then Prime Minister Hendrik Verwoerd and Justice Minister John

Vorster. Harrison was driven to paint the work in 1962 after the Sharpeville massacre of 1960, when police killed 69 black demonstrators. It was immediately banned and smuggled to Britain, where it caused a sensation when it was hung in the

crypt of St Paul's Cathedral in London. The painting went missing in the late 1960s after it was taken on a tour of Britain to raise funds for the anti-apartheid

It turned up only this summer in the London basement of 90year-old Julius Baker, an exiled South African, after a British newspaper ran a story bemoaning its disappearance.

Housemaids given one month to legalise stay in

Saudi Arabia DUBAI, Oct 27: Saudi Arabia gave housemaids working in the oil-rich kingdom without proper permits one month to legalise their stay or leave, official Saudi Television said on Sunday, reports Reuter.

The interior ministry gave housemaids who are not carrying residency a month to obtain a residency licence for those who want to work, the television

It said the decision was effective from Oct 18. The television said licences would be issued only to those

carrying a valid passport and after medical examination. Foreign workers - mostly from India, South-east Asia and from poorer Arab countries make up one-third of the country's 18 million population.

Shadow of Tiananmen massacre haunts Clinton-Jiang summit WASHINGTON, Oct 27: Eight years after the Tiananmen Square massacre chilled relations, the United States and China are on the verge of a

historic reconciliation, reports To the dismay of critics of the right and the left, the new era begins Wednesday as President Bill Clinton welcomes Chinese President Jiang Zemin to the White House with pomp and pageantry that mask the strains

of the past.

Jiang, who likes to impress Americans by reciting Lincoln's Gettysburg Address and singing "Yankee Doodle," is the first Chinese leader on a state visit to Washington in 12 years. Born into a family of intellectuals and trained as an electrical engineer, the 71-year-old Jiang was Deng Xiaoping's chosen successor.

"The most fundamental importance of this trip is the sym-

bolism of establishing an amicable relationship between the two countries," said Michael Swaine of the Rand Corp's Centre for Asia-Pacific Policy in Santa Monica, California. "Recent polls have indicated the American public tends to view China as a concern or threat fairly high up on their list, higher than Russia."

Douglas Paal, president of Washington's Asia Pacific Policy Centre, said, "Jiang is going to work hard to convey a folksy image. He has asked his advisers to give him softer speeches that have a relaxed style, give him a more human image in the minds of the American people."

He seems eager to make a good impression and solidify his standing as the newly-elected head of the Chinese Communist Party. He tells interviewers that China and the United States share responsibility for world

peace and stability and should improve relations. Clinton once seemed an un-

likely champion of closer ties with China. He accused President George Bush in the 1992 campaign of coddling China and came to the White House promising be tough on Beijing until it improves its humanrights record. When that didn't work, Clinton made an aboutface, the first of his any reversals on China. Acknowledging that many

differences still separate the two nations, Clinton has concluded it is a grave mistake to try to punish or isolate the world's most populous country, whose economy is expected to surpass the United States as the world's largest early next century. In a scene-setting speech. Clinton extended an open hand

to Jiang. He told critics the get-

tough approach advocated by

many would be "unworkable. counter productive and potentially dangerous." At the same time, Clinton promised the United States would continue to stand up for human rights and speak out about their abuse.

On Sunday, his Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, reiterated that. "We have never minced words about how we feel on their human rights record," she said on NBC tele-

China's crackdown with infantry and tanks on democracy protestors in Tiananmen Square in 1989 threw US-China relations into a tailspin. The United States banned official exchanges on political, military and strategic issues at the Cabinet and sub-Cabinet levels. The framework of dialogue between the two countries collapsed.

Jiang, then Shanghai's

businesses look for profits," Lou said, noting that vaccines for other diseases were successfully developed in 10 years.

business climate. Let's face it.

Between two million and 70 million dollars have been spent on the search for an antidote to HIV and AIDS since the mid-1980s but no vaccine has yet reached the phase where it can be tested safely on a large group of humans.

"The only way to find out is from human trials" once the vaccine is found to be safe. Lou told the 4th International AIDS Congress here.

mayor, was brought to Beijing

in the midst of the protracted

Tiananmen demonstrations.

Deng named him general secre-

tary of the Communist Party.

beginning Jiang's rise to power.

Relations with the United States

soured even more when Clinton

allowed Taiwan's first popularly

cans viewed China as a boom-

forms. Afterward, it was seen as

repressive, hostile to democ-

about China, but the Clinton

turn the page on the bloody

past and build a new dialogue.

administration has decided to

The public remains skeptical

"Tiananmen is something

Taiwan's independence.

the Chinese are going to have to come to grips with in their own way of thinking ..., so I don't think it's something one can ignore," said Sandy Berger, the president's national security adviser. "Neither do I think that we should freeze the relation-

elected president to visit the Jiang will get the full dose of United States. China saw the diplomatic honours. He will be visit as part of a campaign for welcomed with a 21-gun salute on the South Lawn, pose for pictures with Clinton in the Tiananmen had a huge im-Oval Office, join the president pact on American public opinat a news conference and exion. Before the shooting, Americhange toasts at an elegant state dinner. ing country with market-led re-

ship in time."

The two leaders' talks are planned to run just 90 minutes - and translations will cut that time in half. Whatever agreements may be announced, the real significance will be the simple fact that Clinton and Jiang met to end the US-China estrangement.

ask London to recall envoy' NEW DELHI, Oct 27: Prime

'Delhi didn't

Minister IK Guiral today described as 'deliberate disinformation' a British newspaper report claiming that Indian officials had asked the British government to recall its high commissioner in New Delhi, Sir David Gore-Booth, reports PTI. "It is deliberate disinforma-

tion ... I will not like to comment any more on it," Gujral told reporters on his return from Edinburgh after attending the Commonwealth heads of government (CHOGM) summit When it was pointed out to the prime minister that this was

being attributed to a senior In-

dian official, Gujral said, "You

ask that Indian official." The British envoy, who car ried the newspaper which published the report, was seen

showing it to ministers