

Iraq resolute to expel US arms inspectors

BAGHDAD, Nov 13: Iraq remained adamant Wednesday about throwing American weapons inspectors out of the country despite a unanimous UN Security Council vote condemning the move and tightening sanctions, reports AP.

Deputy Vice President Tariq Aziz said in New York that Baghdad would not rescind its order giving the six Americans in the country a week to leave.

"Iraq will continue to explain its just case, and this resolution will not scare it," Aziz said after the vote.

State-run Iraq television quoted Aziz as saying Iraqis would defend their rights "with all the legitimate means they deem fit." The announcer did not elaborate.

Earlier, Iraq's foreign minister, Mohammed Sa'ed al-Sahhaf, said in Baghdad that the expulsions would be carried out.

"Whether it is this day or that day, that is a detail," he told reporters.

Al-Sahhaf also said US mili-

itary flights over Iraq had doubled since the crisis began and charged that the Americans "are trying to push the region to a crisis."

He warned that Iraq would respond, saying: "Whenever we see it proper to shoot them, we will shoot them."

In Washington, presidential spokesman Mike McCurry said expelling the Americans "would be a very serious breach of Iraq's obligation to the international community."

He added: "Any sign that they are not ready to comply will be read for what it is... an act of defiance and an act that requires further measures."

He refused to elaborate, but the United States has said repeatedly it has not ruled out military action to punish Iraq.

The Russian ambassador to the United Nations, Sergey Lavrov, warned against force.

"We are convinced that any complication with Iraq be resolved exclusively by political means," he said.

Another AP report adds: In a unanimous vote, the UN Security Council condemned Iraq, imposed a travel ban and warned of "further measures" Wednesday unless Iraq reverses its decision to expel American arms inspectors.

Iraq's deputy prime minister immediately rejected the UN demand and US Ambassador Bill Richardson warned "the crisis with Iraq is not over."

"The message has been clear: Iraq must comply or face consequences," Richardson said after the vote. "We are not precluding any option, including the military option."

Russian Ambassador Sergey Lavrov told reporters that the crisis with Iraq was "headed for deadlock. It's very dangerous."

The government of Saddam Hussein, meanwhile, showed no signs of backing down on its vow to kick American inspectors out of Iraq, Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz, speaking in New York, declared that his government "refuses this resolution."



Members of a United Nations inspection team walk in front of UN headquarters in Baghdad, Wednesday November 12, 1997. UN inspection teams were again blocked from sites by the Iraqis who claim American members of the teams are spies. — AP/UNB photo

CBI counsel's submission before court Rao should face trial in St Kitts forgery case

NEW DELHI, Nov 13: Former premier PV Narasimha Rao should face trial in the St Kitts forgery case as he with full knowledge of the conspiracy to defame VP Singh had ordered the attestation of forged documents, the CBI alleged before the Delhi High Court Wednesday, reports PTI.

CBI Counsel, PR Vakli, submitted that Rao, the then external affairs minister, had in 1989 asked the Consul General in New York to secretly attest certain documents relating to a "bogus" account of VP Singh's son in a St Kitts Bank though he was aware that these were forged ones.

"Rao instructed the Consul General, RK Rai, to attest the papers brought to him by the then deputy director of enforcement, AP Nanday, and asked him not to tell anything about this to the then ambassador, Karan Singh," Vakli alleged.

"It is not merely case of grave suspicion against Rao but if his conduct in the case was taken together, it would be beyond the stage of grave suspicion, Vakli said.

Challenging the discharge of Rao from the case, the CBI counsel said the trial court erred by not putting Rao to trial and added that benefit of doubt to the accused could only be given at the end of the trial and not at the stage of framing charges.

Justice Singh asked Vakli the purpose of the attestation — whether it was to authenticate the documents or to procure them.

Vakli replied that the exercise was to procure the documents as normal attestation could not have been done without the presence of the owner of the St Kitts Bank, George McLean, who signed the forged documents.

He said the documents were procured by Nanday and Rao instructed Rai to attest them saying that these were required in a case in India.

The CBI counsel said the conduct of Rao and his role in the case should have been judged by the trial court

Group supporting Kasi claims responsibility for killing of four Americans

KARACHI, Nov 13: A previously unheard of organisation claimed responsibility Thursday for the ambush and killing of four American oil company workers in this troubled southern port city, report AP.

In the Jang, meaning War newspaper, Pakistan's most widely read Urdu-language paper, a group calling itself the Aimal Secret Committee, took responsibility for Wednesday's early morning massacre in Karachi as warned of more carnage if US convicted CIA killer, Mir Aimal Kasi, is not released.

Police officials said they had not heard of this organisation.

The letter, written in Urdu and faxed to the newspaper's office in Karachi late on Wednesday, also threatened that the group "will not spare any American Jews on Pakistan soil" if Kasi is given the death penalty.

The American oil company workers were gunned down on a

crowded bridge in the middle of early morning rush hour traffic on Wednesday.

The attack came two days after Kasi was found guilty of killing two CIA employees outside Washington in 1993. The jury, which has been given additional security since the killings in Pakistan, is to decide whether to ask for the death penalty on a charge of capital murder.

The Aimal Secret Committee warned of further retaliation if the death penalty is imposed.

"If Aimal Kasi is martyred then we will not spare any American Jews on Pakistan soil and we will destroy the American Embassy in Pakistan," the letter signed by Ajab Gul said. Many right wing religious groups link the US and Israel in their attacks.

The letter was addressed to the US government and according to Gul was delivered to the

embassy in Islamabad. No one at the embassy was willing to comment, however several people said they were aware of it.

Meanwhile police artists in Karachi were trying to put together a sketch of the suspected killers from a mountain of evidence compiled from eye-witness accounts.

Police in bullet proof vests set up roadblocks on the streets of Karachi stopping cars and searching for weapons.

As people in this city of 14 million people fought early morning rush hour traffic, they found themselves pulled over by police and ordered out of their cars while a search was conducted.

"We have tightened security and are checking cars," said a senior police official, who didn't want to be quoted after being criticised for earlier statements he made. "We are also watching various suspects."

Suu Kyi again barred from meeting partymen

YANGON, Nov 13: Myanmar's military government once again frustrated democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi's attempt to meet with members of her party by refusing to allow her to leave her Yangon home Thursday, reports AP.

Suu Kyi had planned to meet with members of her political party at an office in the Hlaing district of Yangon to reorganize its youth wing. She has vowed to hold a series of such meetings in party offices around the capital.

"Aung San Suu Kyi left her house in her car at 8:30 this morning, but was stopped a few yards away. She is still waiting in her car," said a party member contacted by telephone at Suu Kyi's lakeside home at 10:40 am.

Aung Shwe, chairman of her political party, and vice chairman Tin Oo were prevented by traffic police from approaching Suu Kyi's compound. They meet with the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize winner daily.

This is the third consecutive meeting Myanmar's military government has halted between Suu Kyi and her party members, and the second time in two weeks that they have confined her to her home.

Last Wednesday's detention lasted until the afternoon, after the planned meeting was prevented and those waiting to confer with Suu Kyi had dispersed.

The military government denies it confines Suu Kyi, and published on the internet a list of her daily movements during the past month to prove she is free to travel outside her home.

But the military, which claims it is bringing about democracy in Myanmar, bars Suu Kyi from leaving her home whenever she intends to conduct peaceful political activities.

Last week, Gen. Khin Myunt, one Myanmar's four most powerful generals, said Suu Kyi and her party were bent on starting riots.

'Di's car's speed was almost supersonic'

LONDON, Nov 13: The motorcyclist who says he was the first person at the scene of the crash that killed Princess Diana said in an interview published Thursday the car had been going exceptionally fast. But he denied the driver had challenged paparazzi to catch it, reports AP.

The London newspaper The Guardian quoted Stéphane Darmon, who was a holiday-rental motorcycle courier for Gamma picture agency at the time, as saying the car's speed had been "almost supersonic."

The Mercedes crashed in a Paris underpass early on August 31 while being pursued by photographers. French tests showed that Henri Paul, the driver, was drunk and had taken prescription drugs. Investigators have said the car was speeding.

Darmon, 32, denied reports that Paul issued a catch-me-if-

you-can challenge. "The car had darkened windows and they were all closed but I could see Diana inside. She was still wearing dark glasses," he was quoted as saying.

But he told the paper Paul had fooled with photographers as they waited at the Ritz Hotel.

for Diana and Fayed to emerge. "Henri Paul began playing games with us, saying they would be out in 10 minutes, then five. He staged two false departures, in which Mercedes cars drove round Place Vendôme and came back again," he told the paper.

It quoted him as saying he and Gamma photographer Romuald Rat sped off after the Mercedes on the courier's motorcycle when the real departure occurred.

"We drew even with the Mercedes at a traffic light," Darmon was quoted as saying. "There were cars in front of the Mercedes, so it could not just speed off when the lights turned to green. But it zigzagged quite cleverly through the traffic and was ahead of us when it turned into the slip road... Once it had turned into the dual carriage-way, it just took off — almost supersonic."



Clinton to meet Nazarbayev soon

President Bill Clinton will meet with President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan next week, the White House announced Wednesday, AP reports from Washington.

The two leaders will meet at the White House November 18 to discuss issues of regional concern and development of Caspian Sea oil and gas resources, said White House spokesman Mike McCurry. Nazarbayev is in Washington for the annual meeting of the US-Kazakhstan Joint Commission, which he chairs with Vice President Al Gore.

Cuban vice president to visit China

Vice President Raul Castro of Cuba will make official visit to China beginning December 16, the Chinese Foreign Ministry announced Thursday, AP says from Beijing.

The announcement did not give any details of the visit or say how long it would last. Cuba, a former Soviet ally, did not establish diplomatic ties with China until 1993 but has since looked to its fellow communist government for guidance in reforming the struggling Cuban economy. Castro is the brother of Cuban President Fidel Castro, who made his first state visit to China in November 1995.

Milosevic arrives in Beijing

Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic arrived in Beijing Thursday seeking closer ties and economic cooperation with China, AP reports from Beijing.

"I want to see China's progress with my own eyes," Milosevic told Chinese reporters ahead of his four-day visit at the invitation of President Jiang Zemin. "I wish to enhance the friendship between the two countries to a new high and expand bilateral cooperation in the economic, cultural and scientific fields, China's official Xinhua News Agency quoted Milosevic as saying.

Chinese dissident freed in HK

A Chinese labour activist has been released from jail after completing a 3 1/2-year sentence for trying to organise an independent union, a human rights group said Thursday, AP reports from Hong Kong.

Li Wenming was free Tuesday in the southern Chinese city of Shenzhen, said Lu Siqing, spokesman for the Hong Kong-based Information Centre on Human Rights and the Democratic Movement in China. Li was sent back to his hometown in central China where he faces two years of "deprivation of political rights," or special restrictions on his activities, Lu said.

11 activists held in Indonesia

Eleven people were arrested outside the Indonesian embassy Wednesday during a mock funeral marking the anniversary of the 1991 massacre of protesters in the troubled territory of east Timor, AP reports from Washington.

Van Gosse, a protester and member of Peace Action, said the demonstrators were quickly arrested as they tried to carry a 7-foot coffin through the embassy gates. The coffin bore the names of 271 people that activists believe were killed by the Indonesian army November 12, 1991, in front of Western journalists, Gosse said.

Indian court upholds death sentences for murders during '84

NEW DELHI, Nov 13: A court has ruled that three people convicted of hacking Sikhs to death during 1984 religious riots in India deserve the death sentence, a local news agency reported Thursday, reports AP.

Judge O P Dwivedi on Wednesday handed down the death sentences after convicting Kishore Lal Budh Prakash and Mohammed Abbas of murdering three Sikh youths in New Delhi, Press Trust of India news agency reported.

All three can still appeal to the Supreme Court. Hanging is the usual form of execution, though death sentences are rare in India.

Lal was also sentenced to death late last month for two other killings during the riots. He has been charged in only a few cases, but allegedly hacked to death more than 100 Sikhs in the three days of riots that erupted after the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by two of her Sikh bodyguards.

DNA evidence technologically advanced to identify criminals

WASHINGTON, Nov 13: DNA evidence, used for years to bolster criminal cases, now is technologically advanced enough to specifically identify murderers, rapists and other criminals, the FBI said on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

The improvement in technology has spawned a change in FBI policy that has already helped convict a Wisconsin rapist, even though he had four alibi witnesses that distanced him from the crime, FBI officials said at a news conference.

Asked in French recently why Vietnam was hosting the summit, Premier Phan Van Khai strained to hear his interpreter's translation into Vietnamese.

"It shows our partnership with France," was the prime minister's response. It's a partnership for Vietnam underwritten in development aid.

For Vietnam, one of Asia's poorest countries, the Franco-phonic Summit is a financial windfall.

Vietnam, unable to fund the gala summit, has left much of the financing to Paris. Paint, roads have been repaved and even a few French signs have been erected.

"The French government has committed some 100 million dollars for Vietnam in 1997 alone," says French diplomat Philippe Beaudry. French development aid takes the form such as

Gerry Adams optimistic about negotiations

JERUSALEM, Nov 13: As Israel remembered Yitzhak Rabin with somber ceremonies Wednesday, a former security chief warned there could be more political assassinations and a right-wing lawmaker received a letter with a death threat and a bullet in it, reports AP.

Two years after Rabin was assassinated by an ultranationalist Jew opposed to the peace process with the Palestinians, the potential for violence remains high, said Yaakov Perry, a former chief of the Shin Bet security service.

"The tense atmosphere, the intolerance, the absence of any inclination to reconcile are liable to lead to violence that will deteriorate into another assassination," Perry told parliament's Interior Committee. "Another political assassination in Israel is definitely conceivable."

As if to underscore Perry's point, legislator Benny Elon of the far-right opposition Moleket Party said Wednesday he had received a letter with a threatening note and a bullet in it.

"You killed the peace; primitives, fanatics, forces of darkness; you murdered Rabin and hope. We will rub you out," said the unsigned note in bold print found by an aide in Elon's mail box in parliament.

Clinton's attorneys question Paula Jones

LITTLE ROCK, Arkansas, Nov 13: President Bill Clinton's attorneys on Wednesday questioned Paula Jones in a key pre-trial deposition for her sexual harassment lawsuit against him, reports Reuter.

Clinton's lead attorney, Robert Bennett, was believed to have spearheaded vigorous questioning of Jones by the defense team.

Deposing Jones apparently took seven hours, including a possible break for lunch, sources close to the case said the process would resume Thursday morning.

The federal judge who will try Jones' lawsuit in May has ordered all parties to it, and their attorneys, not to discuss the depositions outside the courtroom.

Jones says Clinton sexually harassed her by exposing himself and asking for sex while the two were attending a conference at a Little Rock hotel in May 1991. Clinton was Governor of Arkansas and Jones was a state employee at the time of the alleged incident.



Paula Corbin Jones is flanked by her publicist Susan Carpenter McMillan as she talks to reporters upon her arrival in Little Rock, Ark, airport late Tuesday. — AP/UNB photo

EU for urgent action to boost European arms sector

BRUSSELS, Nov 13: The European Union's head office said Wednesday that urgent action is needed to prevent a serious decline of the European defence industry, reports AP.

The situation of the European arms sector is deteriorating year by year, said European Industry Commissioner Martin Bangemann, who outlined proposals to boost the sector's competitiveness.

Bangemann told reporters that EU nations' efforts to restructure their defence industries were not going far enough and that EU-wide action was needed.

He said that would involve the creation of a common EU armaments policy and a plan to develop defence-related industries.

Queen Elizabeth II attends Diana memorial concert

LONDON, Nov 13: Queen Elizabeth II attended a charity concert Wednesday in memory of her former daughter-in-law Princess Diana and brought happiness to a teen-age girl befriended by the princess, reports AP.

Emma May, 16, a patient from Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital, one of Diana's favourite charitable causes, was presented to the queen during the interval of the concert at London's Royal Festival Hall.

Emma was 10 when she met Diana at the hospital, where the youngster was being treated for a rare genetic condition which doctors said would stop her growing beyond 4 feet 6 inches (1.36 metres) in height. The princess later wrote to the youngster encouraging her to have treatment and helped her raise funds for an operation to lengthen her legs.

Off the Record

It sounds too good to be true

WASHINGTON: Popping a pill to regrow hair? It sounds too good to be true, but balding men may soon get that option, reports AP.

The Food and Drug Administration's scientific advisers will decide Thursday whether to let Merck and Co. sell the first anti-baldness pill to American men, whose only hope now is to slather Rogaine on their scalps.

Marck's Propecia is a once-a-day pill that promises to help regrow hair — and prevent more from falling out — by suppressing a hormone that shrinks hair follicles.

It's not a miracle cure, cautions Dr. Ronald Savin, a dermatologist in New Haven, Connecticut, who helped test the drug.

The new hair "is not like anybody ever had when they were 13," Savin said. But "it is an obvious difference. I've got to tell you, I've seen the pictures — the before and after — and it's impressive."

Propecia actually is a lower dose of a popular drug that men already use for enlarged prostates, called Proscar. For the merely hair-impaired, Merck says a safe dose is 1 milligram a day of the active ingredient, finasteride, not the 5-milligram Proscar pills that prostate patients take.

And although women suffer hair loss, too, Merck says Propecia can never be used by them — the threat of birth defects is too great. Doctors even tell women not to touch the pills for fear the drug could be absorbed through their skin.

Some 40 million American men suffer hair loss. Until now, their only option was Rogaine, a nonprescription drug sold in the shampoo aisle. It helps about 25 per cent of users grow back moderate amounts of hair, but stop using it and the balding resumes.

Mysterious Bob Dole

WASHINGTON: His friends say no. Columnists say it might be yes. As last year's Republican US presidential candidate Bob Dole used to ask on the campaign trail, "Who do you trust," reports AP.

It's Washington's latest mystery: Did Dole have plastic surgery?

He isn't talking about it, but others are.

"If he had a face-lift, there's no sign of it," said Russ Townsley, a close Kansas friend since 1947 who saw Dole a few months ago. "I think I know Bob well enough."

But the speculation continues. On Wednesday, Maureen Dowd in The New York Times when so far as to say the real question wasn't whether he did it but why. Her answer: so her can help wife Elizabeth win the presidency and thus get to the White House after all.

Townsley added that he couldn't imagine Dole, 74, who had major surgeries for World War II injuries, going under the knife again. "With all the operations he's had, you'd think he would be a little shy of the operating room," Townsley said.

But doctors can perform certain face-lift procedures without general anesthesia. And Stephen Grifka, a facial plastic surgeon in Los Angeles, said recovery can be quick and seamless.

"People can go back into public very quickly," he said.

'France still keen to re-exert influence over Indochina'

HANOI, Nov 13: Baguettes to berets, Vietnam has kept all it wants of its French colonial past — all, that is, but the language, reports AP.

Revered by revolutionary hero Ho Chi Minh and virtually eradicated by the communists, French has never quite recovered its place as a linguistic imperative in Vietnam — not that the Francophiles aren't trying.

France once the colonial master of Indochina, is keen to re-exert at least a little influence over Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. If nothing else, Paris wants French to emerge as the region's unofficial second language.

For Vietnam, where less than 1 per cent of its 76 million people have a functional command of French, Paris has a long way to go. What's worse, the new lingua franca of business and trade in Vietnam is English.

Ministry of Education figures show English students outnumber those studying French 10 to one.

"Everywhere we go in Vietnam we can use English," says 21-year-old college student Nguyen Thi Hong Dao. "French is pretty and romantic sounding, but on the street English is more useful."

Most of the estimated 70,000 people who do speak French in Vietnam are 70 or older.

That hasn't stopped Paris and its linguistic allies from converging on Vietnam for the 7th Francophonie Summit. At the top of the agenda? What else, French.

Leaders from 49 French-speaking countries — or countries where at least a few people speak French — will arrive in Vietnam this weekend. France's summit aim is to preserve the French language while trying to stem the growing tide toward

English.

Asked in French recently why Vietnam was hosting the summit, Premier Phan Van Khai strained to hear his interpreter's translation into Vietnamese.

"It shows our partnership with France," was the prime minister's response. It's a partnership for Vietnam underwritten in development aid.

For Vietnam, one of Asia's poorest countries, the Franco-phonic Summit is a financial windfall.

Vietnam, unable to fund the gala summit, has left much of the financing to Paris. Paint, roads have been repaved and even a few French signs have been erected.

"The French government has committed some 100 million dollars for Vietnam in 1997 alone," says French diplomat Philippe Beaudry. French development aid takes the form such as

technical and cultural assistance.

Along with business and infrastructure aid, France is helping develop French television and radio programming in Vietnam. Paris supports Vietnam's only French-language newspaper.

In the weeks leading up to the summit, the French embassy in Hanoi sponsored Francophonie quizzes, French literature symposiums, French cooking lectures, French music appreciations and, of course, French lessons.

Today's aid and yesterday's colonial heritage have left Hanoi with more than just a hint of its French past. It's been 47 years since the French colonists left Vietnam after the communists handed them a humiliating and bloody defeat at Dien Bien Phu.

But today, as four decades ago, the elite from the French

expatriate community mingle over gin and tonics and gossip at the colonial-era Metropole Hotel's long bar.

To escape the crowded and dusty streets, privileged foreigners and wealthy Vietnamese head to the recently reopened Hanoi Opera house — carefully fashioned after a French model.

But in Vietnam and elsewhere in Indochina, France's linguistic and cultural blitz sometimes meets with resistance.

In the Cambodian capital, Phnom Penh, a few years ago, more than 1,000 students staged a street demonstration to protest having to study French at the Institute of Technology.

"Learn English to find a job," said Deputy Prime Minister Ton Nu Thi Minh, "but don't stop there, learn French, it might also be useful."



The US Postal Service announced Wednesday November 12, 1997 it will issue a \$3 Priority Mail stamp commemorating the Mars Pathfinder, whose mission to the red planet riveted Americans' attention this past summer. The stamp will be officially dedicated in a ceremony at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, Calif. on December 10. — AP/UNB photo