Iraq agrees to immediate return of all UN arms inspectors

BAGHDAD, Nov 20: Iraq agreed today to the immediate return of all UN arms inspectors, under an accord hammered out earlier with Russia. Baghdad's official INA news agency announced, reports

The news followed an hastily-arranged overnight meeting in Geneva of the five permanent member states of the UN Security Council on the stand-off with Baghdad over weapons inspections.

"Iraq and Russia have agreed to adopt an accord for Iraq's ac-ceptance that UNSCOM returns in its full composition and resumes its normal activities as

of today," INA said. Baghdad expelled US member of the UN Special Commission (UNSCOM) for the disarmament of Iraq on November 13. Most of the remaining UN-SCOM staff were pulled out in protest the next day.

The accord calls for Russia to contribute actively and on the basis of Iraq's acceptance of UN Security Council resolutions to a rapid lifting of the sanctions on lraq," notably on the lifting of an oil embargo, INA said.

The embargo, in force since Irag's 1990 invasion of Kuwait, can only be lifted after UN-SCOM has certified the destruction of all Iraqi weapons of mass destruction.

The Russian-Iraqi accord specified that the embargo should be lifted "without any additional conditions." INA

Irag's intentions to lift the ban was disclosed by Russia to the other UN Security Council permanent members at the Geneva meeting.

Reuter adds from Washington: Representatives of the world's major powers at an emergency meeting in Geneva showed "firm solidarity" in insisting that Iraq allow UN arms inspectors to return unconditionally, a Clinton administration spokesperson said today.

"There was firms solidarity on the need for the unconditional fulfilment of all the relevant Security Council resolutions in Geneva," a Clinton administration spokesperson said, adding that the white House would have further comment later in the day.

The Iraqi news agency INA reported earlier that Iraq had agreed with Russia that UN arms inspectors will return to Iraq to resume work effective today, apparently defusing a three-week-old crisis.

The joint Russian-Iraqi statement was issued in Baghdad and Moscow after a middleof-the-night meeting in Geneva at which the world's major powers demanded that Iraq allow the inspectors to return unconditionally.

US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and the foreign ministers of Britain. Russia and France and a representative of China issued a statement after the emergency Geneva talks.

They welcomed Russia's efforts to broker a diplomatic solution and said they hoped it would lead to "the unconditional and complete fulfilment by Iraq of all the relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council."

Iraq calls emergency parliament meet

AP adds: Iraq called an emergency meeting of its Parliament on Thursday to discuss a Russian proposal to end the crisis with the United Nations by allowing US arms inspectors to return to the country.

The Parliament session follows an announcement early Thursday by Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov and a hastily arranged, middleof-the-night meeting in Geneva among representatives of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council.

"We expect that today Iraq will make a decision that absolutely all the inspectors, without any exceptions, will return to Iraq, and will begin to work there normally," Primakov told reporters as he left to catch a plane for Brazil.

"That's what Russia achieved ... without any use of violence, any use of weapons, without a show of force, it was achieved through diplomatic means, said Primakov.



Protestors against the United States' involvement in Iraq march in downtown San Francisco Wednesday. Approximately 75 demonstrators gathered along Market Street to denounce possible US military action in Iraq and show their support for the lifting of - AP/UNB photo sanctions against Iraq.

Allowing the American inspectors back would end a three-week stalemate that saw a US military buildup in the Gulf and Iraqi threats to shoot down an American U-2 spy plane making flight over Iraq as part of the UN weapons inspection

programme. US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said the United States made no concessions to Iraq to gain its agreement. She said that an announcement about the US inspectors' return was expected

from Baghdad. Iraqi state television interrupted its programming to announce that the National Assembly would convene Thursday in an emergency meeting. asking all the 250 members to

The Thursday edition of the Iraqi army newspaper Al-Qadissiya appeared to hint at a compromise, though with the

Gujral proposes

universal treaty

of extradition

Minister I K Guiral Wednesday

proposed a universal extradi-

tion treaty to prevent criminals

from finding a safe haven in

other countries, reports PTI.

NEW DELHI: Nov 20: Prime

An increasingly integrated

world provides to the perpetra-

tors of crimes, new forms of es-

cape and refuge and perhaps one

important step would be a uni-

versal extradition treaty, the

prime minister said in his in-

augural speech at the Indira

Gandhi International Confer-

Gujral said the universal ex-

tradition treaty would enable

the international community

to pursue criminals across na-

tional frontiers and prevent

them from escaping to other

countries after committing the

4th Indo-Russian

IGC session

postponed

fourth session of the Indo-Rus-

sian Inter Governmental

Commission (IGC) on trade,

economic, scientific, technolog

ical and cultural cooperation

scheduled for later this month

has been postponed as the fate

of its Russian co-chairman,

Chubais hangs in the balance,

First Vice Premier Anatoly

sources here told PTI.

MOSCOW, Nov 20: The

ence here.

usual anti-American rhetoric. We have always been for a

balanced stand that is based on the national free will of the Iraqi people led by our historical leader Saddam Hussein," it said in an editorial. "This has been getting more and more support in the Arab world and victory will be always in the side of those who are against America.

A statement issued after the meeting in Geneva gave no specifics of the compromise. It said the UN Special Commission in charge of monitoring Iraq's weapons programme would meet in New York on Fri-

It added that the participants in the meeting — the five permanent members of the UN Security Council — hope the Russian initiative will leave to "the unconditional decision" by Iraq to allow the return of all weapons inspectors.

A KHARTOUM Nov 20: Intens

anti-US rally here Wednesday.

tens of thousands of Sudanese

demonstrators burned the US

flag and an effigy of President

embassy in the Sudanese capi-

tal, targetted US economic and

trade sanctions imposed on Su-

dan and followed a similar flag-

burning demonstration last

week by a smaller crowd of

cusing the United States of

"looting and stealing."

Earlier Wednesday, the Bank

The protest, outside the US

Bill Clinton, reports AFP.

around 1,500.

In late October, Iraq demanded the Americans leave the UN teams of experts monitoring to ensure that Iraq destroys all its weapons of mass destruction under UN resolu-

When the UN Security Council condemned the Iraqi stand, the government of President Saddam Hussein order the Americans out on November 13. UN authorities them pulled out inspectors of other nationalities as well.

Iraq accused the Americans of being biased and blocking the lifting of sanctions imposed on Iraq after its invasion of neighbouring Kuwait in 1990 - which include a ban on Iran exporting its oil.

The sanctions cannot be lifted until the arms inspectors certify that Iraq has destroyed all weapons of mass destruction and the means to make others.

America loots and steals

our money ... we thought we

were dealing with a respected

nation but it turned out that

they are thieves," Beshir said,

adding that his Islamic gov-

ernment was considering stop-

ping Sudanese going to the

He attacked US pressure on

US Secretary of State

Iraq, calling the United States

"the world's number one terror-

United States.

ern Christians.

ist nation.

position. The 14-party United Front ers feel the party could win has so far rejected Congress more votes if elections are held Sonia didn't turn

ounces (1.3 kilos)

NEW DELHI, Nov 20: Sonia Gandhi did not turn up apparently for security reasons at the AICC headquarters Wednesday. For a function which she was scheduled to address on the occasion of Indira Gandhi's 80th

NEW DELHI, Nov 20: The

Congress Party insisted Thurs-

day that Prime Minister I K Gu-

jral's shaky coalition oust a

member accused of supporting

former Prime Minister Rajiv

Gandhi's suspected assassins,

their position on the Dravida

Munnetra Kazhagam, or

Dravida Progressive Front, for

an hour Thursday morning,

and emerged determined, said

Mrutyunjaya Nayak, secretary of the party's legislative com-

"No compromise. The DMK has to go. That's a must," Nayak

told reporters after the meeting.

counts of a new report on Rajiv

Gandhi's 1991 assassination.

the DMK supported Sri Lankan

Tamil separatists accused in

the killing of Rajiv, who was head of the Congress Party at

the judicial investigation will

be formally presented to Par-

liament later Thursday. Nayak

said the Congress legislative

committee would reconvene af-

ter the parliament session to

draft a resolution laying out its

up at AICC HQs

for security reasons

The 17-volume findings of

the time of his death.

According to newspaper ac-

Congress lawmakers debated

reports AP.

birth anniversary, reports PTI. Sonia was believed to have cancelled her visit as over enthusiastic partymen broke the security cordon. Repeated pleas of the party leaders did not succeed in persuading them to move back.

The workers mainly from Uttar Pradesh arrived one hour behind schedule shouting slogans "Indira Gandhi amar rahe". Congress party Zind-

Govt to withdraw 500 troops from N Ireland

LONDON, Nov 20: Five hundired paratreopers will be pulled out of Northern Ireland within the coming days, the government said Wednesday, the first scale-down of troops in the British-ruled province since the IRA's renewed ceasefire in July.

reports AP. Mo Mowlam, the senior British Cabinet Minister responsible for Northern Ireland. said that the withdrawal of men from the 3rd battalion of the Parachute Regiment had been made on police advice.

"This is a further step along the road to a normal society but it is important that we do not drop our guard," Mowlam said in a statement.

AIDS to leave 40m children without parents by 2010

WASHINGTON, Nov 20: In a sobering account of the worldwide impact of AIDS, the US Agency for International Development said Wednesday that 40 million children in developing countries will be without one or both parents by 2010, reports

With a population explosion of young people, especially in poor countries," it is a crisis of staggering proportion," Dr. Nils Daulaire, senior adviser on children and women's health issues, said at a news confer-

A report will be released on World AIDS Day, Dec. 1.

govt to oust DMK demands to oust the DMK. But in hectic private talks over the last few days. Front leaders were divided. Many don't want another election just two years

Alleged support for Rajiv murder

Congress (I) presses UF

after the last one. The United Front lacks a parliamentary majority. Congress, though not a member of the coalition, has supported the Front in parliamentary confidence votes in order to keep power out of the hands of the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party, the

largest party in parliament.
Without Congress support,
the government could collapse, paving the way for new elec-

A new national vote could favour the right-wing BJP, rival of both the Congress and the

Thursday's newspapers reported that some Congress lawmakers believe public support for their party has increased following disclosure of the assassination report.

The Congress lost power two years ago and lacks a charismatic national leader like Rajiv. His mother, Indira Gandhi. and grandfather, Jawaharlal Nehru, also were prime ministers, Many Congress Lawmaknow, when memories of the Gandhi-Nehru rule have been revived by discussion of the as-

sassination report. The Congress first shook the government six months ago by successfully getting the Front to replace its prime minister H D Deve Gowda with Gujral. Newspapers speculated that it now wants to split the Front by domanding expulsion of the DMK.

Newspapers who say they have leaked copies of the assassination findings have reported that the judge accuses the DMK of continuing to support Tamil rebels even after the Indian army moved in to try to help Sri Lankan troops crush the guerillas in 1987. The rebels are fighting for creation of a homeland for the Tamils, a minority in Sri Lanka.

The 55 million Tamils of the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu - where the DMK holds nower - have linguistic, cultural and family ties with the 18 million Tamils of Sri Lanka Both trace their ancestry to the Dravidian peoples believed to be among the first to settle in India.

The DMK admits it backed the rebel cause for a homeland. just as Congress and other parties had done for 10 years.

Off the Record

2nd set of septuplets born alive

DES MOINES, lowa, Nov 20: A US seamstress gave birth Wednesday to four boys and three girls, only the second set of septuplets ever known to be born alive. It took a medical team of more than 40 specialists just six minutes to deliver the babies by Caesarean section, reports AP. Bobbi McCaughey, 29, gave birth to babies ranging in weight

from 2 pounds, 5 ounces to 3 pounds, 4 ounces. "I'm probably one of the proudest grandfathers in this country at this moment," said Bob Hepworth, who announced

the births. The babies, who were delivered at Iowa Methodist Medical

Centre, were listed in serious condition. Hepworth said his daughter was "resting comfortably." "I would ask that all believers across the world join us in praying for Bobbi and for the babies that their health will

continue land only improve." Hepworth said. From the delivery room, the babies were taken to an adjacent stabilisation room, where their conditions were

assessed, and then to the neonatal unit The biggest baby, who weighed 3 pounds, 4 ounces (1.5 kilos), was named Kenneth Robert after his grandfather; Alexis May weighed 2 pounds, 11 ounces (1.2 kilos); Natalie Sue, 2 pounds, 10 ounces (1.2 kilos); Kelsey Ann. 2 pounds. 5 ounces (1.0 kilos); Brandon James, 3 pounds, 3 ounces (1.5 kilos); Nathaniel Roy, 2 pounds, 14 ounces (1.3 kilos); and Joel Steven, 2 pounds, 15

. Stuffe die Candle in the wind' by sound-alikes?

CANBERRA, Nov 20: A shipment of fake video compact discs of Elton John's tribute song "Candle in the Wind", sung at the funeral of Princess Diana, has been seized by Australian customs, reports Reuter.

The discs were among a consignment of fake VCDs recorded in the Philippines by sound-alike artists, when played in a computer, the tribute's words scroll karaoke style across the computer screen over a background of clouds and roses. Other discs seized featured the songs of Madonna, Rod

Stewart, Whitney Houston and Mariah Carey "The message as far as this is concerned is that people who propose to import goods of this nature cannot be guaranteed to get them through our customs system. Customs Minister

Warren Truss told reporters. In fact we're very likely to apprehend them." The discs were found and confiscated by customs officers in

Melbourne on November 3.

Computer acts more like human

NEW YORK: IBM researcher Mark Lucente waves his hands in the air before the computer. Two colorful spirals on the screen float in the same direction, reports AP.

"Let's see the world." he commands, and the view switches to a bright blue globe. "Make it this big," he says, drawing his hands together, and the globe grows smaller.

Welcome to the future according to International Business Machines Corp, which showed off a computer that combines, albeit crudely, the ability to see and hear in one machine. It's a future where machines obey people and act more like

humans than faceless drones. But don't worry - the new machines will be a far cry from science fiction's most famous talking computer, the murderous Hal of "2001: A Space Odyssey.

The company foresees versions in commercial use in about two years. For example, people walking by a storefront window could "ask" a mannequin to talk about products that are on sale. The mannequin would appear to follow the person's movements as it talks back.

I want computers to be intelligent," Lucente said in a demonstration during this week's Comdex show here. "I think a good way to start is by giving them eyes and ears."

'Queen, Prince Philip found formula for successful marriage'

when things get difficult.

suspected serial killer was executed in Texas by lethal injection on Wednesday after leaving his final words on the Internet, Reuter reports from Huntsville. It was thought to be the first time the Internet had been used by a prisoner facing execution to distribute his last words usually only heard by witnesses in the death chamber. Michael LONDON, Nov 20: The much-Sharp, 43, was put to death at 6:21 PM CST (0021 GMT) for the

- AP/UNB photo

50 hurt as 2 trains collide in Canada: Two commuter trains collided inside the main railroad station in Toronto on Wednesday, leaving up to 50 people hurt, none se-

1982 kidnapping and murder of a woman and her daughter.

Miss World finalists from Malaysia, Ariana Lai Poh, left

and Nepal Jharana Rashid, right, pose on the beach on lo-

cation in the Seychelles, Wednesday, ahead of this week-

Serial killer executed in Texas: A

ends Miss World pageant.

riously, police said, Reuter reports from Toronto. Authorities said an empty commuter train entered Toronto's Union Station at a low speed and hit a stationary train carrying

800 passengers. Argentina to sign Ottawa treaty:
Argentine Foreign Minister Guido Di Tella will sign an agreement banning anti-personnel landmines at a December ceremony in Ottawa, officials said Wednesday. AFP reports from

Buenos Aires. An international treaty banning the use, export, production, development and stockpiling of anti-personnel landmines was negotiated in Oslo earlier this year. More than 100 countries have agreed to sign the treaty, but so far China, Russia and the United States have refused to do so.

Rains claim 4 in Malaysia: At least four people have been killed in heavy tropical rains that have cleared the haze over Malaysia but flooded roads and houses, news reports said Thursday, AP reports from Kuala Lumpur. In Pennag, 300 kilometres (180 miles) northwest of Kuala

Lumpur, a tin roof flew off a roadside hotel and hit a man,

killing him on Wednesday. The Star daily reported. Bombs at US embassy in Denmark: Two fire bombs were thrown at the US embassy in Copenhagen on Wednesday, just hours after the US state department advised Americans abroad to exercise increased caution, AP says from

Copenhagen. Police responded immediately after the 7:55 PM (1855 GMT) attack and arrested three Danes in the vicinity. No one was injured; the embassy building was staffed by a single Danish guard. The first fire bomb failed to explode.

ridiculed institution of royal marriage got a boost Wednesday from someone who ought to know. Prince Philip, married for 50 years to Queen Elizabeth II, called the marriage a successful partnership and expressed pride in their children, whose marital history is less happy, reports AP. The special problems of

royal marriage pose a challenge that he and the queen have met, the 76-year-old Duke of Edinburgh said in an unusually personal speech at a luncheon banquet the day before their golden anniversary. Philip has walked several

paces behind his wife throughout their public life together, but his significant role within the family's private life and his importance to the queen have always been apparent. At Wednesday's luncheon

Philip did the speaking and she listened with the rest of the guests. The prince, who has a reputation for impatience and out-

He said they had learned tolingredient of any happy mar-

spokenness, paid a rare public compliment on Wednesday to a tolerant wife. erance was "the one essential

pleasures and tribulations of "It may not be quite so important when things are going bringing up children," Philip well, but it is absolutely vital said at the luncheon, given by

Madeleine Albright on Novemof Sudan banned transactions ber 4 announced new measures in the US dollar. against Sudan, criticising its Sudanese President Omar alleged sponsorship of terror-Al-Beshir addressed the ism, poor human rights record demonstrators Wednesday, acand harsh treatment of south-

Netanyahu meets party men

Sudanese burn US flag,

Clinton's effigy

to shore up support JERUSALEM, Nov 20: Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu held intensive meetings with members of his own party Wednesday to shore up support

for his leadership amidst mounting party rebellion and growing frustration among coalition partners, reports AP. Netanyahu's moves to quell the rebellion at home came

immediately after returning from a trip abroad where he faced international criticism for his peace policies.

"There is a crisis and many questions are being asked by

istence between official and

lawmakers and ministers. Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert, a leading critic of Netanyahu within the Likud Party, told Channel 2 TV.

And Tel Aviv Mayor Roni Milo, who announced earlier this week his intention to work to replace Netanyahu, said he would consider forming a new centrist party. 2 Jewish students killed

Two Jewish seminary students were killed in a shooting early Thursday in the Muslim quarter of Jerusalem's walled

the Lord Mayor of London at People in royal life, Philip that serves as town hall. said, as the queen looked on impassively, have "to accept certain constraints and to accommodate that gray area of ex-

what is left of private life." "In such circumstances much can be done by an individual, but I am sufficiently West Side Story." old-fashioned to believe that a great deal more can be achieved by a partnership in marriage.

"It has been a challenge for us but, by trial and experience, I believe we have achieved a sensible division of labour and a good balance between our individual and joint interests," he

The royal pair, distant cousins, met as teenagers and were married when Elizabeth was 21 and Philip was 26. They had only five years of relatively carefree marriage before the death of King George VI on Feb. 6, 1952, brought Elizabeth to the throne and ended Philip's naval career. For 45 years, they have had

to combine their private lives and the upbringing of four children with the heavy duties of the British head of state, the head of the Commonwealth. "Like all families, we went through the full range of the Guildhall, the ancient building

In the evening, Philip and the queen, looking lighthearted and relaxed, attended a musical celebration of love and marriage, using songs tied to Shakespeare productions from Prokofiev's "Romeo and Juliet" to Leonard Bernstein's version

On Thursday, Elizabeth and Philip will retrace their steps down the aisle of Westminister Abbey in an anniversary service attended by the largest contingent of foreign royalty since her coronation in 1953.

Their wedding Nov. 20, 1947, brought color, glamour and a little optimism to a country still suffering the devastations of war. Many buildings were in ruin, the economy was crippled and food and clothing were still rationed. People all around the country spent their cherished ration coupons on wedding presents for the popular princess.

After the Abbey service, the

queen and Philip will meet well-wishers outside and, if the weather permits, walk to 10 Downing St. for a reception with Prime Minister Tony Blair. Then they will cross Whitehall for a governmenthosted luncheon at historic Banqueting House. A private ball at Windsor Castle will cap the celebrations.



President Clinton surrounded by members of Congress and adopted children signs the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997, a law designed to speed the movement of children from foster care to permanent homes, in the East Room of the White House Wednesday.

- AP/UNB photo