

International

# Tight security remains in force in Jakarta

JAKARTA, Nov 17: Tight security remained in force in central Jakarta today despite a semblance of calm as flags flown at half-mast in memory of the 14 killed in violent weekend clashes between students and security forces, reports AFP.

Indonesian President BJ Habibie left as scheduled for the two-day Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in Kuala Lumpur, but would return later today if fresh battles erupted, palace sources said.

There was heavy security around Independence Square in the centre of the city, lined with government buildings including the state Merdeka palace.

But elsewhere in the capital, Indonesians relaxed on this Islamic public holiday.

Joggers ran on the main avenues which were largely deserted of traffic, shops and food vendors reopened for business after being closed during the violence and soldiers on the roadside relaxed in the shade of trees and buildings.

Hundreds of people streamed into a sports stadium near the overpass, which was the scene of pitched battles between the students and armed soldiers on Friday, to attend a gathering by the new Muslim moon and star party.

The thousands of students, who had led the protests on the weekend, were nowhere to be seen early today with some campuses declared closed for the first two days of the week.

The violence had erupted as students marched on parliament to demonstrate against the people's consultative assembly, the nation's highest legislative body, which met last week to map out Indonesia's political future.

The students claimed the assembly was an appendage of the regime of former president Suharto, who stepped down amid mounting public pressure and widespread rioting in May, and would ignore demands for reforms.

# UN arms inspectors return to Baghdad Clinton's stiff conditions may set a trap for Saddam

WASHINGTON, Nov 17: While President Clinton again stopped short of attacking Iraq, he also could be setting a trap that forces President Saddam Hussein to make a difficult choice between an embarrassing surrender and devastating airstrikes, reports AP.

It would take a complete turnaround from past positions for the Iraqi leader to meet all five criteria listed by Clinton for judging Iraq's compliance with UN weapons inspections. His track record suggests he will not meet the terms.

And if he doesn't, Clinton could again have reason to order the assault that Saddam barely averted over the weekend by allowing the UN inspectors to return — this time unconditionally — to hunt for weapons of mass destruction.

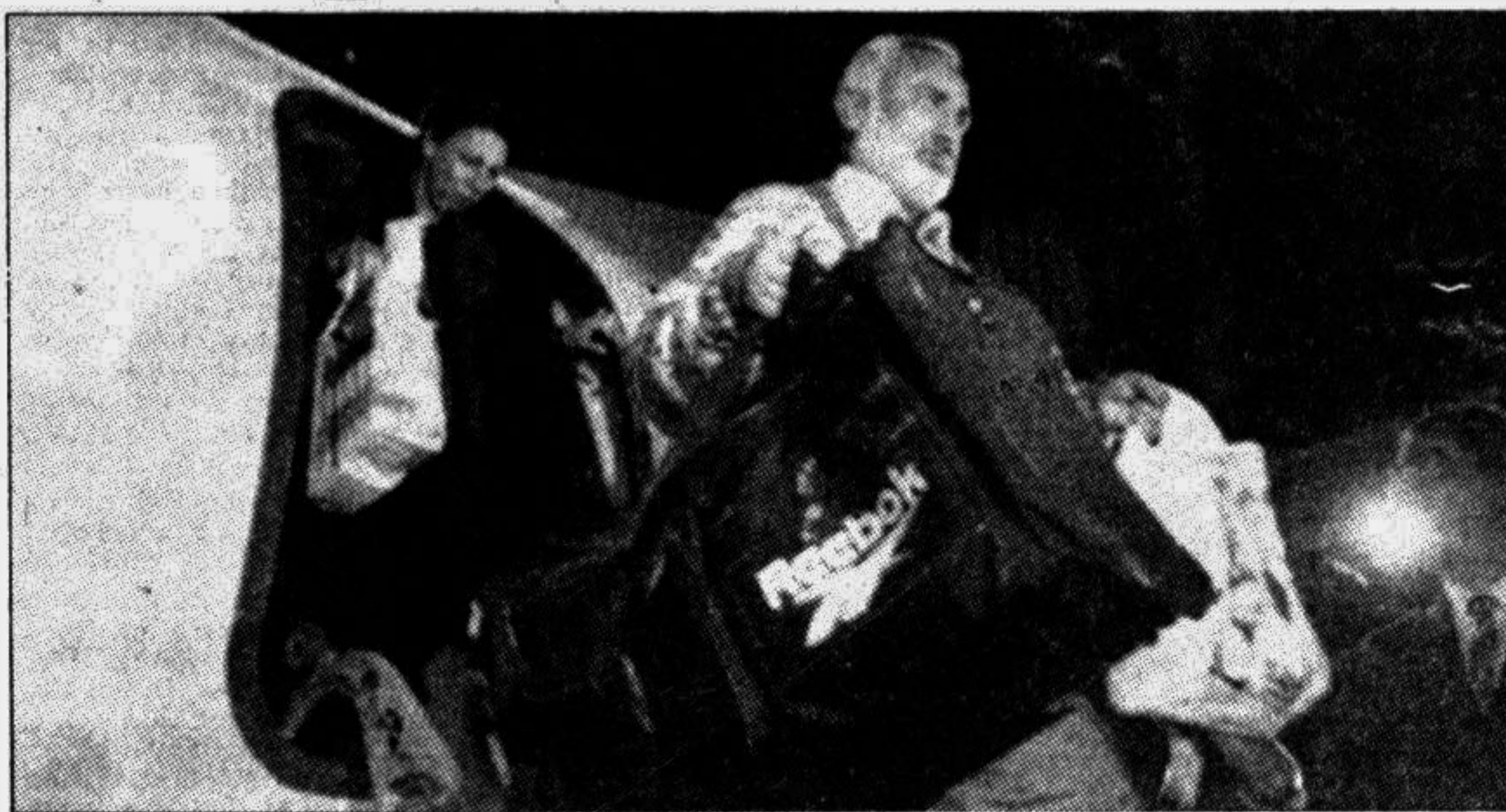
Defence Secretary William Cohen said on Monday that US forces sent to the Gulf in the past week would stay there, but that other planned deployments to the region would be put on hold.

As Hussein ponders his next move, Clinton and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright are openly calling for his overthrow and pledging support to opposition groups in Iraq.

"This truly breaks new ground," Robert Sattoff, Executive Director of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, said on Monday of Clinton's demands. "It puts us on a collision course with whatever allies we have, but it raises almost the sure prospect of a future clash with Iraq."

Russia, several European allies — Britain is a notable exception — and several Arab nations had hoped Clinton would hold his fire. Hard-won unity at the United Nations began to crack on Friday as overtures to Baghdad gained momentum.

As a result, Saddam reversed his October 31 decision to halt all cooperation with UN weapons inspectors. But he also gave no indications he is about



The first humanitarian United Nations workers return to Iraq at the Habaniya airbase 65 km west of Baghdad on Monday. Faced with the threat of an American attack, Iraq declared on Saturday that UN weapons inspectors would go back to work immediately, a move that could defuse the third crisis in less than a year over arms inspections. — AP/UNB photo

to meet the terms set by Clinton. His hope is to split the allies and gain more time, possibly to develop his weaponry.

This tactic has let the Iraqi leader survive the cat-and-mouse inspection game for more than seven years now with little or no erosion of his grip on power within Iraq.

The five conditions listed by Clinton are:

1. Iraq must give the inspectors "unfettered access" to all sites they choose to see. "With no restrictions or qualifications"; it must turn over all documents bearing on the production of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and the missiles that could be used to deliver them; it must not interfere with the inspectors, for example, by challenging their nationalities; it must resolve "all outstanding issues raised" by the inspectors;

2. It must accept all UN resolutions relevant to weapons of mass destruction.

The State Department spokesman, James P. Rubin, said on Monday that if Iraq reversed course after seven years and made a "strategic decision" to disclose its weapons of mass destruction it would be easier to resolve other problems.

But Rubin stressed that was only one of several obligations Iraq must shoulder.

In an interview, Rubin called Clinton's criteria "a prescription for a much stronger UNSCOM," the UN special commission, and said they are terms Iraq had never dealt with before.

Another report from Baghdad says: UN weapons inspectors made their way back to Baghdad today and said they want to get back to work as soon

possible to test Iraq's pledge to cooperate in the search for its weapons of mass destruction.

The Iraqi authorities have promised cooperation. Obviously the next few days are going to be very important," said Caroline Cross, spokeswoman for the UN Special Commission in charge of arms inspections.

She spoke as 86 inspectors from UNSCOM and the International Atomic Energy Agency left their hotel in the Gulf state of Bahrain, to where they were evacuated last week, for the flight back to Baghdad.

With the threat of American and British air strikes on Iraq over for now, about 150 UN relief workers also returned to Baghdad from the Jordanian capital of Amman, where they were sent at the height of the crisis.

# US criticised for not allowing inspection of its chemical industry

THE HAGUE, Nov 17: The United States came under fire Monday for not opening up its chemical industry — the world's largest — to inspections by international weapons experts, reports AP.

At a gathering of signature nations to the international Chemical Weapons Convention, convention director Jose Mauricio Bustani urged the United States "to take whatever action is necessary to achieve this goal."

The global convention, which took effect in April 1997, prohibits the use, production, stockpiling and transfer of chemical weapons.

Under the treaty, chemical weapon production facilities, as well as storage and destruction sites are all subject to inspections. But industries producing so-called dual use chemicals, which can be used for civil and military ends, must also open their doors to inspectors.

While the United States has allowed inspections of government facilities, checks of industry sites have been impossible due to legislative difficulties, said Donato Kiniger-Passigli, the spokesman for the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, which oversees the treaty.

A US official at the conference said the relevant legislation has been enacted, clearing the way for eventual inspections.

Ambassador Ralph Earle II, the US representative to the conference, stressed that it will take some time before the legislation will be up and running.

But he assured conference participants that the United States "is continuing to seek various ways to accelerate this process."

# US blasts both Arafat, Sharon with equal fervour

WASHINGTON, Nov 17: The Clinton administration is admonishing Yasser Arafat for a harsh statement on Jerusalem, but also criticising Israel's foreign minister, Ariel Sharon, with equal fervour, reports AP.

Arafat was wrong to declare "our rifle is ready" to defend Jerusalem, where he intends to establish a Palestinian capital, State Department spokesman James P. Rubin said Monday.

But neither should Sharon have called on Jewish settlers to seize every hilltop, Rubin said. It serves to "undermine the trust and confidence" needed for the two sides to make peace, the spokesman said.

Statements aside, the State Department's position is that Israel should begin withdrawing from another 13 per cent of the West Bank, as the Wye memorandum signed last month at the White House by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Arafat provides.

Rubin called it a commitment without conditions "about every word that was said by every party."

Netanyahu announced Monday he was suspending the onset of Israel's withdrawal this week until the Palestinians dropped plans to declare a statehood in May.

While warning "our rifle is ready" to defend Jerusalem, Arafat again said he would establish a Palestinian state if Israel did not agree to one in negotiations.

He has made such statement before and then backed off under US pressure.

The statehood issue and the future of Jerusalem are on the agenda for negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians.

# Kuwaitis disappointed as US didn't finish off Saddam

KUWAIT, Nov 17: As another Iraq crisis wound down, Kuwaitis were disappointed on Monday that US missiles didn't finally finish off Saddam Hussein. But for other Arabs, it was back to normal: Israel, not Iraq, is the enemy, reports AP.

"Undoubtedly there is disappointment. We know that Saddam will be whipping up more crises," Kuwaiti lawmaker Musalam al-Barak said.

"We have the right to know if America wants Saddam Hussein to stay, or if it is serious about toppling him and saving Iraq," wrote columnist Faisal al-Kanani in the daily al-Siyasah newspaper.

Bitterness toward the Iraqi leader is to be expected in the small wealthy emirate south of Iraq. Saddam's army invaded Kuwait in August 1990 and occupied the country until a US-led force drove it out seven months later.

But elsewhere in the Arab world, commentators looked at the latest run-in between Saddam and the United Nations differently and arrived at a familiar charge: Washington's foreign policy is plagued by double standards.

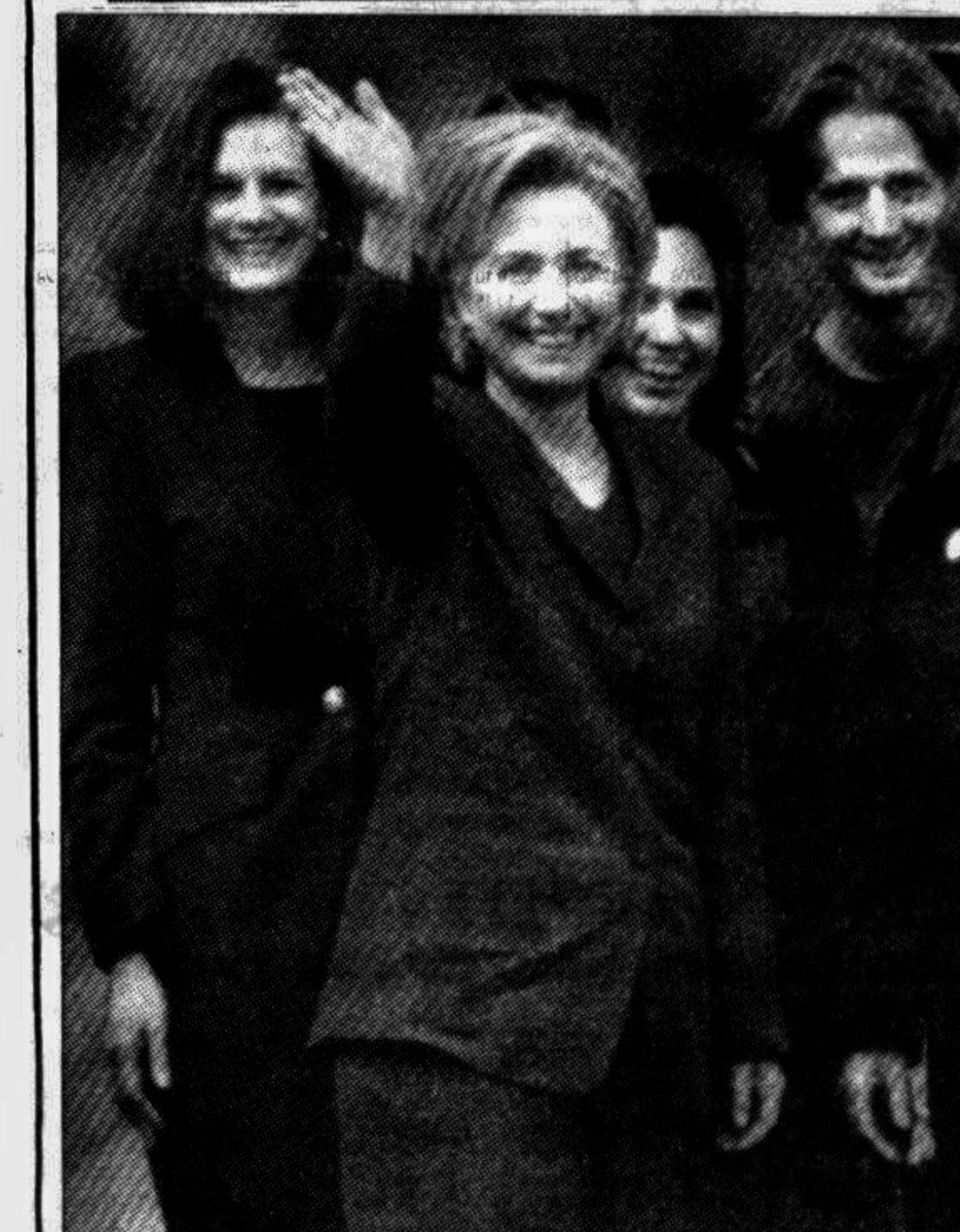
"The admiration of the US stand (on Iraq) ... would subside when the admirers know of Washington's leniency in dealing with the Israeli sustained failure to abide by international law," the Egyptian Gazette said in an editorial.

"It seems that international law and threats of using force are only tailored for Iraqis."

In Lebanon, the Daily Star concluded that Saddam, not President Clinton, emerged the winner from the standoff created by the Iraq's October 31 decision to halt the work of UN weapons inspectors.

Saddam relented on Saturday, avoiding what looked like certain military retaliation by the United States and Britain.

# BRRIEFLY



US First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton waves to the crowd at the airport in Tegucigalpa, Honduras on Monday. At left is Honduran First Lady Mary Fluke Wood de Flores. Hillary announced a doubling of US aid on Monday to the hurricane-ravaged countries of Central America during a tour of the region. — AP/UNB photo

**Two Kurds set themselves on fire:** Two Kurdish protesters set themselves on fire outside the Russian parliament on Tuesday after protests in support of a Kurdish rebel leader who was arrested last week in Rome, police said, AP reports from Moscow.

The two men splashed themselves with a flammable liquid and then set it ablaze outside the Duma building in the heart of Moscow. Police managed to extinguish the flames and the two men were hospitalised with burns, officials said.

The protest came as about 100 Kurdish residents of Moscow continued a hunger strike for a fourth day to protest what they claim is an international conspiracy against Abdullah Ocalan, who leads the Kurdistan Workers Party, or PKK.

**Observers praise Burkina Faso polls:** The presidential election in Burkina Faso this weekend was free of tampering or other irregularities, a panel of independent monitors said on Monday, AP reports from Ouagadougou.

The conditions for the elections were good, French election observer Alain Terrenoire told reporters in the capital, Ouagadougou. "There was calm and patience on the part of voters."

Terrenoire said he and eight other observers from European Union member states visited 50 polling stations during the elections in this landlocked West African country.

**Former minister dies in Myanmar:** A former agriculture minister ousted from Myanmar's military government in an anti-corruption shakeup last year has died, official newspapers reported on Monday, AP says from Yangon.

Lu Gen Myint Aung, 67, known for his tough handling of the pro-democracy opposition when he was a regional military commander a decade ago, died on Monday at home. No cause of death was given.

Myint Aung's death came a year and a day after he was removed as minister of agriculture and irrigation in an attempt by Myanmar's ruling generals to improve the image of their government.

**Floods claim 17 in C Vietnam:** Another bout of serious flooding in central Vietnam has killed 17 people and caused an estimated 104 billion dong (7.4 million dollars) in damage, officials said on Tuesday, AP reports from Hanoi.

Provincial floods and storm control committees said eight people died in Khanh Hoa province, three in Ninh Thuan and two in each in Binh Thuan, Phu Yen and Binh Dinh.

Tropical storm Chip, which dumped 200 to 400 millimetres (eight to 16 inches) of rain on the area on Friday through Sunday, submerged large swaths of land, destroyed several hundred houses, sank 20 fishing boats and damaged some rice fields and roads.

# British attorney general blocks fresh bid to try Pinochet

LONDON, Nov 17: As a panel of judges considers whether to free Gen. Augusto Pinochet or let Spanish extradition proceedings continue, Britain's attorney general on Monday blocked a fresh bid to have the former Chilean dictator tried under British law for torture and hostage-taking, reports AP.

John Morris said there was "insufficient admissible evidence" to bring criminal proceedings against Pinochet, arrested in a London clinic on Oct 16 on a Spanish warrant alleging he murdered Spanish citizens in Chile. A second Spanish warrant accuses him of murder, torture and hostage-taking.

Lawyer Geoffrey Bindman, representing human rights groups, had presented Morris with fresh evidence of alleged torture and disappearances during Pinochet's 17-year rule. It was his third attempt to bring a criminal prosecution against the 82-year-old former leader.

Separately, five judges at the House of Lords, Britain's highest court, must decide whether to endorse a High Court ruling that Pinochet's arrest was illegal because British law grants former heads of state immunity from prosecution for deeds committed while in office.

Lawyers for the Spanish government appealed the High Court decision, saying Pinochet's crimes were so heinous as to be beyond immunity.

At the end of a six-day hearing Thursday, the judges gave no indication when they will deliver their verdict.

# Vajpayee, Sonia facing an electoral baptism of fire

NEW DELHI, Nov 17: Hindu nationalist poet versus Italian-born widow — India's premier and opposition leader are facing an electoral baptism of fire that could well decide who ends up ruling the country, reports AP.

For Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Congress Party president Sonia Gandhi, elections on November 25 in New Delhi and three other states are being viewed in part as a touchstone for their political futures.

Vajpayee, 71, who heads a fractious multi-party alliance that took power eight months ago, faces the first electoral test of his government's performance.

For Sonia, 51, it is the first polls where she has had her say in everything — from choosing all the candidates to finalising election strategy and giving her 113-year-old Congress Party a new impetus.

Analysts say the polls will indicate if Vajpayee is struggling to deal with galloping inflation and withdrawal threats from his partners — will finish a five-year term or be unseated by the Congress, which is champing at the bit to return to power after being ousted in 1996.

Vajpayee, a poet and an orator, is seen to be the moderate face of his Hindu nationalist party, which the Congress and the opposition attack for trying to rent India's social fabric by covertly championing a Hindu

# Clinton should and will face some kind of punishment

WASHINGTON, Nov 17: US President Bill Clinton "should and will face some kind of punishment" for actions stemming from the Monica Lewinsky affair, the top Democrat in the House of representatives said on Monday, reports AP.

"What the president did was very wrong and reprehensible and I believe that some action should and will be taken," House Minority Leader Richard Gephardt told reporters after winning reelection to his post.

Democrats' strong showing in November 3 elections — widely seen as a referendum on the impeachment process — had prompted speculation that the Republican-held Congress would back down from its tough position on the matter.

And the vote was also thought to have lessened Democrats' support for even limited punishment, such as congressional censure — a rebuke falling well short of ouster — of Clinton.

Asked what sanction Clinton should receive, the Missouri Democrat would not say, telling reporters "what that is, whether or not this rises to what level has to be decided" by the House Judiciary Committee which is holding impeachment hearings.

And asked whether Democrats on the panel, which is weighing a vote on articles of impeachment, should vote down such formal charges, Gephardt replied that he was "not ready to conclude what I think should be done."

"And I would hope that members would hold their fire until they see what the committee does, see what the committee produces, and then make their own judgement of what they think the proper thing to do is."

Gephardt also renewed his call to end the impeachment process by the end of the year, saying "We cannot sit here in suspended animation over impeachment forever."

Americans "cannot put up with more and more months of investigation and subpoenas and documents and report and tapes; they've had it, enough already," added Gephardt at a press conference to introduce his party's newly elected House leadership.

AP adds: Tired of the Monica Lewinsky story? Hold your ears.

The House Judiciary Committee on Tuesday was releasing audio of the famed Linda Tripp tapes, giving most Americans their first chance to hear the voice of Ms. Lewinsky, the former White House intern.

People already have gotten an earful of Lewinsky minutiae: Transcripts of the conversations secretly recorded by Mrs. Tripp were released by Congress earlier this fall.

Now the nuances of voice and inflection will be added to the mix.

The 75 tapes contain 22 hours of private musings from Ms. Lewinsky about her relationship with the president. According to transcripts, Mrs. Tripp is heard providing her own analysis of Ms. Lewinsky's voice.

# Indo-Pak anti-nuclear activists to get tolerance prize

PARIS, Nov 17: Indian and Pakistani anti-nuclear activists on Monday received the UNESCO-Madanjeet Singh Prize for the Promotion of Tolerance and Non-Violence, reports AP.

India's Narayan Dasai, 74, won the award for campaigning against nuclear weapons and for his work in promoting education and youth training camps with his Shanti Sena (Peace Brides) corps of volunteers dedicated to non-violence.

The Pakistani group Joint Action Committee for Peoples Rights won the prize for its campaigns for women's rights, religious tolerance and against nuclear weapons. The committee is an informal coalition of 30 non-governmental organisations and individuals, founded in 1990.

The two leaders endorsed a proposal to form a group of experts who would work on finding ways to build confidence between the nations involved in the territorial dispute, said Philippines Foreign Minister Domingo Siason.

The Spratlys, which straddle vital sea lanes in the South China Sea, are claimed in whole by China, Vietnam and Taiwan, and in part by Malaysia and the Philippines. Brunei claims one reef.



Senator John Glenn gestures, as his wife, Annie, waves to the crowd during a ticketed parade through New York's "Canyon of Heroes" on Monday. A lunchtime crowd lined Broadway to honour John Glenn, for becoming the oldest man ever in space, and the other crew members aboard the space shuttle Discovery, Cmdr. Curtis Brown, Steven Lindsey, Scott Parazynski, Stephen Robinson, Chiaki Mukai and Pedro Duque. — AP/UNB photo

# Beijing-Manila plan to reduce tensions on Spratlys

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 17: The leaders of China and the Philippines gave their support today to a plan designed to reduce tensions between nations claiming the Spratly Islands, reports AP.

Philippines President Joseph Estrada met Chain's President Jiang Zemin here on the first day of a meeting of Asian leaders attending the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum.

The two leaders endorsed a proposal to form a group of experts who would work on finding ways to build confidence between the nations involved in the territorial dispute, said Philippines Foreign Minister Domingo Siason.

The Spratlys, which straddle vital sea lanes in the South China Sea, are claimed in whole by China, Vietnam and Taiwan, and in part by Malaysia and the Philippines. Brunei claims one reef.

# Asians will have best view of meteor storm today

WASHINGTON, Nov 17: Asians will have the best view of the spectacular Leonid meteor storm, expected to illuminate their skies in the dead of night today and tomorrow, reports AP.

Some 200 to 5,000 meteors per hour could hit the earth's atmosphere at the height of the barrage, expected to last about an hour starting at 1943 GMT today or 0343 GMT tomorrow in Hong Kong.

Europe, where night will be falling, will also be able to enjoy the show, but won't have as good a view as those in Asia.

US stargazers will be less fortunate — the most spectacular show will take place at 1443 GMT Washington Time, when the continental United States is bathed in daylight.

But some shooting stars should still be visible that night over the United States, specialists say.

Japan's National Astronomical Observatory has decided to transmit the event live on the Internet for interested viewers from the observatories at Saji, in the Tottori prefecture.

Next year, Europe and North Africa will be well-placed to see another meteor storm that could be seen more captivatingly, astronomers say.

# Off the Record

## Heat treatment to cure drug addicts

MOSCOW: Scientists in snow-bound Siberia are attempting to cure drug addicts with the one thing that's always in short supply in this isolated region — heat, reports AP.

According to a new treatment developed in the city of Novosibirsk, patients are stripped of their addictions when their bodies are heated to the point of hyperthermia, Interfax News Agency reported Sunday.

The process exposes patients to temperatures so high that they are "incompatible with life" — up to 43.5 degrees Celsius (111 Fahrenheit), the report said.

The treatment, authored by specialist Alexei Suvarnev, has an inherent "chemical protection remedy" to guard against thermal shock.

## Grandma hits the jackpot!

LOS ANGELES: A 67-year-old grandmother who fed slot machines on regular basis for more than two decades won a record 27.6 million dollars slot jackpot at a Las Vegas casino, reports AP.

The woman, who was not identified, did not immediately realise she had won until fellow slot players at the palace state hotel Casino ran through the establishment Sunday announcing the news said casino spokesman Jack Taylor.

"This is the largest slot machine jackpot in history," Taylor said.

She won 27,582,539.48 at the super megabucks slot machine that is linked to 700 slot machines in 33 locations in Nevada, they share a combined jackpot that starts at five million dollars.

Six weeks ago she won 680,000 playing the wheel of fortune.

"She's still thinking about what to do with her winnings but she said she did plan to share it with her family, Taylor said. She will be paid 1.1 million dollars over 25 years.