Iraq demands receipt for documents

Iraq said it refused to let United Nations weapons inspectors leave documents on Thursday, a move that could result in a search next week by the inspectors who would not give Iraq soldiers a receipt. UN officials said that the papers show Iraq has been developing nuclear weapons.

A statement from Iraq's Foreign Ministry, released by the official Iraqi News agency, said that Iraq had a "right" to get a receipt in return for the documents. The statement said that officials asked for a receipt to prevent the team from later producing "altered papers" that would be attributed to Iraq.

The statement said that the UN team refused Iraq's request for a receipt, a condition which Iraq said was previously agreed to by all inspection teams. UN officials said earlier that Iraq soldiers detained the inspection for more than 12 hours in a Baghdad building, then took the documents away by force. UN officials made no mention of a dispute over a receipt.

And in Washington, President Bush said that Saddam Hussein must comply with the UN resolution that calls for the destruction of Iraq's nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. Bush has warned that he might resort to US weapons to escort UN inspection flights in Iraq if Hussein refuses to cooperate. While Bush did not make any threats or set any deadlines in his UN speech, administration officials are reportedly making it clear that the US is still willing to use force. White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater said that some sort of military action may be necessary.

Armenia declares independence

The Soviet news agency Tass reported yesterday that the republic of Armenia has declared its independence. The news agency said that the republic's parliament unanimously approved independence after a referendum that was held on Sunday. It said that more than 99 percent of the residents voted for independence.

Meanwhile, talks are taking place between Armenia and the neighboring republic of Azerbaijan concerning the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh, which is in Armenian hands but has a large Armenian population. Armenia has reportedly offered to renounce its claim to Nagorno-Karabakh in return for an independent government in that territory. Those talks are being mediated by Russian President Boris Yeltsin and others.

Hostage to be released in 24 hours

A pro-Iranian kidnapping faction in Beirut said yesterday that it would release British hostage Jack Macri within 48 hours of the announcement. A handwritten communique from the Revolutionary Justice Organization said that it decided to free Macri as a result of "immense efforts" by United Nations Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar. The communique, which was in Arabic, was delivered to the Beirut newspaper Al Nahar, along with a photograph of American hostage Joseph Cicippio. Revolutionary Justice is reported to be holding both Macri and Cicippio.

Health Secretary expresses doubts over future of medical coverage

Health Secretary Louis H. Sullivan expressed serious doubts on Monday over claims that medical costs could be slashed with less red tape, but announced that he will oversee insurance executives soon to pursue the prospect. Sullivan said he believes some savings can be achieved by streamlining administrative burdens. He dismissed several recent studies that concluded large cuts could be realized.

Sullivan said he "has become increasingly concerned that the public is being given a very misleading picture of the potential cost savings achievable through administrative costs."

The scope of the administrative burden is being a rallying call among those who want radical health-care reforms, including a potential run for medical coverage.

Wealth

Three thousand rally for more benefits

About 3,000 people, many of them jobless workers, took part in a spirited rally at Government Center in Boston yesterday. The rally, held in front of the John F. Kennedy building, was to support a 26-week extension of unemployment benefits.

Democratic Senator Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts and his nephew, Congressman Joseph P. Kennedy, were there along with Mayne Raymond Flynn and labor leaders. They cited in eyebrow passage of the bill. They reported that many workers are now out of benefits due to the recession and cannot find jobs.

President Bush earlier declined to declare an emergency to fund the bill.

Weather

Fall gets off to a wet start

The first week of fall in New England will be a wet one. A cyclone developing in the southeastern US will track to the north this week. Southeasterly winds will provide the necessary moisture for the opening rain event. Snow is not anticipated for the latter portion of the week.

Tuesday afternoon: Partly to mostly cloudy and a bit cooler. High 66°F (19°C).

Tuesday evening: Cloudy with areas of fog developing. Rain returning from the south at night. Low 56°F (13°C).


Forecast by Michael C. Morgan

Compiled by Joyce Marquez

The Tech's Response Line

Do you have an opinion on an issue, or a comment about anything you saw in The Tech? Then tell us at 258-8219.