

THE DAILY Star ON FRIDAY

COMMITTED TO People's Right to Know

Arab volunteers fight on Fear, anger, relief at Saddam's fall

STAR DESK
US-led invading forces have not yet won the Iraq war, as a heavy gun battle continued yesterday around a Baghdad mosque where President Saddam Hussein was rumoured to be hiding.
A US marine was killed and more than 20 were injured in the four-hour firefight that began at about 9.30am Iraqi time (0630 BST).
Anglo-American soldiers came under rocket-propelled grenade.

mortar and AK-47 fire from what appeared to be a unit of Republican Guards as they attempted to search the Imam al-Adham mosque, which is beside the Tigris in the Aadhamiya district of northwest Baghdad.
Non-Iraqi Arab volunteer fighters were in control of several streets in the Aadhamiya district, where the mosque is located, and also in the nearby Waziriya district. A Reuters correspondent saw Arab fighters manning checkpoints and patrol



US marines protect a road leading to the Palestine Hotel near Baghdad's al-Fardous square yesterday. In small pockets of the city, Arab volunteers and Republican Guard soldiers are still fighting the invading forces on the streets.

AGENCIES, London/Baghdad
Concerns about Iraq's future and where the United States might next unleash its awesome military might tempered widespread relief yesterday that Saddam Hussein's grip had fallen away so easily.
His 24-year reign appeared to have ended on Wednesday when US troops swept into the heart of Baghdad and jubilant Iraqis danced on a toppled statue of their ousted leader.
But relief in many countries that Baghdad had fallen without a blood-

bath mingled with mistrust of the United States in parts of Europe and Asia, and shock and anger in the Middle East.
Some wondered whether President Bush, emboldened by military success, would turn his attention to other nations Washington has accused of pursuing weapons of mass destruction.
Syria, Iran and Libya have all drawn US censure, along with North Korea.
The New York Times said the collapse of government authority in

Looters rule Baghdad

AGENCIES, Baghdad
Looting surged and government buildings were set on fire across Baghdad yesterday while US troops concentrated more on fighting pockets of resistance than on keeping order.
Tens of thousands of people -- young and old, men and women -- roamed the city in the second round of

looting to hit Baghdad since Wednesday, with American forces making little or no effort to stop them as they carried off TV sets, refrigerators and carpets.
The German embassy and the French cultural centre in Baghdad were also looted. Dozens of people

Iraqi embassy stops operation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Iraq's Embassy has ceased to operate in Dhaka and the ambassador gone on a "holiday".
A spokesman of the embassy told

the press that the holiday would last for 'a few days'. He would not say when the embassy would reopen.
Chargé d'affaires of Iraqi

US embassy worried over discrimination allegation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The US embassy has expressed concern over a report published in The Daily Star on Tuesday, which said a Kuwaiti company has placed discriminatory advertisements in Indian newspapers, allegedly on behalf of the US Army.
"If this incident is true as reported, it is against US law," said a statement signed by Director of the American Centre Karl Fritz on Wednesday.
Race, religion, gender or ethnicity cannot be the basis for discrimination against applicants for employment by the US government including employment

DFP's black hole of plunder 194 cases of tender forgery, false billing unearthed

REZAUL KARIM
The Department of Films and Publication (DFP) has turned into a black hole of public money plunder where all sorts of corruption including false billing, forgery and bribing run rampant.
Authorities uncovered 194 cases of tender forgery in a range of unbelievable ways involving crores of Taka last year.
Some top officials of DFP, an important department of the Ministry of Information, in collaboration with wheeler-dealer contractors, top bureaucrats and press workers pocket the public fund.
Their tactics include false billing, publishing advertisements in name-only newspapers, getting advertise-

ments printed in major dailies craftily without the knowledge of authorities concerned and influencing probe bodies and bribing.
Despite detection of a raft of such cases, the government has not yet taken any action against 'mammonish' DFP officials as they are well-connected with higher authorities even at the Prime Minister's Office and Ministry of Information.
A recent tender forgery by DFP officials sparked furore at the Ministry of Agriculture and the cheating was confirmed later by a probe body.
The forgery came to light when the information ministry last year ordered a probe into a complaint lodged by Agriculture Secretary Ayub Quadri who

pointed out that an advertisement, carrying DFP No 23215-11/9, was totally false.
He said bills were paid against the advertisement published in Daily Inqilab and Daily Banglabazar Patrika regarding "Production of Improved Seeds, Preservation and Distribution Project".
The probe body found his allegation true, as the original advertisement carrying the number was an appointment notice of the deputy commissioner's office at Panchagarh.
The inquiry committee headed by Joint Secretary (Development) Muhammad Afsaruddin, however, 'craftily saved' the corrupt officials, an official said, requesting anonymity.

Besides, drawing bill against false advertisements, the corrupt DFP clique also sell their favour to some contractors by publishing tender notices involving huge amount of money in unknown and poor-circulation newspapers.
They also realise money from the newspapers that include Bhorer Dak, Ajker Protasha, Dhakar Dak, Iteshal, Good Morning, Jalchap, Dainik Banner, Nabo Chetona, Nutun Alo, Rupali, Rupbani, Sabujdesh, Bhorer Awaj, Nawroz, Naba Jagaron, Deshjanata, Janapad, Janabani, Samabesh, Ajker Bhola, Ajker Janodesh, Asia Bani, Ajker Darpan, Desh Potrika, Ajker Batra, Purbavash, Spashtabadi and Sakal Bela.

Garner to be interim administrator

AFP, Washington
Retired US general Jay Garner will head to Baghdad as interim administrator with his team once the shooting stops, Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said on Wednesday.
"They'll move to the Baghdad area at that point that the Baghdad airport is sufficiently secured to take a number of civilians who are not in a combat situation.... as the war kinetics decline," Rumsfeld said.
Garner and his team have been hard at work for weeks, at first from Washington and currently in Kuwait, at a safe distance from Iraq, Rumsfeld said.
"There's a lot more fighting that's going to be done. There's more

War impact limited, yet to be watched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
With the war on Iraq being played out, the immediate adverse impact on Bangladesh economy seems limited as only a few migrant workers had to return home.
Remittance inflow also appears to be steady, economists told a dialogue yesterday.
However, some signs of immediate export dislocation are evident. Petroleum and petroleum products related import costs are on the rise, they noted in an early assessment of the possible impacts of the Iraq war on Bangladesh economy.
Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya, executive director of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), and Professor Mustafizur Rahman, research director, carried out the assessment.
The dialogue on 'The War in Iraq and Economic Implications for Bangladesh' was organised by the CPD at CIRDAP auditorium in Dhaka. Professor Rehman Sobhan chaired it.
Terming the war an unjust one, Prof. Sobhan said the main agenda of the invasion is to break up the Iraqi petroleum companies and control them.
Lawmakers from the ruling BNP,

IMF seeks major bank reforms

STAR REPORT
The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has suggested major reforms in the nationalised commercial banks (NCBs).
At a meeting with Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman yesterday, the visiting IMF team pressed for a major restructuring in the banking sector, especially in the NCBs. It however appreciated some of the government steps in the sector.
The team's visit ahead of the next budget is being viewed as significant

