



Saddam still in Iraq, says Chalabi

AFP, London

Toppled Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein is still in Iraq, a key Iraqi opposition leader, Ahmad Chalabi, told BBC radio yesterday.

"Yes, he is in Iraq. Yes, he is moving around," Chalabi, who heads the Iraqi National Congress, said in an interview.

"We have received information about his movements and the movements of his sons," he said, but added that the information reached Chalabi's sources too late for them to locate Saddam before he had moved on again.

"We cannot locate Saddam so that we would have a coincidence of time and position simultaneously ... But we are aware of his movements and we are aware of the areas that he has been to and we learn of this within 12 to 24 hours," Chalabi said.

Saddam tops the list of 55 Iraqi officials most wanted by the United States, seven of whom have been captured.

Reuters adds: The United States shows no sign of knowing where the toppled Iraqi president is, or even whether he is still alive.

Most speculation has focused on Syria as a hiding place, but Middle East analysts say it is unlikely Damascus would harbour him because of the risk that Washington would make it the next target of its global war on terror.

They say Saddam, who was

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2 more Saddam aides captured

AFP, Qatar

The US Central Command in Qatar yesterday announced the capture of two more men on its list of 55 wanted former Iraqi officials, bringing to seven the number seized since the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime.

Iraq's former scientific research and higher education minister Human abd al-Khaliq al-Ghafar was captured Saturday and was in US custody, Lieutenant Herb Josey said.

The Command added the Iraqi opposition was reportedly holding Jamal Mustafa Abdullah Sultan, a son-in-law of Saddam and deputy head of the tribal affairs office, and would turn him over to coalition forces in Baghdad.

A spokesman for the Iraqi National Congress in London said Sultan and a member of Saddam's elite Republican Guard who surrendered with him, were in INC custody in Baghdad and would be handed over soon.

Sultan is the nine of clubs in the most wanted deck of playing cards issued by the US military, while al-Khaliq is the four of hearts. Saddam, number one on the list, is the ace of spades.

Tk 1.35 cr gold haul at ZIA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Customs at Zia International Airport (ZIA) seized gold bars worth about Tk 1.35 crore Sunday night.

Officials detained an incoming passenger, Mohammad Javed, when he was about to pass through the green channel in the late hours of Sunday. Javed arrived at Dhaka by a Bangladesh Biman flight, BG-018, from London via Dubai.

The passenger was taken to the customs counter and was thoroughly searched. One hundred and sixty five gold bars weighing 10 tola each were found wrapped in a cloth fastened to his body.

Javed was handed over to airport police and a case was filed in this regard.

The gold bars were deposited at the customs warehouse. A departmental case was also filed.

PHOTO: STAR

Priority agenda on Buriganga fixed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The committee for implementing recommendations of the cabinet division on Buriganga river at a meeting yesterday fixed its priority agenda to save the river from pollution and encroachment on its banks.

The meeting felt the need for immediate implementation of six of the 31 decisions the cabinet earlier approved, according to sources. However, the meeting did not set any timeframe for the implementation.

Presided over by Shipping Minister Akbar Hossain, the meeting, the first

after formation of the committee, set terms of reference of the ministries, divisions and departments concerned to protect the Buriganga.

"It would be a coordinated effort, and the committee would suggest the authorities concerned to make it effective," said a meeting source.

Also attended by Forest and Environment Minister Shahjahan Siraj, State Minister for Law Shajahan Omar, the meeting further agreed to sit at least once a month to monitor the progress on execution of the recommendations made by a taskforce formed last year on saving the

Buriganga.

The meeting suggested implementation of a ban on brick kiln within 250 metres of the bank of the river, completion of the land survey according to the CF records and initiation of a river route around the city to reduce pressure on the Buriganga.

It underscored implementation of mandatory provision for obtaining permission from the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority for work on overhead line and the riverbed. Removal of siltation

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BNP leader gunned down by outlaws in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Noor Hossain, 36, General Secretary of Phultala unit of BNP, was gunned down by unidentified assailants on Sunday night.

Noor Hossain came under attack while he was returning home at village Tartipur from Phultala Bazar along with his elder brother, Abul Hossain, 40, in a three-wheelervan.

Witnesses said the assailants stopped the vehicle near Shikirhat and sprayed bullets. Noor Hossain was shot in the chest and abdomen. He died on the spot.

The slain BNP leader's brother Abul Hossain and van driver Azim, 30, also received bullet wounds in the attack.

Abul Hossain was admitted to the Khulna Medical College Hospital (KMCH) in a critical condition while

driver Azim succumbed to his injuries on way to the hospital.

The killers also exploded bombs during the attack. They left the scene raising slogans in the name of Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP).

Police said ten rounds of bullets were sprayed on BNP leader who was proprietor of 'Shihab Fish Company' at Phultala bazar.

According to a source in police super's office, Noor Hossain was also ringleader of notorious 'Jalil Bahini' of Phultala. On July 7, 1999, he surrendered to police taking advantage of general amnesty.

On February 14, 2001, OC of Phultala submitted a charge sheet against him under the Public Safety Act. But he joined BNP after the charge sheet was submitted.

Noor Hossain was arrested on

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JCD leader shot dead in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An armed gang gunned down a Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leader and injured two others at Pallabi in the city yesterday.

Mohammad Sharif Hossain, JCD general Secretary of Ward-5, was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where doctors declared him dead.

Of the injured, JCD president of the ward Nausher Hossain Dilu was admitted to the DMCH and JCD activist Mosharraf Hossain to the Orthopaedic hospital.

Five armed elements allegedly led by a criminal from the area shot the three inside a telephone service shop owned by Mosharraf.

Local people said the incident was a sequel to previous enmity. Some sources however attributed it to a row over 'domination' of the area.

Pallabi police said at about 9 pm that they were aware of the incident but they could not give details as their men were yet to return from the place of occurrence.



PHOTO: STAR

South Africa captain Graeme Smith (L) holds the TVS Cup with his Indian counterpart Saurav Ganguly after the teams were declared joint champions.



PHOTO: STAR

THUNDERCLOUDS ARE ON THE MOVE! The skies above the Bangabandhu National Stadium send ominous signals during the Indian innings in the final of the TVS Cup yesterday.

UPDF leader killed, two abducted in Rangamati

UNB, Rangamati

A leader of the United People's Democratic Front (UPDF) was gunned down and two of its activists were kidnapped by their rivals at Chouchalabil in the hill district on Sunday.

The dead was identified as Sundar Chakma, 28.

Police and locals said the gunmen abducted UPDF activists Nil Chandra Chakma, 25, and Kaijia Chakma, 27.

Some 15-20 cadres allegedly belonging to Parbatya Chattogram Jano Snaghati Samity (PCJSS) attacked the house of Sundarban Chakma and sprayed bullets on him. He died on the spot.

They kidnapped Nil Chandra and Kaijia from the house at gun point.

On information, a joint team of police and security forces rushed to the scene and recovered the body.

Ministry ditches Petrobangla, forms body on recruitment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Ministry of Energy last week unilaterally formed a five-member committee on recruitment of executives on contract to restructure three gas companies.

State-owned Petrobangla had advertised in the press in February to hire executives to make Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution Company Ltd. (TGTDCL), Gas Transmission Company Ltd (GTCL) and Rupantarita Prakritik Gas Ltd (RPGCL) more commercial and competitive.

The advertisement sought managing directors for the companies, and general managers for operation and

finance departments.

The Petrobangla, which owns these companies, is supposed to oversee the recruitment, but the ministry arbitrarily formed the committee with a professor of the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) as its chairman.

Interestingly, the chairman of Petrobangla himself is now a member of the five-man board.

The legal structure designates Petrobangla as the authority to appoint the managing directors.

The cabinet on April 6 had observed that interference into the running of the nine companies of

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Iraqis sceptical about Garner

Russia insists on UN arms inspectors declaring Iraq free of WMD

STAR DESK

ay Garner, the retired US general overseeing Iraq's reconstruction, arrived in Baghdad yesterday to see for himself the devastation suffered by the capital.

But his promise to work all out to repair the damage failed to convince Iraqis who faced the worst nightmare during the US-led bombardment.

In a sign of tensions with Iraqi leaders emerging after the fall of Saddam Hussein, Garner's team said the United States did not recognise the authority of an Iraqi who has declared

himself governor of Baghdad. And not all Baghdad residents welcomed the US-led team tasked with rebuilding their country.

"What better day in your life can you have than to be able to help somebody else, to help other people, and that is what we intend to do," Garner, head of the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA), told reporters on arrival.

Garner visited a hospital ransacked by looters and deprived of electricity, and an abandoned sewage treatment plant.

He said his priority was to restore

basic services such as water and electricity. Asked what the greatest challenge was, he said: "Everything is the challenge."

At the Yarmuk hospital in southern Baghdad, Garner was led through dark, dusty corridors littered with broken glass and shown wards stripped by looters of everything except beds.

"What we need to do from this day forward is to give birth to a new system in Iraq," he told doctors at the hospital. "It begins with us working together, but it is hard work

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Rain calls final shot India, SA joint champions

SPORTS REPORTER

The TVS Cup tri-nation tournament that began in glorious sunshine on April 11 was blown away by rain at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

It was a damp finish to the 10-day event after rain forced another futile attempt to hold the final between India and South Africa for a second successive day.

On Sunday the contest of between two worthy opponents did not take off because of heavy showers, forcing the match to go into Monday, a reserve day.

But after only 17.1 overs in front of a good crowd, the elements played spoilsport forcing a sad end to the competition, which had not seen a drop of rain during the preliminary phase.

Both India and South Africa were

declared joint champions.

But South Africa could claim themselves morale victors after they had India on the ropes at 46-3.

Indian captain Saurav Ganguly won the opening bowlers Shaun Pollock and Makhaya Ntini bowled with precision.

Nitini took two wickets after Pollock removed dangerous Virender Sehwag in the seventh over. Ganguly (11) was fighting to hold the fort together with fellow southpaw Yuvraj Singh when the rain came down heavily.

The bright blue sky turned ominously dark as a strong breeze started to blow over the big bowl. The nor'wester even forced an early

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