

# Saddam 'message' casts shadow as Bush warns of further US strikes

AFP, Baghdad

The spectre of Saddam Hussein loomed as large as ever over Iraq on Saturday against the backdrop of US President George W. Bush marking Independence Day by reminding terrorists and tyrants of US resolve.

Saddam returned to haunt the Iraqi people after an ominous warning on satellite TV, purportedly from the deposed dictator, suggested he was still in the country directing cells of "holy warriors" against coalition forces.

In Dayton, Ohio, Bush lauded his nation's efforts in the fight against tyranny and terrorism.

"Without America's active involvement in the world, the ambitions of tyrants would go unopposed, and millions would live at mercy of terrorists. With Americans' active involvement in the world, tyrants learn to fear, and terrorists are on the run," he said.

Saddam's taped message, broadcast on Qatar's Al-Jazeera television, served only to increase the resolve of US force seeking to flush him out from wherever he may be hiding, assuming he is still alive.

Sergeant Amy Abbott told AFP Saturday coalition forces were pursuing Operation Sidewinder, the hunt for followers of Saddam's ousted Baathist

regime north of Baghdad where anti-coalition guerrilla attacks have been taking place.

"It is continuing without any hindrance whatsoever," she stressed, adding defiantly: "The operation will be effective regardless."

The voice on the tape said Saddam and his aides were still in the country, and directed cells of "holy warriors" to fight coalition forces.

"I bring you glad tidings, O brethren, sons and heroes, that the cells and brigades of jihad and sacrifice have been formed on a large scale, comprising male and female mujahedeen (holy warriors), and launched their honorable battle against the enemy," the voice said.

"What will come in the days ahead will, God willing and with His help, be tough on the infidel invaders and honorable for the believers."

"I call on you to provide a cover for the heroic mujahedeen and not to give the infidel invaders and their collaborators any information about them and their activities," said the voice.

The supposed former Iraqi leader, whose whereabouts have been a mystery since US-led forces seized Baghdad on April 9, told the Iraqi people: "I miss you, my beloved ones, although I am amidst you and within your ranks."

## Monsoon hits Delhi: 4 killed in wall collapse

PTI, New Delhi

Heavy rains lashed the capital on Saturday morning as the monsoon hit the city and the adjoining areas, a week behind schedule, bringing much respite from the sweltering heat.

Delhiites woke up to a cool morning with rains plummeting the mercury five degrees below normal to 22.8 degrees.

The city has received 62.7 mm rains since 4 am, Met office said.

The heavy downpour led to a wall collapse in Roshanara road of the city killing four persons, including two women, died.

Six persons were rescued from the rubble and search was on for some others feared trapped in it, police said.

Bringing along its share of woes, office-goers had a tough time as the rains led to water logging in several areas causing traffic jams.



PHOTO: AFP  
Commuters push their bicycles through rising floodwaters on a road in New Delhi on Saturday as heavy rain lashed the city. The long awaited monsoons rains have finally arrived to the joy of some and discomfort of others, especially those trying to get to work.



PHOTO: AFP  
A group of protesters hold a US flag with a peace sign in place of the stars, during an anti-war rally and march at Franklin Square Park on Independence Day on Friday in Philadelphia. Protesters demonstrated against the war with Iraq, declaring President Bush a war criminal.

## Musharraf terms Indo-Pak talks process 'too slow'

'Pakistan has no nuke ties with N Korea, Iran'

ANI, London

Talks between India and Pakistan are moving at a snail's pace Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf told reporters in Paris, adding that a certain pace was required to "break the ice."

"The Indians can take their time and ensure that the process of dialogue begins without further loss of time. In my view, four actions are urgently required. Firstly, the talks should be initiated; secondly, we should accept that all pending issues should be discussed simultaneously; thirdly, Kashmir should not be sidelined and lastly a win-win situation principal should be kept in mind to deal with all left-out issues," The News quoted Musharraf as saying at a news conference in the French capital.

"I personally feel that the best way of resolving the dispute, ideally, is on a bilateral basis," he added.

Efforts were made to sideline the Kashmir dispute issue, which

was "untenable." He said he was aware of the difficulties in the use of word "mediation," adding that some other word could be found. "It could be "mediation, facilitation or encouragement or whatever but there is a role being played now even behind the scenes to encourage this process of dialogue to start."

He said he had never alleged that the Indian government was moving slowly to start the talks process. What he said was that the speed of the talks process was slow.

Pakistan and India should try to find solutions to all issues, including Kashmir, acceptable to all the parties including Kashmiris.

On the issue of cross-border terrorism, Musharraf said "We have done all we could. We have only 60,000 troops in our side of Kashmir while India has deployed over 700,000 troops there. Let India do its part."

When asked what he told world community leaders during his recent visits abroad, he said: "I

have conveyed to the world leaders that it was high time for India to realise the importance of peace in the region. If India does not realise it will be unfortunate."

"I discussed this issue with President Bush, Prime Minister Tony Blair, Chancellor Schroeder and President Chirac during my current visit and I am very encouraged with their response to Pakistan's point of view."

Meanwhile, Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf has categorically rejected allegations by the international community that Islamabad has and is extending nuclear cooperation to North Korea and Iran.

Talking to newsmen in Paris, Musharraf said: "There is no relationship with North Korea either at conventional or non-conventional levels. We purchased surface-to-air missile from North Korea some time back and now we are producing the same type of missiles at home. There is no conventional or unconventional agreement with Pyongyang."

## HK bows to pressure on anti-subversion bill

REUTERS, Hong Kong

Hong Kong leader Tung Chee-hwa, struggling to defuse the territory's biggest political crisis in years, bowed to popular protest on Saturday and said he would delete two controversial clauses of an anti-subversion bill.

One would have given police sweeping search powers and the other would have allowed the banning of groups in Hong Kong if they were outlawed on the mainland.

"After repeated and detailed discussions, we have decided to make amendments to further allay people's fears," Tung told a news conference, looking weary after days of crisis talks with his cabinet and senior advisers.

"I hope that after making the changes it will gain the acceptance of legislators."

The government will also strengthen safeguards to freedom of the press. Journalists who disclose Chinese state secrets will be

able to defend themselves by saying they are acting in the public interest.

Hundreds of thousands of protesters took to Hong Kong's streets on Tuesday to denounce the anti-subversion law in the city's biggest demonstration since the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre.

Critics of the law fear it will trample basic human rights and that dissent may soon be treated the same way it is in mainland China. The Falun Gong spiritual group, for instance, practices freely in Hong Kong but has been banned in China as an "evil cult."

Many want the bill postponed outright to allow for more public consultation, the most important piece of legislation in Hong Kong since Britain returned it to Chinese rule in 1997.

Several Hong Kong politicians have asked Beijing to step in, stoking fears that the territory's autonomy is under threat.

## Perle compares purge of Iraq's Baath loyalists to post-Hitler Nazis

AFP, Dubai

The purge of former officials of Saddam Hussein's Baath regime in Iraq is similar to that carried out in Germany after the fall of the Nazi regime, a top US military advisor said in remarks published Saturday.

Richard Perle, counselor to Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, added in an interview with the Arabic-language Al-Hayat newspaper that it was "difficult" to tell when coalition forces would hand power back to the Iraqi people.

Interference in Iraq's internal affairs, notably by Iran, was one of Washington's main sources of concern, said Perle, a leading advocate of the war in Iraq.

Turning to Iraq's Shiite Muslim majority, Perle said they would not want to swap one dictatorship with another.

On the Middle East crisis, Perle blasted Palestinian Authority president Yasser Arafat, whom he accused of exercising a lot of power without wanting peace with Israel.

But he had praise for Palestinian prime minister Mahmud Abbas, saying he had to be supported "in his fight against Arafat" to bring pacifists to power.

Meanwhile, US forces in Iraq have arrested 11 Turkish soldiers on suspicions of fomenting an attack on a Kurdish governor in northern Iraq, the Turkish media reported on Saturday.

Three officers and eight non-commissioned officers were arrested on Friday in Sulaymaniyah, fiefdom of the Iraqi Kurdish leader Jalal Talabani of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, the Hurriyet newspaper reported.

About 100 US soldiers stormed the local offices of the Turkish special forces after cutting the telephone lines. The 11 soldiers and six employees were taken to the nearby city of Kirkuk, the daily said.

The arrests were carried out on the grounds that "certain Turks were planning to commit an attack on the governor of Kirkuk", Hurriyet continued.



PHOTO: AFP  
Iraqi prisoners, looters and petty criminals are driven away from court in a US military lorry in the center of Baghdad on Saturday. US troops in Iraq continue their hunt for loyalists of Saddam Hussein's toppled regime after the release of his purported taped message on Friday, hailing Iraqi Jihad cells waging daily attacks against US-led invasion forces.



PHOTO: AFP  
A child sits close to one of three displaced people who buried themselves in the ground up to their necks in the Aguablanca district of Cali, Colombia on Friday. The displaced protest because the city's authorities have not provided them with housing.

## RSS adopts resolution demanding temple in Ayodhya

Muslims to debate seer's proposals

PTI, Kanyakumari

The ongoing national executive meeting of RSS in Kanyakumari is learnt to have adopted a resolution on Saturday demanding construction of a Ram temple in Ayodhya.

It also made clear that there could be no compromise on the issues of Kashi and Mathura.

Earlier, the crucial two-day national executive meet of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh began in Kanyakumari on Saturday, for detailed deliberations on issues including the latest negotiating efforts by the Kanchi Shankaracharya to solve the Ayodhya tangle. It will also discuss the VHP's strident attack on the Vajpayee Government on the vexed temple issue.

The two-day meet, inaugurated by RSS Sangh Chalak KS Sudarshan by lighting a traditional lamp at Vivekanandapuram here, the southern tip of the country, is also

slated to discuss other topics such as current Indo-Pak peace initiatives.

About 260 participants including the RSS central office bearers and representatives of the parivar outfits such as VHP top brass Ashok Singhal and Pravin Togadia are attending the conclave. The BJP is represented by former party president Kushabhau Thakre.

Top RSS sources indicated that the meet was likely to come out with a resolution on Ayodhya on Saturday evening.

Other issues to prominently figure in the meet would include the Marad carnage, which left nine persons dead in a fishing hamlet near Kozhikode in Kerala, sources said.

AFP adds: India's main Muslim body will on Sunday discuss a Hindu seer's proposals to solve an explosive religious dispute about the ruins of an ancient mosque in the northern town of Ayodhya.

## 3 carried out Pak mosque attack: Death toll now 48

AFP, Quetta

Three terrorists, including two suicide bombers, carried out the attack on a Muslim Shiite mosque in southwestern Quetta city, the government said Saturday as the death toll rose to 48.

"Two of the attackers blew themselves (up) with bombs attached to their bodies," the Baluchistan provincial government said in a press note.

The third attacker was wounded and died later in hospital, the head of the federal interior ministry's National Crises Management Cell, Brigadier Javed Cheema told AFP.

The country's humanitarian organisation, Edhi Welfare Trust, said four people died in hospital overnight of wounds suffered in the attack Friday afternoon.

The attack triggered violent unrest, forcing the government to impose an indefinite curfew and deploy troops to quell the unrest.

"Four more people have died in the hospital raising the death toll to 48," Edhi's Quetta supervisor Naeem Ahmed told AFP.