

World leaders hail capture

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bring about unity, reconciliation and peace," UK Prime Minister Tony Blair said. "Saddam is gone from power. He won't be coming back, that the Iraqi people now know and it is they who will decide his fate."

The Spanish government, another supporter of the war, also hailed the news.

"The time has come for him to pay for his crimes," said Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar, an outspoken supporter of the war to oust Saddam, despite widespread opposition at home.

France, which has had a rocky relationship with the United States since it led the opposition to the war, said the capture would help stabilize the country and lead to its sovereignty.

"It's a major event that should strongly contribute to democracy and stability in Iraq and allow the Iraqis to master their destiny," French President Jacques Chirac said in a statement.

German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, another foe of the US-led invasion of Iraq, congratulated President Bush.

"With much happiness I learned about the arrest of Saddam Hussein," Schroeder wrote in a letter to Bush released by the German government. "I congratulate you on this successful action."

Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov said, "We think the arrest of Saddam Hussein will contribute to the strengthening of security in Iraq and to the process of political regulation in the country with the active participation of the United Nations."

The government of Jordan said yesterday it hoped that Saddam's capture would contribute to the

dawning of a new era and help the Iraqi people restore law and order in their in their war-ravaged country.

Kuwait Information Minister Mohammed Abulhassan said, "Kuwait today feels more relaxed and assured after the departure of this tyrant and after all are certain now that he will never return. The Kuwaiti people are happy for the Iraqi people."

Japan, Australia and other countries also were quick to applaud the news of Saddam's capture, as a video showing a bearded Saddam being examined by a doctor was broadcast on news channels.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Maher said, "I don't think anyone will be sad over Saddam Hussein."

Israeli President Moshe Katzav said that it was excellent news for Israel.

UN spokesman Farhan Haq said he hoped Saddam's capture would help restore stability.

News of Saddam's capture reverberated among the 500 delegates and other dignitaries at the opening session of Afghanistan's historic constitutional council, being held in Kabul.

Others, like Poland and South Korea, urged caution, warning the arrest could spark retaliation from Saddam's supporters.

Launch security

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Kalim Ullah, chairman of Bangladesh Inland Waterways Passenger Carriers Association.

"Most launch robberies took place for looting firearms from the ansars," he said, justifying the demand for lowering the number of security personnel.

Citing a robbery on a launch, Kalim said the leader of the ansar team left the vessel with the robbers in a sign of links between security personnel and attackers.

The meeting also decided on skill building through training for the embedded ansars and equipping them with modern firearms.

It also made dues and salary clearance certificate from the launches to get surveillance certificates and asked the owners to clear dues and salaries by December every year and pay new ansars one-month advance during recruitment.

About 2,000 large and small launches ply the over 1,000 kms of river with over 1,000 ansars serving in the passenger vessels for security.

Home Secretary Omar Farooq, director general of the Ansar and deputy inspector general (Dhaka range) of the Village Defence Party, director general of shipping, superintendent of police (Dhaka) and chairmen of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority and Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation were also present.

Home Secretary Omar Farooq, director general of the Ansar and deputy inspector general (Dhaka range) of the Village Defence Party, director general of shipping, superintendent of police (Dhaka) and chairmen of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority and Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation were also present.

Judge

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December 6 started camera proceedings to probe the allegations against a judge.

The council restricted disclosure of the proceedings.

Judge Shahidur submitted a written statement to the council on November 17 and denied the allegations.

Summit on info society

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the gap.

As a compromise, states agreed to study the issue further and report back before follow-up summit in Tunis in 2005.

Senior UN officials also agreed it was better to explore improved use of existing resources from the World Bank and other sources before rushing into new finances.

The International Telecommunications Union (ITU), the UN special wing for telecommunications, also came under fire as it failed to get United States of America and Britain participate actively. First world countries like USA and UK maintained low-key presence in the summit but countries from Africa and Asia were vocal.

Meanwhile, an international group of independent researchers attending the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) revealed important technical and legal flaws, relating to data protection and privacy, in the security system used to control access to the UN Summit.

The system not only failed to guarantee the promised high level security but also introduced the very real possibility of constant surveillance of the representatives of the civil society.

During the course of investigation the group called Contra Info was able to register for the summit and obtain an official pass by "just" showing a fake

plastic identity card and being photographed (via a webcam), with no other document or registration number required to obtain the pass.

The limited personal data required for the production of the fake ID and thus register was easily obtained - a name from the WSIS website of participants.

Moreover, the official summit badges, which are made of plastic and the size of a credit card, hide a

"RF smart card" -- a hidden chip that can communicate its information via radio frequency. It carries both a unique identifier associated with the participant, and a radio frequency tag (RFID) that can be "read" when close to a sensor.

These sensors can be located anywhere, from vending machines to the entrance of a specific meeting room allowing electronic identification and tracking of participants, or groups of participants, attending the event.

The data relating to the cardholder (personal details, access authorisation, account information and photograph) is not stored on the smart card itself, but instead managed by a centralised database.

This solution enables the centralised system to monitor closely every movement of the participants at the entrance of the conference centre, or using data mining techniques, the human interaction of the participants and their relationship. The system can potentially be extended to track participants' movements within the summit and detect their presence at particular sessions.

Because all of the personal data is stored in a centralised database, any part of the database can be replicated locally, or transferred to future events -- for example in the next WSIS Summit to be hosted by Tunisia in 2005.

During the registration process Contra Info requested information about the future use of the picture and other information that was taken, and the built-in functionality of the seemingly innocent plastic badge.

No public information or privacy policy was available on demand that could indicate the purpose, processing or retention periods of the data collected. The registration personnel were obviously not properly informed and trained, blamed Contra Info.

2 on-duty docs stabbed in emergency room

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Miscrants stabbed two persons including an on-duty doctor allegedly for not paying toll at Muktagachha Upazila Health Complex at around 7:15pm Saturday.

The victims are Madhab Das, medical officer of the health complex, and Waj Ali, 50.

Police said the gang entered the emergency room and stabbed Madhab in his left hand. They also stabbed Ali, who tried to save the doctor.

Seriously injured Madhab was rushed to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH).

The upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) and local police rushed to the spot after the incident. Civil Surgeon Mahmud Hossain also visited the health complex yesterday morning.

Police arrested Hamu, Rezvy and Liton for their alleged involvement in the incident.

A case was filed.

Contraband medicines seized at ZIA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Customs officials seized contraband medicines reportedly worth about Tk 7.14 lakh from a Pakistan national at ZIA International Airport (ZIA) yesterday.

Faisal Khan, a Pak national, landed in Dhaka at 4:30am on a Biman Flight (BG-032) from Karachi, and claimed he had nothing illegal or worth paying tax in his luggage. But he forcibly tried to cross immigration green channel where officials wanted to scan his three bags.

Being suspicious, customs officials asked him to go to immigration counter and at this Faisal tried to break through the cordoned officials.

Security personnel later caught him and medicines including Premarin, Aldactone and Calan tablets and Neurobin ampoules were found in his bags, ZIA officials said.

Faisal, son of Sanubar Khan of Street No. 04, Naved Officers' Colony, Mirpur Road, Karachi, was handed over to Airport Police Station and a case was filed against him.

In another incident yesterday, Customs, Surveillance and Investigation Directorate (CSID) officials seized 300,000 yards of unannounced fabric rolls reportedly worth about Tk 3.5 lakh from Kamalapur Inland Container Depot.

Sayed Traders, a trading agency, imported the unannounced fabric rolls from Thailand announcing 80,000 yards of clothes in a container and tried to smuggle in the clothes evading about Tk 6 lakh in customs duties, a CSID official said.

2 pirates killed

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the trawler, Sohrab Hossain, officer-in-charge of Manpura Police Station told local journalists later. The pirates reportedly plunged their arms into the river.

Two separate cases were lodged against them with Monpura Police Station.

US ready

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the overall security of the region, contributing to heightened trade and investment," the ambassador said.

Counter-terrorism has been a key factor in US policy in South Asia and worldwide since September 11 of 2001, which would continue to defeat anti-democratic forces, he said adding, "As President Bush made it clear, we are committed to this goal and are in the fight against terrorism."

He lauded the role of Bangladesh in sending peacekeeping missions to trouble torn countries. The US envoy observed that Bangladesh faced some key challenges like political violence combined with corruption and hartal, which caused negative impact on its economy and image.

"I cannot understand the continuing use of hartals -- violent or not -- as a means of venting grievances" he said adding, "The policy of hartal is old think and an independent democratic Bangladesh deserves better." He stressed the need for upholding the cause of tolerance and democracy for nation's prosperity.

Turning to trade and investment the ambassador said that United States remains the biggest investor in Bangladesh, with one third of all Bangladeshi exports going to the US.

"Bangladesh enjoys an annual trade balance with US of more than 1 billion dollars. Our bilateral trade and investment framework agreement is nearing final stage of negotiation and would establish a bilateral council to promote trade, resolve disputes and remove investment hurdles," the envoy said.

Among other members of Lions Club who addressed the function were Alhaj Rafique Ahmed, A Qaiyum Chowdhury, Mahub Ali and ANM Saifuddin.

Special tribunal

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in time and those issues will be resolved in the near future," Sanchez said.

The tribunal will cover crimes committed from July 17, 1968 -- the day Saddam's Baath Party came to power -- until May 1, 2003 -- the day President Bush declared major hostilities over, said Abdel-Aziz al-Hakim, the current president of the Iraqi Governing Council. Saddam became president in 1979 but wielded vast influence starting from the early 1970s.

The tribunal will try cases stemming from mass executions of Iraqi Kurds in the 1980s, as well as the suppression of uprisings by Kurds and Shia Muslims soon after the 1991 Gulf War.

The legal framework also draws on international law, including Rwanda's genocide tribunal and the legal code used to create the United Nations' International Criminal Court, a body the Bush administration opposes. Al-Hakim said it would also use the Geneva Conventions as a point of reference.

Prosecutors will use a growing cache of documents seized from the former regime. Evidence also will come from the excavation of some of the 270 mass graves in Iraq that are believed to hold at least 300,000 sets of remains.

Some of those are already in coalition custody, including former foreign minister Tariq Aziz, former

vice president Taha Yassin Ramadan and Ali Hassan al-Majid, known as "Chemical Ali" for his role in chemical attacks on Kurds in the 1980s.

The coalition authority now holds at least 5,500 people in detention centers, but it isn't known how many of those are war crimes suspects.

The US occupation authority suspended using the death penalty, and Iraqi officials have said they will decide whether to reinstate it when a transitional government assumes sovereignty as scheduled on July 1.

The trials would be open to the public, human rights groups and news media, suggesting they could be televised. Their work is not expected to begin for months.

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Nation pays homage

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long War of Liberation.

Renowned academics, doctors, engineers, journalists, teachers and other eminent personalities were dragged blind-folded out of their residences in the city and killed in cold blood to cripple the new-born nation intellectually.

Their bodies were dumped at Rayerbazar, Mirpur and some other places on the city's outskirts. People across the country observed the day through various programmes including hoisting of black flag and the national flag at half-mast, seminars, discussion meetings and silent processions.

In the city, different political parties, socio-cultural and professional bodies, student organisations, members of the martyrs' families and people in general visited the Martyred Intellectuals Mausoleum at Mirpur and Rayerbazar memorial and placed wreaths from early morning yesterday.

President Iajuddin Ahmed, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar placed wreaths at the Mirpur Martyred Intellectuals Mausoleum in the morning.

The president paid tribute to the martyred intellectuals of the country through placing wreath at the mausoleum at Mirpur early in the morning.

Immediately after the departure of the president, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia arrived at the mausoleum and placed wreath to pay her tribute to the slain intellectuals. Members of the cabinet were present at the time.

Khaleda Zia also placed a wreath on behalf of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP).

Leader of the Opposition and

Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina placed wreath at the mausoleum to pay tribute to the martyrs in the morning. Senior leaders of AL were present on the occasion. Later she visited the Rayerbazar memorial along with senior leaders to pay tribute.

From early morning yesterday, members of the martyrs' families representatives of different political parties, social, cultural and professional organisations paid tributes to the memory of the martyrs at the Martyred Intellectuals Mausoleum at Mirpur.

President Iajuddin Ahmed, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina in separate messages on the eve of the day paid homage to the martyred Bangalee intelligentsia.

Newspapers brought out special supplements highlighting the significance of the day. Bangladesh Betar and Bangladesh Television aired special programmes on the day.

The Dhaka University authorities brought out a silent procession led by Vice Chancellor Prof SMA Faiz, placed wreaths at the graves of martyrs on the campus and at the mausoleum at Mirpur. They also held a discussion meeting.

A group of young boys and girls enacted the gruesome scene of the slain intellectuals discovered on January 5 in 1972 at the site on which the Rayerbazar memorial now stands. Prajanma Ekattur arranged the show.

The organisations and institutions, which observed the day, among others, were 11-party alliance and their student wings, Shilpakala Academy, Bangladesh Medical Association, Bangabandhu Lalitkala Academy and Sonar Bangla Jubo Parishad.

Saddam legacy

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July 1968: Saddam helps plot the coup that puts the Baath Party back in power, deposing President Abdul-Rahman Aref.

March 1975: As vice-president of the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), Saddam signs a border agreement with the Shah of Iran, who ends support for an Iraqi Kurdish revolt, causing its collapse.

July 16, 1979: Takes power after President Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr steps aside as chairman of the RCC.

Sept 22, 1980: Following border skirmishes, Saddam launches war on Iran that lasts eight years.

March 16, 1988: Iraqi forces launch chemical attack on Iraqi Kurdish town of Halabja, killing about 5,000 people.

Aug 20, 1988: A ceasefire is officially implemented in the Iran-Iraq war. The campaign against Kurds continues.

Aug 2, 1990: Launches invasion of Kuwait, prompting UN Security Council to impose sanctions on Iraq.

Jan 17, 1991: US-led forces start Gulf War with air attacks on Iraq and occupied Kuwait.

Feb 28, 1991: Hostilities end with eviction of Iraqi forces from Kuwait.

April 3, 1991: UN Security Council orders Iraq to scrap chemical, biological, nuclear and long-range missile programmes.

Oct 15, 1995: Saddam wins a presidential referendum and is elected unopposed with more than 99 percent of the vote.

Feb 23, 1996: Two senior

Iraqi defectors, both married to Saddam's daughters, are reported murdered by relatives just days after returning from Jordan.

Oct 15, 2002: Official results show Saddam wins 100 percent of votes in a referendum for a new term in office.

Dec 7, 2002: Saddam apologises for invasion of Kuwait but blames the emirates' leadership. Kuwait rejects the apology.

Feb 2, 2003: In his first interview in more than a decade, Saddam denies Baghdad has banned weapons or any links to al-Qaeda.

March 15: Saddam puts Iraq on a war footing, dividing the country into four military districts and putting his younger son Qusay in command of the vital Baghdad-Tikrit area.

March 20: US launches war against Iraq with strikes on Baghdad targeting "very senior" leadership. Saddam later appears on TV urging Iraqis to defend their country.

April 7: US aircraft drop 2,000lb (900-kg) bombs on a building in a residential area of Baghdad after US intelligence reports indicate that Saddam and his two sons might have been inside with other Iraqi leaders.

April 9: US forces sweep into the heart of Baghdad to an ecstatic welcome as Saddam Hussein's 24-year rule crumbles.

July 22: US military confirms that Saddam's two sons, Uday and Qusay, were killed in gun battle in Mosul.

Dec 14: US officials announce capture of Saddam.

Blast misses Musharraf's vehicle

AP, Islamabad

A bomb exploded minutes after a motorcade carrying the Pakistani president passed a road near the capital yesterday, but no one was hurt, officials said.

The blast damaged a bridge in Rawalpindi, about 10 miles from the capital, Islamabad, but President Gen. Pervez Musharraf was not harmed, state television PTV reported.

Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed told the news agency that the president was returning to his home at Army House in Rawalpindi from the city's airport after a visit to the southern city of Karachi.

Ahmed said it was a bomb explosion and an investigation was under way.

Maj. Gen. Shaukat Sultan, a military spokesman, confirmed that the explosion happened soon after the president's vehicle passed.

"His cavalcade had passed safely," he said. He declined to elaborate on who might have carried out such an attack on the president.

GEO TV, a private network, reported the blast happened 10 minutes after Musharraf passed the spot in Rawalpindi.

Musharraf, the army chief, topped an elected government in 1999 in a bloodless coup.

There have been at least two past attempts to assassinate the Pakistani leader.

Both attacks failed, one when a car packed with explosives failed to detonate as Musharraf passed on a congested road in the southern port city of Karachi. Five militants were arrested for involvement in that attack.

Musharraf earned the wrath of hard-line Islamic groups after he chose to abandon the Taliban regime of neighboring Afghanistan and back the US-led war against Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda regime.

Bomb kills US soldier in Iraq

REUTERS, Baghdad

A US soldier was killed yesterday when an explosive device he was trying to disarm blew up, the US military said in a statement.

"The soldier, a trained explosive ordnance disposal specialist, approached the improvised explosive device to disarm it when the device exploded," the statement said.

US-led occupation forces, facing almost daily attacks, scored a major coup Saturday with the capture of ousted Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein.

Hasina

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tion forces despite being a freedom fighter.

"He rehabilitated Jamaat-e-Islami in the country which was banned by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman for collaborating with the occupiers," she said.

"During Bangabandhu's rule some of the collaborators received punishment and were sent to jail. But, after Ziaur Rahman came to power he freed them and gave them state recognition by bringing changes to the constitution," she added.

Paying homage to the intellectuals who were killed during the Liberation War Hasina said, "The Pakistani army killed our national heroes in a planned way after realising that they were losing the war."

"Some of our people helped them to do the job," she added.

During the discussion Hasina bitterly criticised the government for what she described as total failure to run the country. She said the government is stifling the countryside.

She held the government responsible for the killing of at least 58 people by armed forces in the name of Operation Clean Heart last year. "Who empowered her (prime minister) to deploy armed forces across the country?" Hasina questioned.

She also criticised the government for indemnifying all the activities of Operation Clean Heart by promulgating an ordinance.

The AL chief made a fresh call for forming an alliance of all liberation forces with the objective of ousting the present government.

"Let's join hands yet another time with the spirit of Liberation War against the autocratic rule of BNP-Jamaat-led coalition government," Hasina urged in an emotion-charged voice.

Prior to her speech Hasina inaugurated a three-day programme of her party to observe the Victory Day.

Presided over by Abdus Samad Azad the discussion was also addressed by Tofail Ahmed, Abdul Jalil, Justice KM Sobhan and Obaidul Kader while other senior leaders of the party were present.

The adjacent areas of Bangabandhu Memorial Museum wore a festive look as hundreds of people thronged there yesterday evening to watch a cultural show and photographic exhibition on the liberation war.

Saddam Hussein captured

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spoke on condition of anonymity.

Saddam was captured at 8:30pm Saturday in a walled farm compound in Adwar, a town 10 miles from Tikrit, said Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, the top US military commander in Iraq. The cellar was little more than a specially prepared "spider hole" with just enough space to lie down. Bricks and dirt camouflaged the entrance.

A Pentagon diagram showed the hiding place as a 6-foot-deep vertical tunnel, with a shorter tunnel branching out horizontally from one side. A pipe to the concrete surface at ground level provided air, according to a Pentagon diagram. The hole was inside a small walled compound with a room in one corner and a lean-to attached to the room. The hole was roughly in the middle of the compound.

A US defense official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said Saddam also admitted his identity when captured.

Sanchez, who saw Saddam overnight, said the deposed leader "has been cooperative and is talkative." He described Saddam as "a tired man, a man resigned to his fate."

Eager to give Iraqis evidence that the elusive former dictator had indeed been captured, Sanchez played a video at the news conference showing the 66-year-old Saddam in custody.

Saddam, with a thick, graying beard and bushy, disheveled hair, was seen as doctor examined him, holding his mouth open with a tongue depressor, apparently to get a DNA sample. Saddam touched his beard during the exam. Then the video showed a picture of Saddam after he was shaved, juxtaposed for comparison with an old photo of the Iraqi leader while in power.

Iraqi journalists in the audience stood, pointed and shouted "Death to Saddam!" and "Down with Saddam!"

Though the raid occurred Saturday afternoon American time, US officials went to great length to keep it quiet until medical tests and DNA testing confirmed Saddam's identity.

Saddam was being held at an undisclosed location.