

# BRITLY

**Senate slates Bush :** The US Senate unanimously adopted a resolution on Thursday praising US troops in the Gulf and in carefully chosen language, commending President George Bush, reports Reuter. The resolution was intended to heal earlier deep divisions between supporters of Bush's Gulf policy and advocates of further reliance on economic sanctions and diplomacy to force Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait. Its wording occupied key senators for much of the day as republicans sought language that would hail Bush's policies and democrats objected.

**Americans back fighting :** Americans polled just after the U.S.-led attack on Iraq overwhelmingly supported the assault, according to an ABC news-Washington Post survey in New York, reports AFP. The poll of 545 adults was taken shortly after President George Bush's televised address to the nation announcing the attack Wednesday night. At the time of the poll, no US casualties had been reported. Eighty per cent of those polled said they approved of Mr. Bush's handling of the Gulf crisis and 17 per cent disapproved.

Seventy-six per cent said they approved of the United States going to war, against 22 per cent who were against.

**Algerian move at UN :** Algeria on Thursday stepped up its diplomacy at the United Nations with a public appeal to the Secretary General to use his influence to stop the bombing of Iraq and work towards a peaceful solution, reports Reuter. Algeria, Libya, Cuba, and Yemen have spoke out against the bombing. But none of these nations made any formal request for a Security Council initiative and none planned to ask for a meeting on the subject for the time being, diplomats said. Bensed Abderhamane, Algeria's Ambassador to the United States, said he was delivering a message from Algerian President Chadli Benjedid that the United Nations should not be used to wage war but make attempts towards peace.

**Israel assured of US help :** The United States has assured Israel that it will retaliate for the Iraqi surface-to-surface missile attacks today on Israel, Israeli television reported, reports AFP. US President George Bush said in a telephone call in Jerusalem to Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir that the United States would provide an "adequate response" to the attacks, the report said. Seven people were hospitalized after scud missiles armed with conventional warheads crashed into Israel early today.

**Bomb blast in Delhi :** A bomb exploded in a New Delhi business district Thursday damaging a building housing an agent of American airlines, police said, reports Reuter. No one was injured in the blast, caused by a bomb placed near a stairway of the private building. A police official said he did not rule out the involvement of Arab militants protesting against the US led attack on Iraq.

**11 killed in Punjab :** Eleven persons, including three securitymen and two militants were killed, in Punjab since Wednesday night, PTI from Chandigarh says. A gang of militants attacked a police patrol near village Uksidhukar in Ludhiana district killing two securitymen and a civilian driver. The militants managed to escape. The victims were identified as police constable Harinder Singh, special police officer, Harbans Singh and the driver Mr. Gurbachan Singh.

**Human activists in Beijing :** A group of human rights activists from four countries arrived in Beijing Thursday to plead for open and fair trials for dissidents accused of masterminding the massive 1989 pro-democracy movement, reports AP. The six activists plan to seek permission to attend a dissident's trial, to get records, of trials that already have finished and to request meetings with Chinese government and judicial officials, said Norman Quan, a member of the group.

"We know basically that we cannot change a lot, but we are just trying to get the message (across) that we care and we're trying to help," said Quan, an accountant from Los Angeles. The other activists represent human rights groups or overseas Chinese community groups in Canada, Britain and the Netherlands. Four, including Quan, are ethnic Chinese.

**Gorbachev in crisis :** Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's problems in the rebellious Baltic Republic are persisting while the world's attention is gripped by the Gulf crisis, reports Reuter. Leader in the three Republics have expressed fears that the Kremlin could use the Gulf war as a cover to crush their separatist movements. All three have pledged to restore their pre-world war two independence. Top leaders in Latvia demanded on Thursday that Gorbachev should disband a special police unit held responsible for shooting dead a Latvian at the wheel of a Government car.

## Both sides view God as their ally

NICOSIA (Cyprus), Jan 18: There is no God but Allah, Muslims believe. In the Gulf war, both sides seem sure he is their ally, reports AP. Iraqi television Thursday showed Saddam Hussein kneeling in prayer, and the President said his people had no fear of the forces of Satan.

Yet in neighbouring Saudi Arabia, King Fahd said, "It was God's will" that war had been launched against Saddam. "Matters had to be corrected," said the King, citing Iraq's occupation of Kuwait. "We pray to God for victory for his soldiers."

Even in Washington, the war was given religious overtones. President George Bush invited preacher Billy Graham to the White House on the eve of the U.S.-led attack, then attended a church service Thursday, along with top advisers, at a military chapel. "There come times when we must fight for peace," Graham told the worshippers, "I pray we will be on God's side."

Across the Islamic world, from Mauritania in western Africa to Bangladesh, many Muslims reacted with fury to the attack on Iraq. To them, the conflict is a "jihad" -- a holy war pitting the faithful against Western infidels and their Arab "backers". Saddam, in a lengthy letter to Bush made public Thursday,

repeatedly depicted the conflict in religious terms and harked back to Muslim heroes of past centuries. "We are being faithful to the values which God Almighty has inspired in us, for we have no fears of the forces of Satan, the devil that rides your shoulder," Saddam said. "It is you who came as aggressors, crossing the oceans and seas to occupy the land of our sanctities...." He referred to the presence of U.S. and other non-Muslim forces in Saudi Arabia, home of the holiest Islamic shrine. Earlier this week, as war approached, Saddam's government decided to alter the Iraqi national flag to include the words, "God is Great." Iraq's ruling Arab Baath Socialist Party is secular, and includes Christians among its leadership. But Saddam, throughout the five-month showdown, has sought to depict himself as warrior fighting on behalf of Islam. In the Lebanese city of Sidon, Palestinian guerrillas toured downtown streets and an outlying refugee camp in cars fitted with loudspeakers, exhorting Palestinians to join the jihad. "The Iraqi army is fighting on behalf of the whole Arab and Muslim nations", shouted one guerrilla.

# Saddam's palace destroyed

## 50 Iraqi tanks surrender

CAIRO, Jan 18 : The commander of Egyptian forces in Saudi Arabia confirmed Thursday an earlier U.S. television report that about 50 Iraqi tanks had surrendered to allied forces near the Saudi-Kuwait border, reports AFP. Cited by the official Mena news agency, General Mohammed Attiya Halabi said Egyptian troops would take charge of the tanks which were heading towards their positions in the northeastern region of

Hafr al-Batin near the Iraqi border. The agency said President Hosni Mubarak had contacted Gen. Halabi by telephone Thursday afternoon. Earlier, the U.S. Cable News Network, quoting a Saudi source, said the Iraqi tanks had surrendered. Egypt has deployed some 35,000 troops in northern Saudi Arabia and battalion of 600 paratroopers in the United Arab Emirates as part

of a U.S. led multinational force massed against Iraq in the Gulf. The foreign military forces launched an air and missile offensive against Iraq and occupied Kuwait early Thursday in a bid to dislodge Baghdad's troops from the Emirate, which Iraq invaded August 2. Reuter from Moscow adds: Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh said allied air attacks on Baghdad had destroyed Iraqi President

Saddam Hussein's palace. Bessmertnykh told a special session of the Supreme Soviet Presidium on Thursday : "The presidential palace was completely destroyed". The Foreign Minister, citing Soviet intelligence reports on the effects of the first air strikes by U.S.-led multinational forces, said they had not attacked residential areas of the Iraqi capital. Bessmertnykh told leaders of the Soviet Parliament that President Mikhail Gorbachev made a last-minute appeal to Washington to postpone the attack on Iraq and allow a final effort to solve the Gulf crisis peacefully. But a sombre Gorbachev told the Soviet people on television that the assault on Iraq by the American-led alliance was provoked by the refusal of Baghdad to heed world demands to withdraw its forces from Kuwait.

Bessmertnykh, whose speech was shown on television, said Iraq had failed to put up any resistance to the first phase of the attacks. He said : two airports within the city limits of Baghdad were put out of action. Damage was caused to a number of industrial enterprises, including a power station supplying electricity for Baghdad. Bessmertnykh said : in all, at least 75 sites on Iraqi territory were hit. "No strikes were carried out on residential districts, on districts of towns or population centres. Our own intelligence information confirms this."



SAUDI ARABIA : Two unidentified British Royal Air Force pilots talking to reporters on their return from a sortie over Iraq Jan 17. Britain reportedly lost one plane during the US-led attack early January 17, but the pilot and navigator ejected safely. -AFP photo

## Allied forces fail to smother Iraqi Scud missile attacks

WASHINGTON, Jan 18 : Allied forces failed to smother Scud missile attacks on Israel and Saudi Arabia despite continuous bombardments of military targets inside Iraq and Kuwait for two consecutive days, reports AFP. Eight missiles struck Israel, Israeli officials said, sparking fears of a chemical attack, as Iraqi military forces struck back with a retaliatory blow that threatened to widen the war in the Gulf. The Israeli officials said that the missiles carried conventional warheads. The Iraqis also fired further Scud missiles into Saudi Arabia, the White House said.

President George Bush discussed the attacks with his top advisors. "The President is outraged at and condemns this further aggression by Iraq," White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater said. A top Bush administration official said Israel had the right to defend itself : "an unprovoked attack on Israel also calls for an appropriate U.S. response", he added. Pentagon officials had warned earlier Thursday that the missiles which Iraq has modified to carry payloads of lethal chemicals, may have survived the massive attacks

by U.S. aircraft and sea-launched cruise missiles and still posed a threat. Scud missiles on mobile launchers were passed over in the first air assaults because they were too difficult to detect and target, they said. Others might have been hidden in hardened bunkers before the raids, the officials said. "It is important to remember that the operation is by no means over," said a senior Pentagon official just hours before the missile attack. "The Iraqis still have some capability." The missile attacks deflated

### King Olav dead

OSLO, Jan 18: Norway's King Olav, aged 87 and the world's oldest monarch, died Thursday after a heart attack the palace said.

"His majesty king Olav V quietly passed away on Thursday 17th January 1991," an official statement distributed through Norway's National News Agency said.

King Olav a symbol of Norwegian resistance to Nazi occupation in World War Two, will be succeeded by his 53-year-old son, Crown Prince Harald.

### Iraqis in Kuwait face hammer blows

NICOSIA, Jan 18 : Allied air strikes against strategic targets in Iraq were likely to continue for another day or so to knock out mobile missile batteries and command centers before starting to soften up Iraqi troops in Kuwait, analysts say, reports AP.

"They'll keep the pressure on over the next 24 hours. Then, if the Iraqi ground forces have shown no sign of giving up, they'll go after them," said mideast military analyst Hans-Heino Kopietz. "If I was an Iraqi ground commander, I'd be throwing in the towel giving up," the London-based Kopietz said in a telephone interview. "The Iraqis have no idea what it's like to be constantly hammered from the air." It's not something they had to contend with in the war with Iran. The key objective on the second day of the Gulf conflict appears to be to destroy



SOMEWHERE IN SAUDI ARABIA -- A French soldier from Mourmelon is going for rest with his coveted possession, a guitar, after a day-long drill in the desert. The multinational troops in the Gulf region have not yet been pressed into action. -AFP photo

## Off the Record

### UN strangely mute, no hue and cry

UNITED NATIONS: As U.S. bombs rain on Baghdad, the United Nations is strangely mute and there is no familiar hue and cry against the United States, reports AP. The reason: For once the U.S. government has sought prior approval for its military action from the world body, effectively stifling protest, diplomats say. In the view of some sympathetic diplomats here U.S. diplomacy is coming of age and moving beyond the "shoot-from-the-hip" stage of unilateral action without much regard for international public opinion or the United Nations. The administration of U.S. President George Bush, a former U.N. envoy, carefully has prepared to ground for U.S. and allied military action in Iraq, shepherding 12 resolutions through the council, culminating on Nov. 29 in a resolution authorizing military force if Iraq did not leave Kuwait by Jan. 15.

"For once, the Americans have been quite savvy in using the United Nations organization as an umbrella and justification for its action," said one U.N. official, speaking on condition of anonymity. "In the past they would have been accused of aggression, but now they are implementing the legally binding resolutions of the Security Council," he said. The U.S. and allied attack upon Iraq has been greeted here with sadness, but the mood is desultory and there are no moves to convene the Security Council to denounce the attack, to call for a cease-fire or to seek a pause for peace.

### Not a bad shot really

LONDON: A British television reporter described from Tel Aviv Friday how he watched and Iraqi missile strike en area in the middle of the city and explode in a ball of flames, reports Reuter. Independent Television news reporter Colin Baker said he heard several explosions in the city. "I watched coming down from the north a missile very high with a long flame coming out of its tail," he said. "If it's from Iraq it wasn't bad shot. It hit the town, it's gone south of the Mod (Ministry of Defence) building. There was a large explosion, a ball of red flame." An Israeli official in Washington said eight missiles were fired at Israel. Two landed in or around Tel Aviv, two in or around Haifa, three in rural areas and one did not arrive.

### 1,000 sorties in 12 hrs

WASHINGTON, Jan 18 : Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Colin Powell said yesterday that U.S. aircraft, during their 1,000 sorties in 12 and half hours since US-led forces attacked Iraq, have damaged the Iraqi command and control system though "I don't think it has collapsed yet." Contradicting earlier reports, he and Defence Secretary Richard Cheney reported the loss of only one US aircraft an F-18. The pilot is reported dead. Powell also mentioned that some Iraqi aircraft were in the air during the raid on Baghdad-again contradicting non-official reports which suggested there was no opposition in the air. Powell said there was some anti-aircraft fire too.

### Notorious due on show

GRAPEVINE (Texas)-A bank that escaped the rampages of bank robbers Bonnie and Clyde is displaying and exhibit featuring the notorious due as part of this area's history, reports AP. The display at the First National Bank in Grapevine, between Dallas and Fort Worth, includes 10 photographs and two newspaper articles. The Dallas County Sheriff's Department gave the items to the family of First National Bank vice president William Buckner in the 1930s. Buckner's great-uncle, Deputy Sheriff Malcolm Davis of Dallas, was killed by Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow in 1933. Bank executive vice president R. Bruce MacElvaine said he believes two of the photos are being seen by the public for the first time. They are from film in a camera that was found in the bandits' car after police killed them on May 23, 1934, at Gibsland, Louisiana. One photo shows Parker and Barrow hugging. Another shows Barrow with his driver.

### Fruitcake all over

ST. PAUL (Minnesota) Needy families here benefited when a mixup sent 28,000 (12,700 kilograms) of fruitcake to the offices of the Salvation Army, Reports AP. "We ended up with fruitcake all over the building," said Joseph Clubb, director of social services for the charitable organization. The shipment--9,500 cakes packed in decorative tins--was supposed to go to the St. Paul Post Office for mailing to customers throughout the region for the holidays. But a truck driver delivered the cakes to the Salvation Army by mistake, the same street address, 401 West 7th Street, of the bakery in Texas, where the fruitcakes were prepared. Nancy Philo, office manager for the Collin Street Bakery in Corsicana, Texas, said the mix-up was only discovered after customers began calling asking for their Christmas fruitcakes. They were too late. The Salvation Army had given them away. "I feel badly for the bakery," the Salvation Army spokesman said. "But the needy people appreciated it." Philo said he bakery is sending replacement cakes. "We only hope the other fruitcakes went to people who enjoyed it," Philo said.

### Today in History

Today is Saturday, January 19, the 19th day of 1991. There are 346 days left in the year, reports UNB. Highlights in history on this date:

- 1493 - France and Spain sign Treaty of Barcelona; Maximilian, King of the Romans, saves Germany from French invasion at Battle of Salinas.
- 1649 - Trial of England's King Charles I begins.
- 1795 - French forces overrun Holland.
- 1812 - British forces under Duke of Wellington take Ciudad Rodrigo in Spain.
- 1859 - France and Sardinia sign treaty of alliance.
- 1918 - Bolsheviks dissolve Russian Constitutional Assembly in Petrograd.
- 1938 - General Francisco Franco's Nationalist air force bombs Spanish cities of Barcelona and Valencia, killing 700 people.
- 1945 - Soviet troops take Cracow, Poland, in World War II.
- 1956 - Sudan joins Arab League as ninth member.
- 1960 - United States and Japan sign treaty of mutual security.
- 1966 - India's new Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, pledges to follow path of nonalignment in world affairs.

- 1974 - Five Russians, including a senior diplomat and two other members of Soviet embassy staff, are expelled from China on charges of espionage.
- 1975 - Britain and Irish Republican Army announce first direct negotiations since start of guerrilla activity in Northern Ireland five years earlier.

### Today's birthdays

- James Watt, Scottish engineer-inventor (1736-1819); Auguste Comte, French philosopher (1798-1857); Edger Allen Poe, U.S. writer (1809-1849); Paul Cezanne, French artist (1839-1906); Robert MacNeil, Canadian-born newsman-writer (1931-); Dolly Parton, U.S. singer-actress (1946-).

### Thought for today

Always do right. This will gratify some people and astonish the rest --Mark Twain, U.S. writer-humorist (1835-1910).