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Let us devote our efforts to ensure free and fair polls on February 27. Cast your vote judiciously and allow others to exercise their rights.

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Only a ground offensive will show if Iraq's elite 1.5 lakh strong Republican Guards have been smashed Page 6

Feature

Environment

UNEP says it is now ready to provide a reliable early warning system on the health of the planet

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NEWS BRIEFS

Talks on Chakma refugees soon

Bangladesh and India are likely to meet soon to talk repatriation of Chakma refugees from Tripura before next month's parliamentary election, an official source said Wednesday, reports BSS.

Shops to close at 7 p.m.

The Government has directed to close all shops and establishments at 7 pm instead of 8 pm for fuel saving due to the Gulf war, an official handout said on Wednesday, reports

Shoes thrown at Kaifu

TOKYO, Jan 30: Shouting anti-war protestors threw shoes at Japanese Prime Minister Tosluki Katfu as he addressed the Dict (Parltament) today, police said the two were arrested for interrupting the proceedings of the Dict, reports AFP.

Tamil Nadu govt sacked

to be serious

Gulf war.

foundation for rehabilitation of

the repatriated workers from

castern countries due to the

prepared a project costing

about Taka 113 crore to fi-

The Manpower Ministry

Kuwait and other Middle-

NEW DELHI, Jan 30: Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar on Wednesday dismissed the government in the southern state of Tamil Nadu and imposed direct federal rule. secusing it of aiding Sri Lankan Tamil rebels, reports AP.

New oil slick

LONDON, Jan 30: Iraq has started pumping more crude oil into the waters of the northern Gulf to form another oil slick, military sources said today, reports Reuter.

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US-Soviet joint statement

Ceasefire if Iraq pledges pullout

WASHINGTON, Jan 30 : The United States and the Sovict Union declared Tuesday night a ceasefire in the Gulf war would be possible if Iraq made 'an unequivocal commitment' to withdraw all its troops from Kuwait and took concrete steps' in that direction, reports AP.

administration of President

George Bush would be willing to suspend the Descrt Storm attacks with less than the total withdrawal of all Iraqi troops.

The total withdrawal concept is embedded in United Nations resolutions that gave the US-led coalition authority to wage war.

In his State of the Union The statement indicates the message, Bush Tuesday evening gave no sign of compromise, vowing, "We will drawal from Kuwait," succed in the Gulf."

The Soviet-US statement was issued at the conclusion of talks between Secretary of State James A. Baker III and Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander A. Bessmertnkyh.

It said, in part: 'A cessation of hostilities would be possible if Iraq would make an unequivocal commitment to with-

It added the two governments 'also believe that such a commitment must be backed by immediate, concrete steps leading to full compliance with the Security Council resolu-

The Soviet official told reporters, "the main task remains to free Kuwait, to liberatc Kuwait."

In their statement, Baker and Bessmertnykh declared the Arab-Israeli dispute was a source of conflict in the Middle East and it "will be especially important" to try to resolve it after the conflict is

ended. Before the allies attacked Iraq January 17 Saddam sought to link any Iraqi withdrawal with a resolution of the Palestinian question, a tie-in the United States adamantly rejected.

Baker and Bessmertnkyh also said they believed 'everything possible should be done to avoid further escalation of the war and expansion of its scale.'

See Page 10 Col. 5

The statement evidently refleeted the concern regis-

Iraqi troops cut off: Allies•Oil refineries set ablaze

Heavy fighting around Khafji



- Khafji under control: Saudi Arabia.
 - 5 Iraqi tanks destroyed in Khafji.
- 10 US personnel carriers knocked out. 6 Iraqi naval vessels sunk.

Kuwait: US.

- Iraqi troops cut off: Allies
- 20 Iraqi T-55 tanks destroyed: Allies Iraq pouring reinforcements.
- 23 Iraqis taken prisoner: Allies.
- Iraqis push 20 km into S Arabia. Iraqi missiles set ablaze oil refineries around
- Khafji.
- * 10 US among 20 Allied troops killed.
- Iraqi ship, 3 more planes take refuge in Iran. * 24 Iraqi tanks, armoured carriers knocked out in

RIYADH, Jan 30: Allied and Iraqi forces were still fighting at mid-day today (Wednesday) around the northern Saudi coastal town of Al-Khafji, a Saudi military spokesman

announced, reports AFP. "Iraqi troops at this moment are totally isolated and engaged by Allied forces," he said in a statement carried by the Saudi Press Agency.

Reuter reports from Riyadh Saudi Arabia said Allied troops had the situation at the border town of Khafji under control following a tank-led Iraqí attack across the frontier into the Kingdom Wednesday.

A Saudi military spokesman said at least five Iraqi tanks were destroyed in the battle. Coalition losses were light, he

Asked if fighting was continuing, he said: "It is an ongoing operation, yes." -

Iragis cut off

Reports from Nicosia say : Iraqi troops and tanks thrust into Saudi Arabia on three fronts and fought Allied forces in the biggest ground battle of the Gulf war.

Oil industry sources in Dahran told Reuters Iraqi forces had occupied the abandoned oil town of Khafji. five km (three miles) south of the Kuwaiti border. Saudi officials said the Iragis were cut off. Reporters with US troops

Twenty Iraqi T-55 tanks were destroyed and there was heavy fighting in the sands west of Khafji, the reporters said in a pool dispatch from the front. Two battalions of Iraqi

said eight to ten US personnel

carriers had been knocked out.

troops, backed by armour. crossed the border. The dispatch suggested that Allies at first thought the Iraqis were surrendering because their

NICOSIA, Jan 30: Up to 4,000 Iraqi troops with tanks thrust into Saudi Arabia today and fought pitched battles with Allied troops. Eighteen hours after the first of four attacks across the desert sands from occupied Kuwait, Iraqi forces were still holding out in the Saudi border town of Khafji, reports Reuter.

tank turrets were facing back-

One pool dispatch said that Iraq was pouring reinforcements into the fighting around Khafji. Describing the start of the

said an Iraqi armoured column rumbled into Khafji unopposed and opened fire about midnight Tuesday local time. US Marines called in air strikes to dislodge the Iraqis.

Arab troops from Saudi Arabia

See Page 10 Col. 6

action, another pool report



Nuclear, biological, chemical (NBC) suited gun crew get ready for action on their ship HMS Brazen in the Gulf. - AFP photo

Rickshaws with passengers smashed at Tejgaon yesterday. Eight persons were killed in the accident. .- Star photo

8 killed as truck smashes rickshaws in city

By Staff Correspondent

take three crore will be fi-

nanced by the government and

rest of the money will come

from banks and the repatri-

ates. Taka 88 crore will be

borrowed from banks and rest

of the money will be generated

See Page 10 Col. 2

place near Nabisco Biscuit fac-Three separate road tory in Teigaon industrial area mishaps occurred in the city on Wednesday claiming 11 at dawn. Eight persons were lives including eight in one killed when a truck smashed single accident. The total as many as 15 rickshaws. The number of persons injured in sofl-laden truck in a bid to the accidents was 25, of whom overtake another truck at top the condition of 18 was stated speed hit the rickshaws coming from opposite direction The first accident took carrying vegetables, eye wit-

One rickshawpuller and five passengers died on the spot while two others succumbed to their injuries at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) . The driver of the truck along with helpers fled away, police said. But the truck was setzed. See Page 10 col. 1

Bush tells Americans WASHINGTON, Jan 30: Bush said in the nationally broadcast address to a joint

President George Bush confidently assured Americans that the war against Iraq will be won and the recession at home will end in short order.

"We stand at a defining hour". Bush said Tuesday night in his State of the Union ad-

"For two centuries, we've done the hard work of freedom. And to night, we lead the world in facing down a threat to decency and humanity,"

session of Congress. It was the first wartime

We stand at a defining hour,

State of the Union address since the days of Vietnam, Extraordinary security precautions enshrouded the Capitol, a bow to threats of terrorism. Bush won a long standing

ovation when he praised US forces in the Gulf as "truly America's finest" and again when he predicted "we will prevail" over Iraqi President

Saddam Husscin.

"As Americans, we know there are times when we must step forward and accept our responsibility to lead the world away from the dark chaos of dictators, toward the brighter promise of a better day," Bush said in his 55- minute speech.

The President delivered terse assessment of the war to date: "I'm pleased to report that we are on course. Irag's capacity to sustain war is being See Page 10 Col. 3

Code of conduct not followed, Shahabuddin told

BNP Secretary-General Barrister Abdus Salam Talukder met the Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed at President's Secretariat in the city on Wednesday, reports

He complained that the code of conduct for the coming parliamentary polls was not being followed by some parties which, he said, interferred with the election campaign of his party.

He mentioned some officers by names in different districts. who, according to him, were working against the interests of the BNP candidates. He also alleged two BNP workers were illegally arrested in Bhola while engaged in election campaign.

The Acting President said all powers to deal with such allegations have been delegated to the Election Commission which is an independent body.

He advised the BNP Score tary General to lodge com plaints in this regard with the Election Commission.

Menon concerned at unlimited spendings, use of arms in polls

By Staff Correspondent Workers Party General Secretary Rashed Khan Menon on Wednesday urged the government to check spendings by some candidates without waiting for submission of returns. He also called for recov-

ery of all illegal arms. Exchanging views with newsmen on his return to Dhaka after a 10-day visit to the southern districts he also See Page 10 Col. 6

AL, BNP have no character, says Abbas

By Staff Correspondent Acting Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami Abbas Ali Khan said on

Wednesday the aides of the ousted autocratic government were contesting the coming elections with BNP and Awami League tickets. In fact, these parties have no character and as such, they sold their nominations to the aides of the past government, he added.

Abbas Ali Khan addressed five separate election meetings at Akbar Ali Government College, Sherpur of Bogra distict, Naimailhat, Coloybazar and Mokamtali on his way to Jaipurhat from Dhaka.

He said conspiracy was still going on even after the fall of the autocratic government. He said Fate of the common people had not changed after change of governments during the last 20 years. He said only Islamic spirit can protect country's independence and sovereignty. Those who propagate that the nation does not need armed forces, they are the enemies of the nation, he said. He said Jamaat Stands for a strong army.

Parliamentary democracy to end killing, says Hasina

RAJSHAHI, Jan 30 : Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina said here today that her party would establish parliamentary democracy to bring and end to the politics of killings and conspiracies, reports BSS.

"We will not allow anybody to fish in the troubled water, she said while addressing a public meeting at Shaheb Bazar road here this evening. Presided over by Advocate Muzaffar Hossain, President of Rajshahf Awami League, the meeting was also addressed by Joint Secretary M. A. Jalil and President of US-Awami League Nurul Islam Anu.

Sheikh Hasina said people had undergone a tremendous See Page 10 Col. 2

No democracy during AL rule, says Khaleda

SATKHIRA. Jan 30: BNP leader Begum Khaleda Zia today said the nation could expect nothing good from those who conspired against the people by taking part in elections under Ershad regime. reports UNB.

"If they are voted to power again, they will deprive the people of their rights." Khaleda said addressing an election meeting at the Satkhira Government College football ground this afternoon.

Without naming BNP's arch rival Awami League, she said during the rule of a particular party, there was no democracy in the country and killing, hijack became regular features amid total disruption of law See Page 10 Col. 6

Indecision costs Biman Tk 10 crore a week By Reazuddin Ahmed

Air travel to an Arab country within the war zone is costlicr by 250 US dollars (equivalent to about Taka nine thousand) for each passenger. The extra money is charged by Lloyds, UK based insurance broker, as war insurance premium.

Bangladesh Biman, which failed to get any positive rehas suspended its flights to sponse from Lloyds regarding eight destinations within the reduced premium rate war zone in the Middle-east which is delaying the resumpfrom January 14, is negotiating tion of flights to those destinawith Lloyds Company to finalise the insurance arrangement. But Biman has so far

The Bangladeshi nationals See Page 10 col. I

A new month starts

Tomorrow

Right day to start with a new paper

The Baily Star

Tell your hawker Today for a copy of The Paily Star from Tomorrow

Rehabilitation plan for repatriates By Moinuddin Naser Government has finalised a nance self employment proposal to set up a welfare schemes. The initial cost of