Off the Record

Fight AIDS, not Arabs

opening minutes of a major US television news programme chanting "fight aids, not Arabs" and forcing the programme

briefly off the air. reports Reuter

ejected from the studio.

NEW YORK: AIDS protesters on Tucsday disrupted the

As introductory music faded on the CBS evening news and

The man was hustled off camera and Rather said. 'we're

newscater Dan Rather introduced himself voices chanting

'Fight AIDS not Arubs' could be heard off camera and a male

going to take a break for a commercial right now. We break for

a commercial." The screen thern went blank for several

On reappearing rather applogised for that disruption and said, "We'll take that from the top." Later in the broadcast he

said rude people had tried to disrupt the broadcast and were

SAVANNAH (Georgia): Watching too much war news on

James Turner a counsellor at Memorial Medical Center here

"We're very concerned about people getting virtually

television is unhealthy and some viewers can actually become

said Monday he had coined a name for the problems CNN

complex-referring to constantly viewing the 24-hour coverage

addicted to news, afraid to miss every little thing that might

happen," said Mr. Turner, "It's not good for their emotinal

health to ride this roller coaster continually. You can't build

He said constant news watching was particularly prob-

Military support groups and Georgia area hospitals and

agencies have received several telephone calls from people

who fear they cannot pull themselves away from watching

Beware of TV news on war

addicted to news a US pshychologist warns, reports AFP,

of The Gulf war by Cable News Network.

your life around continous news coverage."

television war coverage, he added.

lematic for families with relatives in the Gulf.

protester with a sign appeared in front of Rather's desk.

Iraqis reinforce positions: Ingi troops who pulled back from the Kuwait-Saudi border at the start of the war are reinfereing their fertifications as US and British forces mass to the south for a possible ground offensive,

reports AFP. US military officials in Saudi Arabja said that Iraqi forces, including tanks, which withdrew during the opening days of the war had begun digging in along the anticipated battlefront. US military intelligence has detected "increased movement back and forth from the border" of Kuwait as Iraqi soldiers try to avoid US and allied bombing raids, said Colonel Ron Richard of the marine 2nd division

Red alert in Turkey : Strens sounded a red alert Tuesday at Adana, near a US air base at Incirlik in southern Turkey but was followed by an all-clear 35 minutes later, official sources in Ankara said, reports AFP. The alert sounded at 1855 GMT following a warning from

Divarbakir. 250 kilometres (150 miles) from the Iraqi border. where the US monitoring station at Pirinelik is located, the news agency Anatolia reported. The warning was down-graded to a so-called 'yellow alert' 13

munities later and finally to a white alert, signifying an all-clear, at 1930 GMT, it said. Iraq's museum damaged: iraq said US pilots damaged the Iraqi national museum during an air raid on Baghdad Tuesday Baghdad radio said, reports Reuter from

It said, a number of archaeologists and other specialists were injured in the attack.

Israel to buy 6 Patriots : Israel which and several US-supplied Patriot missiles at Iraqi Scud missiles on Tuesday, resisted strong US pressure last year to buy the antimissile delences, reports AP.

The Patriots on Tuesday intercepted some Iraq; rockets, but one of the Scuds landed in the Tel Aviv area and caused at least 60 injuries. It was the first firing of the Patriots in Israel since they were airlifted there on Saturday, along with 150 US army technicians to operate them.

Lawmakers emerging from a private briefing by Defence Department officials in Washington said Israel would shortly have five to six US Patriot systems in place and, in the near future, 12 systems would be operational.

Sikhs kill 8 in Punjab : suspected 5tkh separatists gunned down cight civilians in Punjab as security forces shot dead one Sikh militants in the troubled north Indian state, the Press Trust of India (PTI) in New Delhi said Tuesday, reports AFP.

All the killings occured late Monday, the news agency said Suspected Sikh guerillas campaigning for independence killed the eight civilians in six separate attacks across the state.

US navy sinks 2 Iraqi ships: Us navy planes have attacked four Iraqi vessels in the Gulf and appeared to sink two of them, a US military spokesman in Riyadh said on Tuesday, reports Reuter.

Colonel Greg Pepin said three US A-6 attack planes in the northern Gulf on Monday struck an Iraqi ship capable of laying

"The ship was left dead in the water and the US patrol aircraft reported that the ship appeared to be sinking." Pepin said. Later in the same area, navy aircraft attacked three lragi boats of unknown type," he said.

Allied bid to capture Saddam not ruled out

turn from a special mission to

despatched to Jordan on

Sunday to hear King Hus-

scin's views on the Gulf war

and discuss a graving prob-

lem of refugees flooding into

States, U.S. Jordanian ties have

been strained over King Hus-

scin's allegiance to Iraq over

MANAMA, Jan 23:- The

its August 2 invasion of Kuwait.

Kuwaiti government in exile in

Saudi Arabia said Tuesday that

the destruction by Iraq of oil

installations in occupied

Kuwait made the liberation of

the Emirate a matter of in-

U.S. military reports said

that traq had begun to destroy

or damage oil wells and stor-

age tanks in Kuwait. Baghdad

had threatened to set the

whole Gulf on fire if the US-led

allies attempted to dislodge it

Mr Al-Yacoub said this lat-

est criminal act 'showed iraqis

despair and its recognition of

would cause a human and coo-

logical catastrope on an un-

precedented scale if Iraq ig-

nited Kuwatt's oil wells, scien-

tists said Wednesday in

the Kuwaiti offields, the re-

sulting fires could burn for

well over a year, according to

John Cox, a chemical engineer

and independent consultant

to a large oil company working

riedly convened in the light of

developments in the Gulf cri-

sis, that the burning wells

would spew out a pall of about

half a million tonnes of smoke

a month. That is chough, he

said, to prompt serious re-

gional climate changes. The

most dramatic of those could

be the fathere of the Astan

monsoons, which the lives of

upwards of 1,000 million peo-

wells could also spill millions of barrels of crude off it to the

waters to the Gulf fiself, creat-

ing a disaster for marine life

far greater than any oil sptll

from tankers seen so far, he

Fractured pipelines and

He told a symposium, hur-

If Iraq has planted mines in

UN adds: War in the Gulf

defeat' in the Gulf conflict.

from Kuwait.

in the Gulf.

ple depend.

He said Armitage had car-

no particular offer to

from the United

He said Armitage

Jordan from frag.

WASHINGTON, Jan 23: The White flouse said yesterday it could not rule out an attempt by alllied forcess to capture iraqi leader Saddam Hussein to face charges of mistreating prisoners of war (POWs), reports Reuter.

We're saying that we believe Saddam Hussein should held accountable for his treatment of the POWs and other erimes should they be deemed having been committed." White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater told reporters.

Asked if that could entail the capture and arrest o Saddam on war crimes charges. Fitzwater said: "No decisions have been made on how that might occur... But in some fashion we do intend to hold him accountable. We have to wait and see how things unfold. Certainly nothing's been ruled out."

Fitzwater said the objectives of the U.S. led-coalition remained the same: driving Iragi Forces from Kuwait, restoring Kuwait's ousted gov ity to the Gulf.

He said stability was generally taken to mean destroy ing Saddam's vast military

We are not targeting Saddam Hussein and not changour policy." Fitzwater said. "We can't tell what's going to happen at the end of the war.

But asked if stability of the region might depend on Sadbeing ousted from power. Fitzwater said that when the war was over the allies "will take a look at the other security needs and see what needs to be dealt with."

House The White spokesman said former Assistant Secretary of State Richard Armitage was to re-

Nawaz Sharif holds talks with Rafsanjani

NICOSIA, Jan 23: Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani met on Tuesday with Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. who flew in carlier to discuss the Gulf War. reports AP.

Tehran television, monitored in Nicosia, said both leaders expressed concern over the situation.

Sharif arrived earlier in the day on the first leg of a fournation Middle East swing. He was due to leave Tehran for Ankara Wednesday and also plans to visit Egypt and Syria. Sharif is under pressure from daily demonstrations in

Pukistan against the war in the

Bush not functioning as C-in-C

Generals assigned to conduct war

WASHINGTON, Jan 23 President George Bush, though Commander-in Chief of the US Armed Forces, is leaving the conduct of the war against Iraq in the hands of his commanders in the field, reports AFP.

Since the war began last Wednesday, Mr. Bush has been continuously informed of battlefront developments. But he has concentrated his efforts on explaining the war to the American public and intensifying his telephone diplomacy to maintain the cohesion of the anti-iraq international coali-

Mr. Bush and his main political advisers have allowed the commanders in the field to do what they think is correct. said General Norman Schwarzkopf, the commander of US forces in the Gulf.

Obviously, we brief them on what we're doing. Obviously if they thought we were doing something dumb, they'll tell us about it and we'd change it." Gen. Schwarzkopf said.

"But they're allowing the commanders in the field to conduct this war and we are most thankful for that," he

Moscow, Jan 23: The inde-

pendent Soviet news agency

Interfax quoted an unidentified

member of the Soviet General

Staff yesterday as saying 90 per

cent of all allied air strikes

targets, reports-Reuter.

knocked out.

eral as saying.

General said.

against Iraq had missed their

as saying most traqt air bases

and aircraft had not been hit in

the massive bombardment and

about 30 anti-aircraft systems

remained intact. If said 11

anti-aircraft units had been

"Ninety per cent of the

"A large part of the Iraqi

strikes have not hit any tar-

gets,"Interfax quoted the Gen-

aircraft and airports have not

been hit, despite all claims to

the contrary. Air bases in Iraq

are very well camouflaged and

extremely hard to detect," the

the General's source or

Interfax gave no details of

Interfax quoted the officer

Mr. Bush knows war, espectally air combat. He was, at age 18, the youngest pilot in the US navy during World War II. He flew 58 missions off carriers in the Pacific and was reseucd at sea twice, narrowly escaping capture by Japanese

However, he has refrained from following in the footsteps of former President Lyndon Johnson, who reportedly picked out the targets on a map for US warplanes to attack during the Vietnam war.

It was Mr. Bush, nevertheless, who gave the go-ahead for the United States to launch the war against Iraq and approved the military strategy undertaken.

But it was the military chiefs, Gen. Schwarzkopf and General Colin Powell, Armed Forces Chief of Staff, who determined that strategy, convinting politicians of the need for a massive attack to avoid repeating the drawn-out and devastating Vietnam war ex-

Military leaders make the decisions in the field. As White House Chief of Staff John Sunumi told the Washington Post,

Iraqi weapons supplied by Moscow

90 pc allied strikes

miss targets

whether his assessment was

were supplied by the Soviet

Union and there has been

some alarm here at reports of

allied military success in de-

feating them.

Most Iraqi weapons systems

shared by the General Staff.



Mr Bush "doesn't say let's sec. Iraq has 36 Scud missiles and we've gotten 13 of them' and tell the Generals 'why don't you try this or that" to eliminate them all.

Mr. Bush "understands probably more than any recent President that you can't have political figures manage a military operation." Mr. Summi Since the fighting began,

the President has visited the Defence Department only once. last Friday, to attend a war briefing in the "tank," the

The General Staff source

was quoted as saying the U.S.-

led coalition forces had used

bad weather as an excuse to

ground many aircraft while

Thousands killed

opponent in the European Par-

liament said Tuesday he had

information indicating thou-

sands of civilians have been

killed or wounded in allied

a member of Germany's oppo-

sition social democrats, said

two Iragis who had fled to

Jordan via Baghdad had tele-

phoned him with reports from

Spokesmen for the gov-

ernment and the defense min-

istry said they had no informa

tion on Schinzel's claims. Net

ther the Iraqis nor the Ameri-

cans have released such high

numbers of casualties. The

Dieter Schinzel, who is also

bombing raids on Iraq.

the besieged country.

AP from Born adds: A war

they reviewed their strategy.

inner sanctum of the Pentagon. He also no longer holes up in the White House "situation room" where military leaders monitor the Gulf situation round-the-clock.

is regularly briefed, several times a day, by the military of his National Security Adviser. Brent Scoweroft, a retired Air Force General.

These meetings are held in the President's Oval Officer or. as was the case last weekend, retreat in Maryland.

Guarding an image he has cultivated throughout his presidency. Mr. Bush does not want to give the impression during a crisis that he is swamped by details, as former characterised, or, at the other extreme, that he is out of touch, a criticism frequently lobbed at his predecessor. Ronald Reagan.

Deputy Foreign Minister missiles fired at Tel Aviv.

Besides his frequent telephone conversation, Mr. Bush

at the Camp David presidential

President Jimmy Carter was

Benjamin Netanyahu said that to the best of his knowledge US Patriot missiles failed to intercept any of the leagi

parliamentarian accused the

United States and Iraq of

playing a "computer game" by

disclosing only the number of

sortics and jets downed and

He said Washington was do-

ing so to keep U.S. support for

the war high and Baghdad to

keep morale from plummeting.

Schinzel said the two fragis

called him because their rela-

tives knew him from his many

While downtown Baghdad

was not greatly damaged, he

quoted them as saying, outly-

ing regions had been devas-

tated and "several thousand

civilians have been killed or

problems. Many buildings, not

only strategic buildings, are

destroyed. Also those where

people are living." Schinzel

added.

not give more precise figures.

Schinzel met later Tuesday

with the Iraqi ambassador in

Bonn, but said he had no new

information after the meeting.

the areas. They have problems

"There are many, many

not reporting casualties.

past trips to Iraq.

injured."

electricity.

Schinzel added.

It's a hell of a place to fight war

IN NORTHERN SAUDI ARABIA: In the dawn chill, when the breeze is rich in scents and too gentle to carry sand, the desert can be thrilling, even beautiful. But it is a hell of a place to fight a war, reports AP,

The broad swath of on man's land separating Desert Storm forces from their Iraqi foes defies all cliches about the Arabian desert. It is sandy, but rocky. There are dunes, are dunes, but also marshes.

Now, with sporadic rains, there are takes and rivulets and sinkholes called "spbkhas" that can swallow a tank.

Mostly, the northern desert is a devolate, featureless moonscape that only a Bedouin could love. Soon, it is likely to be a killing field.

Chinese student on trial: Chinese student leader Wang Dan went on trial in Beijing Wednesday on charges of counter-revolutionary propaganda and incitement, the Beijing intermediate people's court said, reports AFP. Mr. Wang, 25. was a student at Beijing University and was number one on the government's list of 21 activists mostwanted for leading the pro-democracy demonstrations in early

Perez appeals for Iraqi pullout NAM may launch move to prevent war

BELGRADE, Jan 23 : The Non-Aligned group of Nations may launch a diplomatic inttiative to try and prevent the Gulf war from spreading and to restore peace to the region. Indian Foreign Minister Vidya Charan Shukla told a news conference here Tuesday. reports AFP.

Mr Shukla, speaking here He also reported a shortage after talks with his Yugoslav of doctors, running water and opposite number Budimir Loncar said the Non-Aligned "They can't get doctors to Movement interned to launch a collective effort to define the with transport and they have ways in which a solution to the problems ... with obtaining the Gulf crists could be found. necessary medical equipment,"

war. He put the figure at

around 10 million barrels a But Butler disputes that

throw up as much smoke and dust as Dr Cox claims. "In terms of dust loading, you only have to be in Kuwait in normal circumstances to see the amount of dust around. Natural events are far more significant than what might occur in Kuwait's oilwells".

Organisers of the symposium, including Frank Barnaby, the nuclear physicists and weaphns expert, announced the formation of an emergency task force. It aims to be an international group of independent scientists, bringing to bear 'the best scientific brains" to tackle the problem. The goal is to put together a document for politicians before the 15 January deadline after which the UN Security Council has agreed to the use of force to make Iraq leave

Saudi units assigned to the front line near Kuwait to demonstrate Arab resolve moved to positions behind US forces the first night of the war, angering some American and British soldiers,

the pullback but insist it was, in the words of an official military source, "a planned withdrawal."

American military sources said, the US command knew about it in advance, but they did not know how far in advance. The US command has refused official comment.

A Saudi official quoted anonymously by the Saudi Press Agency said the withdrawal was planned well in advance of hostilites and designed to protect the Saudi troops from Iraqi artillery and rocket fire during the air phase of the war.

Kuwait border.

The ministers whose coun-

fires in the otiwells would

Saudi officials acknowledge

A US Marine officer in the area said the Saudis pulled back just before allied forces, including Saudi pilots, began a bombing campaign against Iraqi positions in Iraq and southern Kuwait, including some within 50 miles (80 kilometers) of the Saudi-

tries are both prominent members of the movement, expressed concern at the dangerous course the Gulf war was taking. Only an initiative coming

from the Non-Aligned Movement has any chance of succeeding in ending the conflict. Mr. Shukla said. Reuter adds from United

Nations Secretary General Javier Perez De Cuellar on Tuesday appealed to Iraq to withdraw its troops from Kuwait and said there was no justification for Baghdad's Scud missile strikes against

The scramble for a peace initiative to end the Gulf war was being pursued vigorously among Third World Nations at the UN but without any sign of interest from Iraq or the United States. Perez De Cuellar, in his first

formal statement since the war began, said he had witnessed with profound grief and anxiety the increasing severity of the war and the widening of the area of hostilities.

To prevent further death and destruction, he asked Iraqi authorities to respond positively to his earlier appeal and commit themselves to withdraw from Kuwait.

Bid to seek Saddam's exit: 7 shot dead

LONDON, Jan 23: A London newspaper on Wednesday quoted an Iraqi opposition leader as saying seven men were shot dead in Baghdad last week when they tried to broadcast a TV message urging the overthrow of President Saddam Hussein, reports AP.

The respected liberal newspaper The Guardian quoted Abdul Aztz al-Hakim as saying Iraqi security forces killed the seven as they tried to occupy the main television station in the Iraqi capital.

The paper identified Abdul Aziz al-Hakim as a Shi'tte Muslim and sentor opposition leader who was one of two Saddam opponents who met with British Foreign Office officials in London on Monday.

The paper quoted him as saying two of the men killed were sentor members of Iraq's ruling Baath Party. He did not reveal their names.

The men planned to broadcast a message to the nation blaming President Saddam for starting another war and urging a general uprising. A power failure prevented them broadcasting and they were caught and killed by security forces," the newspaper said.

Destruction makes liberation urgent: Kuwait

'Kuwait could burn for a year if Iraq really fires oil wells' tion of acid rain.

creasing urgency, the Kuwaiti news agency Kuna monitored here reported says AFP. The destruction of the installations places greater responsibility on the interna-The scientists claimed that tional community to overthrow the Iraq regime, liberate Kuwait, and preserve the states of the region from the dangers of this regime Kuwatti Information Minister Badr Jassem al-Yacoub said.

firefighting teams are already in the Gulf planning how best to tackle what would prove a project of a scale and ferocity without, precedent. Red Adair. who runs the world's bestknown trouble-shooting team. said in Washington Wednesday that he had been contacted by the US government and was willing to go if necessary, but

had not yet signed a contract. The smoke the fires produce could be sufficient to cut sunlight and reduce daytime temperatures in the area by as much as 20 degree Selcius . Dr Cox said.

The fires would also churn out carbon dioxide, the most important "greenhouse" gas. and a cocktail of toxic gases including sulfur, dioxide, the gas responsible for the formaBasil Butler, managing di-

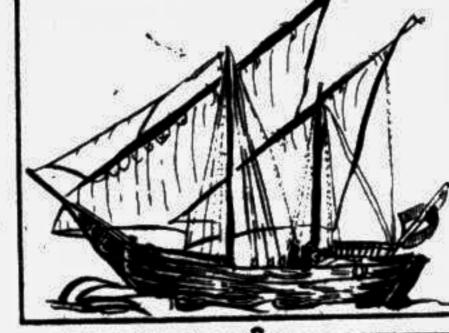
rector of British Petroleum with responsibility for health. safety and the environment. said that discussions were already taking place over ways of dealing with such a crisis. "! believe we have a very major problem on our hands if the wellheads are blown off by the Iraqis". He told The Independent (London) that it could

take "perhaps a year" to cope with all the fires in Kuwait's oil fields, " depending on how much resources you put into dealing with it". . Dr Cox estimates that fires

in the wellheads could burn as much as 3 million barrels of crude off a day. Abdullah Toukan, scientific

adviser to King Hussein of Jordan. first raised the issue of the environmental impact of a

The making of Kuwait





Kuwait was once famous for its sailing ships. Some reached Bombay and Zanzibar. Its harbour is best in Gulf

1756-72 Sheikh Sabah al-Owel founds ruling dynasty

Protection treaty with Britain. Kuwait becomes important as terminus of Baghdad railway

British foil Turkish attempt to occupy Kuwait

Britain recognises Sheikh as independent ruler Surrender of Mesopotamia to

Basra effective terminus, reduces Kuwait's importance Oil discovered, but wells plugged during World War Two

1945 Oil exploitation starts transforming economy



June: Treaty of 1899 terminated. Full sovereignty agreed. Kuwait admitted to Arab League. President Kassem declares Kuwait part of Iraq. Kuwait calls in British troops August: Troops pull out

1990 Aug 2: Iraq invades