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The Daily Star

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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Saddam threatens use chemical weapons



Saddam said his missiles could deliver chemical, nuclear and biological blows.

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There are still hardliners but they are heard less and less.

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NEWS BRIEFS

Magisterial power for officials

Government has on Tuesday decided to empower several district level officials Assistant Director (Local Government department), Deputy collector (revenue), Land Acquisition officer and Assistant Commissioner (land) with magisterial authority to ensure law and order during the ensuing parliamentary polls, election commission sources said, reports UNB.

Blasts at Izmir

ANKARA, Jan 29: Bombs exploded near the French consulate, the American Cultural Association and U. S. warehouses in the Aegean city of Izmir today, damaging five cars and shattering windows in the area, the Anatolian news agency said, reports Reuters.

Iraqi convoy destroyed

NORTHERN SAUDI ARABIA, Jan 29: Allied warplanes caught an Iraqi military convoy moving across the open desert and destroyed 24 tanks, armored personnel carriers and supply vehicles, officials said Tuesday. The action on Monday night was seen by US Marines across the border in Saudi Arabia, reports AP.

Georgia creates own army

MOSCOW, Jan 29: The separatist parliament in Soviet Georgia today approved the creation of a republican army to replace Soviet forces on its territory, reports Reuters.

Iraqi patrol boats attacked

WASHINGTON, Jan 29: British, US and Saudi helicopters attacked a fleet of 17 small Iraqi patrol boats today, sending them scattering for the Kuwaiti coast, a British military spokesman said, reports AFP.

Heaviest shelling on Baghdad's supply depot Iraqi thurst into S. Arabia

NICOSIA, Jan 29: Iraq said today its ground forces attacked Allied positions in three areas on Monday night, penetrating up to 20 km (12 miles) into northwest Saudi Arabia, reports Reuters.

Baghdad Radio quoted military communique 29 as saying the forces returned to their bases after seizing military equipment and destroying other equipment it gave no details on casualties.

"Units of our forces attacked enemy outposts across

our border with Saudi Arabia in ArAr. One unit punched about 15 km (10 miles) into the lands of Najd and Hijaz (Saudi Arabia, while another succeeded into reaching 20 km (12 miles) deep," it said.

It said the other unit attacked Allied positions in Saudi Arabia on the Kuwaiti frontier.

Earlier, Allied sources reported US Marine corps artillery shelled on an Iraqi supply depot inside Kuwait.

Meanwhile, AFP reports say:

- * Iraqi missiles can carry chemical, biological or nuclear warheads: Saddam.
- * Allied POW killed by Allied bombing: Iraq
- * Over 25,000 missions flown so far.
- * One US Marine AV-8 Harrier jet lost on Monday.
- * 24 Allied planes lost till Tuesday.
- * 49 Iraqi planes destroyed: Allies.
- * 110 Iraqis taken prisoner: Allies.
- * Over 180 Allied aircraft downed: Iraq.
- * Over 20 Allied airmen held: Iraq.
- * About 100 Iraqi planes in Iran: US.

Iraqi President Saddam Hussein Monday said Iraq's modified Scud missiles have nuclear, chemical and biological capability and warned he would use weapons that equate those used against US, Cable News Network (CNN) reported from Baghdad. One Allied prisoner was killed by Allied bombing, Baghdad Radio said.

In an interview with CNN correspondent Peter Arnett, Mr. Hussein said the Al-Husseini version of Soviet-made Scud missiles had a nuclear, chemical and biological capability.

Saddam did not say under what conditions he might use those non-conventional weapons. "We have maintained our balance using only conventional weapons. We shall use the weapons that will be equitable to weapons used

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A Five-Party Alliance demonstration in front of the Foreign Office demanded the return of troops from Saudi Arabia. —Star Photo

Khaleda warns against plunderers of wealth

JESSORE, Jan 29: The chief of BNP Begum Khaleda Zia today said the people would never vote for those who plundered the national wealth and snatched away the rights of the people during their regime in 1972-75, reports BSS.

Addressing a big public meeting at the Town Hall here, she said the people had repeatedly rejected this party in the polls held in 1978, 1979 and 1981.

The meeting, presided over

by Ali Reza a local BNP leader, was also addressed, among others, by Tariqul Islam, the BNP candidate for Jessore-3 constituency, Advocate Nazrul Islam and Goutam Mitra.

Casting the party in power just after liberation, she said lakhs of people lost their lives in the famine during their rule in 1974. She said with utter disregard to the sad plight of the people, the party in power then grabbed the relief

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No alternative to parliamentary system: Menon

Rashed Khan Menon, General Secretary of Workers Party and leader of the Five Party Alliance, on Tuesday said that there was no alternative to the parliamentary system of government to ensure the future of democracy in the country, reports BSS.

He said a national consensus was necessary for establishing parliamentary system of government in the country through amendment of the Constitution.

The Five-Party leader said

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Bomb scare at Motijheel

By Staff Correspondent

A bomb scare in Alico building at Motijheel on Tuesday noon disrupted normal transactions at the American Express Bank, Alico Insurance Company and Bangladesh Tobacco Company — all housed in the same building.

An anonymous caller made a phone call at 12-45 p.m. to the American Express Bank saying that a bomb had been planted inside the Alico building and that it would explode any moment. The phone call created panic and sent most staff members of the three companies out of their offices.

A four-member team from the special branch of police consisting of four explosive experts conducted a thorough search from 3 p.m. to 5-30 p.m. But no bomb could, however, be recovered.

French Defence Minister quits Moscow taking 'serious decisions' on Gulf

MOSCOW, Jan 29: Kremlin spokesman Vitaly Ignatenko said Tuesday that "very serious decisions" were about to be taken concerning a solution to the Gulf War, reports AFP.

"We are on the eve of very serious decisions" Ignatenko, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's spokesman, told news conference here.

He said that Mr Gorbachev had exchanged letters with a number of states, including US President George Bush, with a list of proposals concerning the military situation in the Persian Gulf aimed at normalising the situation.

Mr. Ignatenko also warned that the anti Iraq coalition must abide by UN resolutions providing for Iraq to be driven out of Kuwait, saying that there was a "danger that the logic of the UN Security Council be

violated". Moscow has stressed that the resolutions do not call for the destruction of Iraq's military and economic potential.

Xinhua reports: The Soviet Union Monday denounced Iraq's fifth missile attack on Israel and called for restraint by both Israel and Arab nations.

Meanwhile, Reuters reports from Paris, French Defence Minister Jean-Pierre Chevènement, criticised for lukewarm support of France's Gulf war policy, has resigned, President Francois Mitterrand's office said Tuesday.

A spokesman said Chevènement's resignation had been accepted and he would be replaced by Interior Minister Pierre Joxe.

Chevènement, a founding member of the France Iraq Friendship Association, said in

a letter to Mitterrand that "A war logic" was taking Allied nations further away from United Nations resolutions on Iraq.

Diplomatic sources said Chevènement considered that France, which has sent 10,000 troops to the Gulf, was breaching UN resolutions by trying to destroy Iraq rather than focus on driving Iraqi troops from Kuwait.

"A war logic risks distancing us every day from the conditions laid down by the United Nations," he wrote in his resignation letter.

The 60-year-old Chevènement, whose supporters have condemned Allied air attacks on Iraq, was appointed Defence Minister in 1988 after Mitterrand was elected for a second term.

Foreign aid disbursements decline

Star Special

Foreign aid disbursements of 524 million dollars in first five months of fiscal 1990-91 were 41 million dollars less than that of the same period last year.

The disbursed amount between July and November in current fiscal year was 30 per cent of the annual target of 1760 million dollars.

External aid receipts included 99 million dollars in food assistance, 98 million in commodity and 327 million in project loans and grants.

The comparative figures for the same months of last fiscal

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One killed as BNP, FP clash in Chittagong

From Our Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Jan 28: A BNP activist Md. Selim (25) was killed at a hour-long clash between BNP and Freedom Party at Pahartali near Jautala under Doublemooring thana.

On Monday night BNP activists brought out a procession in support of Chittagong-8 constituency candidates and suddenly armed activists of Freedom Party attacked them.

Police brought the situation under control after an hour-long open battle and arrested 10 persons.

At least five persons were injured in the clash. They were admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital.

The body of Md. Selim was sent to his village.

Islamic rule, if voted to power: Jamaat

By Staff Correspondent

Jamaat-e-Islami on Tuesday announced its election manifesto with a pledge to establish Islamic rule in the country.

The Acting Ameer of the party, Abbas Ali Khan told newsmen at the party office that establishment of an Islamic welfare state on the basis of the Quran and Sunnah is the only way to save the country from the present crisis.

If voted to power, the Jamaat chief said his party would make concerted efforts to build an ideal state and declare Bangladesh an Islamic state as desired by the people.

Highlights of the manifesto: — Establishment of an Islamic welfare state. — Repeal of all black laws, independence of judiciary.

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Sikh militants kill 11 Hindus at fake police checkpoint

AMRITSAR (India), Jan 29: A gang of Sikh militants dressed in police uniforms set up a fake checkpoint on a busy highway in Punjab state, pulled out 11 Hindus from passing vehicles and killed them, police said Tuesday.

Monday night's killings in the Hoshiarpur district were elaborately planned, said

Deputy Inspector-General of Police D.R. Bhatti.

At least 15 militants set up the checkpoint shortly after dusk on the Hoshiarpur-Dasuya road: about 105 kilometers (65 miles) east of Amritsar, he said.

At least nine vehicles, including trucks, cars and motor-scooter, were stopped and

all clean-shaven males told to line up on the side of the road, he said.

Two of them were Sikhs and were allowed to go. The other 11 were taken to a nearby field and shot and killed, he said. The checkpoint was in operation for about 15 minutes, he said.

The Sikh religion forbids

having and the trimming of hair. The two Sikhs who escaped walked to the nearest town to report the incident, Bhatti said.

Sikh militants have been fighting for an independent state in Punjab since 1982, accusing the country's majority Hindus of discrimination.

Detention of Ershad, Roushan challenged

By Supreme Court Correspondent

The detention of ousted president H.M. Ershad, his wife Roushan Ershad and former home minister Mahmudul Hasan has been challenged in the High Court Division of the Supreme Court.

Three separate writ petitions were submitted and affidavits were sworn by Ershad's brother-in-law Mustafizur Rahman and Roushan's younger sister Gulshan Afroz Marry, on Tuesday.

All the three cases may come up for hearing on Sunday next, according to court sources.

Former president Ershad and his wife Roushan were taken to protective custody on December 12 last and given 120 days detention under the Special Powers Act.

Two other ex-ministers arrested

By Staff Correspondent

Sheikh Shahidul Islam and Lt Col (ret'd) Zafar Imam, two former ministers of the ousted Ershad government, was arrested from his father-in-law's house at New Eskaton in the early hours of Tuesday.

Sheikh Shahid is one of the 11 ministers whom the government has directed to surrender by January 31. Two other ex-ministers Ruhul Amin Hawlader and Kazi Feroz Rashid were arrested on January 26.

The other wanted former minister are Kazi Zafar Ahmed.

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Moudud, Hassan shifted to jail

Dhaka, Jan 29: Former Vice-President Maudud Ahmed and Home Minister Major General (Rtd) Mahmudul Hassan were shifted to Dhaka Central Jail tonight, reports UNB.

Jail sources said former Vice-President Maudud Ahmed and ex-Home Minister Mahmudul Hassan were taken to the Dhaka Central Jail at 10-55 pm from their Gulshan houses where they were interned earlier. Both were given division.

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