200 Iraqi fighters in Tehran : The number of tract combat and transport planes sent to neutral tran has reached 200. Britain's sky television reported on Wednesday, quoting senior military officials in the Middle East, reports Reuter from London.

It gave no further details but quoted a defence expert as saying it appeared Iraq was running a "shuttle service"

across the border into Iran. The Allies say up to 100 Iraqi aircrafts are known to have flown to Iran in a move analysts say is designed by Iraqi

President Saddam Hussein to preserve his air froce from their attack. Mubarak back home : President Hosni

Mubarak returned home Wednesday night after a brief visit to Saudi Arabia where he had talks with King Fahd on the Gulf war, reports Xinhua. During his visit. President Mubarak also discussed with

Saudi leaders bilateral relations between the two countries the Middle East news agency in Cairo said.

This was the second time President Mubarak visited the oil kingdom since the eruption of the Gulf crisis last August. He was accompanied by Information Minister Safwat El-Sherif and first foreign undersecretary and Presidential Political Advisor Osama Al Baz.

Egypt has sent more than 36,000 troops to Saudi Arabia soon after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait to help the kingdom deter any possible aggression from Iraq, and bilateral relations between Egypt and Saudi Arabia have been strengthened since the Gulf crists.

Major apprehends war in Iraq:
British Prime Minister John Major said he would not rule out pursuit of the Gulf war into Iraq after ejection of President Saddam Hussein's forces from Kuwait, reports Reuter.

"It depends on the circumstances," he told The Times newspaper in an interview published on Thursday. "If Saddam Hussein is within Iraq lobbing missiles of one sort or another outside, then the war patently has not ended."

Perez denies Iraqi charges: UN Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar rejected on Wednesday Iraq's charges that he was personally responsible for the Gulf war and appealed again to Baghdad to withdraw from Kuwait, reports Reuter.

"I continue to believe that such a response is needed in order to find a peaceful solution to this grave and tragic conflict and to save human lives." he said in a letter to Iraqi foreign minister Tarcq Aziz.

16 mines discovered in Gulf : Allied naval forces have discovered 16 new mines in the Gulf, a Saudi military spokesman announced in Riyadh Wednesday night, reports AFP.

Ten of the 16 mines found in the past 24 hours had been neutralized by units from the Saudi, British and US navies, the spokesman said. The remaining six were being dealt with. Three mines were located in the Gulf late Tuesday off the Saudi coast, one of which was destroyed, he said

Allied commanders have reported the destruction of a number of Iraqi mine layers in the Northern end of the

In the two-week-old air offensive against Iraq, the spokesman said that of the more than 30,000 sorties flown by the allied forces, 1,900 had been by Saudi aircraft, 182 by Kuwaiti planes and 44 the Bahraini air force.

Fahd to restore ties with Iran: King Fahd of Saudi Arabia said Wednesday that diplomatic relations with Iran will be reestablished "at the appropriate time" reports AFP from Cairo.

He hoped Iran would soon forget the "sad events of the past" an apparent reference to the backing by most gulf states of Iraq in its eight-year war with Iran and the resulting break of diplomatic ties.

He said Saudi Arabia and Kuwait had substantially contributed to building lraq's army "not to encourage lraq to invade Iran, but to help it face a possible Iranian invasion."

Punjab violence claims 37: A total of 37 persons have been killed in an unabated violence in India's northwest state of Punjab since Monday night, according to reports reaching in New Delhi Thursday reports Xinhua.

The reports noted that Sikh militants gunned down 11 persons near Bhikowal village in Hoshiarpur on Monday

Police sources were quoted as saying that nearly 20 militants blocked the Hoshiarpur-Dasuqa road near the village and started stopping all the vehicles. They pulled out the occupants of a truck and a car at gunpoint, gathered them at a nearby field and shot them dead with rifles.

Militants also gunned down three persons outside Manauli village on Tuesday night.

Other persons were killed in different incidents in Majitha, Amritsar. Ludhiana and Patiala districts.

Iraq permits 15 journalists: Iraq on Wednesday gave permission for 15 western journalists to return to Baghdad to cover the Gulf war, news organisations in Amman said, reports Reuter.

The journalists, including Reuter correspondent Bernd Debusmann, left Amman late on Wednesday and were to be met at the Iraqi border by a representative from the

Information Ministry to be escorted to Baghdad. Most foreign journalists aside from the American Cable

News Network were ordered out of Baghdad shortly after USled forces began bombarding the Iraqi capital on January 17. Those returning included correspondents from the British newspapers the Sunday Times and Britain's independent Television News. Agence France Presse, the French

Television network Antenne Deux, and Austrian television.

Peace plan falls far short of ME solution: Iraq

STOCKHOLM, Jan31: Iraq's envoy in Sweden said on Wednesday a U.S.-Soviet peace plan fell far short of the comprehensive Middle East solution sought by Baghdad, re-

ports Reuter. "We (Iraq) are looking for a comprehensive peace and we shall not yield under pressure", Charge d'Affairs Mohammed Said Hant told journalists.

He said he was expressing his own opinion about Tuesday's superpower proposal

calling for an" unequivocal commitment" by Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait.

The proposal offered Iraq a ceasefire in the Gulf war if it leaves Kuwait, and held out the possibility of a wider settlement once the fighting stopped.

"If anybody should withdraw, it should include Israel withdrawing from the occupied territories. " Said added

He was earlier quoted by the Swedish news agency as saving: Our view is clear.

Kuwait is a part of Iraq...the main problem is Israel's occupation of Arab areas".

The U.S. Soviet statement said stability in the Middle East would be a priority once fighting ended and that both superpowers would try to achieve peace between Arabs and Israelis.

But it fell short of endorsing an international peace conference on the Middle East, which Iraq has demanded as a precondition for negotiations.

A Washington report adds:



SOUTH-EASTERN TURKEY: Turkish tanks take position some 40 kilometres away from Northern Iraq's border. Hundreds of tanks, thousands of soldiers and other heavy war - AFP/UNB Photo materials have been deployed near the border.

Iran wants regional security order

AMMAN, Jan-31: Iran wants a regional security order after the Gulf war to include Iraq and its Arab focs from the sixnation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Jordan's Foreign Minister Taher Al-Masri said on Wednesday. reports Reuter.

Masri, briefing Parliament on a two-day visit to Tchran, said Iran did not believe security arrangements would be made for the region as "a gift" from foreign powers.

"Iran believes there is no way to avoid an arrangement that would include Iran, Iraq, the GCC and later be extended to cover Arab and Muslim countries," he said.

Jordan and Iran restored diplomatic ties two weeks ago after a 10-year break. Masri, who ended his visit on Monday, said the two countries would exchange envoys soon.

US marines capture second Kuwaiti island

OVER UMM AL MARADIM ISLAND, Kuwait, January 31: U S marines ended Iraqi control of a second Kuwiti island they blew up anti-aircrast weapons and artillery the Iragis had apparently stationed there, Reports AFP.

An explosion that produced a mushroom cloud was witnessed at 3:15 P.M. (1215 GMT) Tuesday by reporters flown over the island -- a collection of two communication towers. 13 tents and buildings and brush lying 12 miles off the coast of Kuwait.

The U.S. army and navy on January 24 recaptured Kuwait's Qurah Island from the

It's another step in the continuing effort to free Kuwait." said Captain Michail J. Coumatos, commander of the U.S. S. Okinawa, from which the marines deployed. "I think every square inch of liberated Kuwait is important to the Kuwaitis ."

Before the explosion . two marines climbed to the shorter communication tower and planted a Kuwaiti flag.

The marines decided to storm UMM Al- Maradim because they thought Iraqi soldiers might be there, according to Colonel John Rhodes. Commander of the 18th Marine Expeditionary Unit .

But unlike Qurah, no one was on the island when at least 50 marines were flown to it at noon, and there was no resistance from Iraqi forces on the mainland, according to Lieutenant Colonel Jhon Flinn, who led the marine onto the island.

"In the 29 minutes, we declared the island safe and we set about confiscating equipment and deciding what to destroy and what to bring back" Col . Flinn said. " It was a quiet place."

The marines blew up the wscaponry to prevent the Iraqis from using it against the thousands of U. S. Arab and European jets that regularly fly up the coast of Kuwait Col. Rhodes said.

Thousands of Asians to flee S. Arabia

ABU DHABI Jan 31: Thousands of Asian expatriates are expected to flee eastern Saudi Arabia by road in the absence of air services as the Gulf war escalates, airline officials said on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

They quoted diplomats as saying that up to 10,000 nationals of India and other Asian states including Bangladeshis were likely to undertake in coming weeks a 750 kilometre (450 mile) road trek to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) for onward flights to their

countries. A group of 134 Indians in-

cluding 48 children, flew to India on Tuesday from Abu Dhabi where they arrived after a 22-hour journey from Dhahran, said Krishna Stvaraman. Air India Manager in Abu

"There will be a regular movement of at least 100 Indi ans a day from Friday." He said quoting diplomats.

Mr. Sivaraman said the Dubai - based travel agency Net Toura had arranged a regular bus service for those wishing to travel from Dhahran to the UAE airports of Abu Dhabi and Dubai.

Dhahran airport in eastern

Saudi Arabia was closed to civilian traffic ahead of the assault launched January 17 by US led multinational forces against Iraq to evict it from the oil-rich emirate of Kuwait.

large numbers of expatriate residents from western and Asian countries left the region before that date, but some stayed on.

Iraq has fired more than two dozen missiles at Dhahran and other Saudi cities, and western countries have offered military flights to their nationals wishing to leave.

The White House on Wednesday appeared to back away from a joint U.S. policy and that President George Bush had not seen the proposal before it was issued late on

"If there is anybody that has any concerns we certainly will offer explanations because we are anxious that no one think that we are altering policy in any way". Fitzwater told re-

Tuesday.

Bush and Baker, asked at the start of an Oval Office meeting with Greek Foreign Minister Antonis Samaras whether the president was angry with the Secretary of State. dented any differences.

"There are no differences," Bush said. 'He's never been mad at mc". said Baker of the president

The statement, issued shortly before Bush predicted military defeat for Iraq in his State of the Union message to Congress, offered Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein another chance to end the war by withdrawing from Kuwait and also pledging to work for a comprehensive Middle East peace once the conflict is over. The statement differed from previous statements in

Saddam's bunkers as big as Baghdad

two key respects.

BELGRADE, Jan 31: A bunker complex housing troops. command centers and other installations near the Iraqi capital is "as big as Baghdad," a Yugoslav weekly

said Wednesday, reports AP "The drive from one side of the site to the other takes more than half an hour," a Yugoslav engineer told Zagreb's Danas newsmagazine in an exclusive interview. He requested anonymity. The engineer, who said he

worked on the giant project during the Iran-Iraq War. said its main entrance is located 5 kilometers (3 miles) from the city near the main road south to the port of Basra, but that very few lragis have any idea about its existence or size.

Foreign workers and experts employed on the project including Italians, Germans and Yugoslavs were frequently shifted from one facility to another to prevent them from gaining detailed knowledge about them, the Yugoslav said .

According to my estimate, the area covered by the complex is roughly as big as Baghdad," the engineer declared. Danas said he had spent one year on the site. Iraqi colleagues reportedly

told the Yugoslav that heavily fortified circular marked openings "ventilation shafts" on the design plans were in fact intended to serve as missile siles that would. presumably be loaded from the bunkers below. Numerous bunkers were built

deep underground and were protected by several 70-centimeter (2-foot) deep layers of reinforced concrete interspaced a regular intervals with hard packed soil, the engineer can't imagine what could

destroy all that, what kind of nuclear blast could dig it all up," the builder said

Off the Record

Judge refuses to allow

Bush's son to go scot free

DENVER (Colorado): A Judge has refused to dismiss a 200 -million-dollar lawsuit brought by the U.S. government against President George Bush's son Netl and other officers and directors of the defunct Silverado Banking. Savings and Loan Company, reports Reuter.

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corp (FDIC) filed the suit in September against Bush, 36, a Denver investor, and 10 other Stiverado officials alleging they were grossly negligent in the 1988 fathere of the savings and loan, also known as a

Bush and another former director, car dealer Florian Barth, tried to have the suit dismissed, saying the FDIC did not have enough evidence to support the charges.

U.S. District Judge Sherman Finesilver, in a 15-page ruling issued on Tuesday said the suit was replete with wellplaced facts' and showed the involvement of Bush and Barth.

Bush, 36, also faces a complaint by the office of thrift supervision that he violated conflict-of-interest rules while on the Silverado board. In that case Bush is charged with failing to disclose his interest in bank transactions with two of his

Bush was an outside Director of Silverado from August 1985 until August 1988. The fathere of the federally insured thrift in December 1988 is expected to cost taxpayers one billion Dollars.

Thieves do it again

LONDON Thieves broke into the ear of a British naval officer in Athens and stole a briefcase, the second embar rassing theft of defence-related documents involving the British military in two months, reports Reuter.

The Foreign office said the theft occurred on Wednesday when Commander Christopher Morgan, a British representative of NATO at the Greek Ministry of Defence, parked his car

"Thieves stole a briefcase from Morgan's car in Athens. It has been reported to the police who are now investigating", a spokesman said.

No sensitive papers were reported taken but the theft is certain to cause concern following an incident in London last month when a briefcase and a computer were taken from the car of a senior officer.

The stolen items were recovered but theft caused an outcry in Parliament about security.

Clue to Parkinson's

NEW YORK: Experimental drugs prevented brain cell death in rats that is linked to Parkinson's disease in humans, suggesting a possible approach to fighting the disease. scientists say, reports AP.

The drugs blocked the toxic effects of a substance that produces Parkinson like symptoms in people and kills the same brain cell circuitry that Parkinson's affects.

But scientists cautioned that nobody knows what role if either before or substance called glutamate from binding to brain cells at sites called NMDA receptors.

Bush seeks divine blessings

President George Bush on Wednesday invoked the memory of another wartime president, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and said the goal of the Gulf war is the triump of a new moral order in the world, reports AP.

We ask God to bless us, to guide us and to help us through whatever dark nights we still may face", the President told lawmakers at the Capital. Bush made no mention in his brief speech of the deaths of

12 allied soldiers in a battle with Iraqi troops in Saudi Arabia near the Kuwaiti border. Bush was "very saddened" by the deaths, spokesman Marlin Fitzwater said afterward. Fitzwater said the fighting did not represent the start of

the ground war. He indicated that Bush has not ordered U.S. forces to launch that effort yet.

He said Bush on Friday will visit-three bases that deployed troops in the Gulf: Cherry Point Marine Corps Air Station in North Carolina, Seymour Johnson Air Force Base in North Carolina, and Fort Stewart in Georgia.

War casualties

UNDATED Jan 31: Losses announced in the Gulf war as of 2300 GMT Wednesday, reports AFP.

Military losses:

Allies: By Allied count: 24 planes, 2 helicopters lost, 1 airman killed. 27 airman missing including 10 confirmed POWS. 12 U.S troops killed on Saudi- Kuwaiti bor-Iraq: By Allied count: 54

planes, 46 ships, 52 tanks, and 178 trucks. 9 Iraqi troops killed, and "substantial losses in men and equipment " at Khafji. Between 100 and POWS.

Allies: By Iraqi count: 284 aircraft or missiles, 12 airman captured (one captured air-

man killed in bombing of strategic site where he was Iraq: By Iraqi count: 39 sol-

diers killed. Allied breakdown: By Allied

United States: 15 planes and 2 helicopter Britain: 6 aircraft Italy: 1 aircraft

Kuwait: 1 aircraft

Saudi Arabia: 1 aircraft (for technical reasons) Others: 2 aircraft, I nationalities not given.

Civilians losses by Allied Israel: 5 dead, 273 injured. Saudi Arabia: 1 dead, 42 in-

Iraq: By Iraqi count: 123 civilians dead, 327 injured.

CASPIAN SEA TOTAL FORCES **TURKISH FORCES** TURKEY Troops 647,000 Warships 22 Allies IRAN Tehran **TANKS** 540,000 702,670 Troops TROOPS 1,776 Aircraft **IRANIAN FORCES** Regular 540,000 -CYPRUS Baghdad • 180 15 Warships **AFGHANISTAN** 504,000 Troops LEBANON Reserve 480,000 3,793 4,000 WARSHIPS Tanks Aircraft Militia 850,000 MEDITERRANEAN Frigate Warships Damascus Missile IRAQ Tanks attack craft 8 Soviet Union 2 Torpedo boats 6 Australia **AIRCRAFT JORDAN** Canada Denmark 700 KUWART-WARSHIPS Treops 141,000 France Netherlands 3 Greece TROOPS 80 Italy Spain 3 Norway 430,000 U.S. Gulf Gouncil 36 Belgium 4 TO. Cairo Aircraft PAKISTAL 2 Portugal **Gulf Council** Argentina SAUDI Warships Britain 150,000 4,288 **ARABIA** 35,000 **Britain** BAHRAIN **GULF OF OMAN** Abu Bhabi THE GULF 35,000 Egypt 20,000 Riyadh 11,000 France UNITED ARAB EMIRATES **EGYPT** Pakistan 10,000 Muscat Jeddah **AIRCRAFT** Bangladesh 2,500 Mecca **TANKS** Members of the Gulf **OMAN** 2,000 Canada 1,300 2,000 U.S. Cooperation Council: Saudi 1,700 Morocco **Gulf Council Gulf Council** Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, SUDAN 330 Bahrain, U.A.E. 900 **RED SEA** Argentina 800 CONFRONTATION 72 Britain Australia 600 400 Egypt 500 40 Niger France 270 Syria 500 Senegal Canada 24 163 Britain 500 IN THE GULF Spain YEMEN Italy 10 160 France 400 Belgium Netherlands Czechoslovakia 200 Forces Expected to Be ARABIAN SEA **ETHIOPIA** 200 150 Deployed by Month's End Sierra Leone Aden Honduras 130 Poland 20 South Korea