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The Daily Star

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VOL. 1 NO. 34 REGD. NO. DA 781

FALGUN 3, 1397 BS,

DHAKA SATURDAY FEBRUARY 16, 1991

RAJAB 30, 1411 HIJRI

10 PAGES: PRICE TAKA 3.00

Inside today International

Bush stakes presidency



Ride on a war to liberate a tiny land in a faraway desert has put Bush's presidency at stake. **Page 5**

Feature

Education

The Mass Education Programme is progressing at a snail's pace. If the trend continues the target of achieving education for all by the year 2000 will remain as illusive as ever. **Page 6**

Article

Africa seeks reparations



The case for slavery reparation has now been taken up by Nigerian President Babangida. **Page 4**

Business

Probe into T & T deals

Vested interests played a dominant role in the T & T deals, a report by Shahiduzzaman Khan. **Page 8**

NEWS BRIEFS

Kuwait rejects Iraqi offer

DHAHRAN, Feb 15: Kuwait today rejected Iraq's conditional offer to withdraw from Kuwait, saying it contained nothing new, reports AFP.

Gunfire in Nakhichevan

TEHERAN, Feb 15: Heavy gunfire and the sound of tank movements were heard today coming from the Soviet Muslim enclave of Nakhichevan, the Iranian news agency IRNA said, reports AFP.

Security Council puts off debate

UNITED NATIONS, Feb 15: The U. N. Security Council postponed a scheduled debate on the Gulf war on Friday so members could meet privately to discuss Iraq's conditional offer of a withdrawal from Kuwait, reports Reuters.

17 killed in Lebanon

SIDON (Lebanon), Feb 15: PLO chairman Yasser Arafat's guerrillas killed a breakaway officer Friday in a fierce, house-to-house battle with his followers that left at least 17 combatants dead and 45 wounded police said, reports AP.

Deng's public appearance

BEIJING, Feb 15: Reclusive Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping made a rare public appearance this week, attending a lunar new year party in Shanghai, local media reported today, reports Reuters.

Bush calls it a cruel hoax: Gorbachev hopeful of a peaceful settlement Iraq ready to pull out

Iraq said Friday it was ready to withdraw from Kuwait and called for a full and comprehensive ceasefire in the Gulf war, report agencies.

But US President George Bush rejected the Iraqi peace offer, calling it a 'cruel hoax' because it tried to impose conditions on Baghdad's withdrawal from Kuwait.

Soviet President Gorbachev is however satisfied and hopeful of a peaceful settlement. A senior Kuwaiti official welcomed Iraq's willingness to pull out but said its linkage to other Middle East disputes was unacceptable.

The Iranian news agency IRNA quoted an unnamed Foreign Ministry official as saying Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Saddam Hammadi would arrive shortly on his third visit to the Iranian capital in three weeks.

Iran's official news agency IRNA quoted the ruling Iraqi Revolutionary Command Council Friday as saying Iraq was ready to implement a resolution calling for its withdrawal from Kuwait.

Reuters reports from

meant from the ruling Revolution Command Council (RCC) headed by President Saddam linked its withdrawal to an overall Middle East settlement, rejected by the United States.

The Pentagon said military operations would continue. Iraq said it was ready to take account of U. N. Security Council Resolution 660 calling for Baghdad's unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait, which it conquered last August 2.

Iraqis fired guns into the air on the streets of Baghdad on the 30th day of the war. But celebrations were cut short as more details emerged of the RCC statement, which some Iraqi officials portrayed as 'a proposal.'

Conditions

Baghdad said, however, that its undertaking to withdraw forces from Kuwait was linked to 'A full and comprehensive ceasefire on land, air and sea.'

It also linked it to the scrapping of all 12 Security Council resolutions, such as economic sanctions, adopted against Baghdad and 'Israel's withdrawal from Palestine and the Arab territories it is occupying.'

If Israel failed to withdraw the United Nations should take the same measures against the Jewish state as it took against

Iraq, the statement added.

In the past the allies have ruled out linkage between the Gulf crisis and the Arab Israeli dispute which has dogged the Middle East since the establishment of the Jewish state in 1948.

The statement also insisted on the withdrawal of all Allied forces from the region within a

month of the date of a ceasefire and war reparations to Baghdad.

It said Kuwait, which it annexed as its 19th province after overthrowing the ruling al-Sabah family, should in future be run on democratic lines.

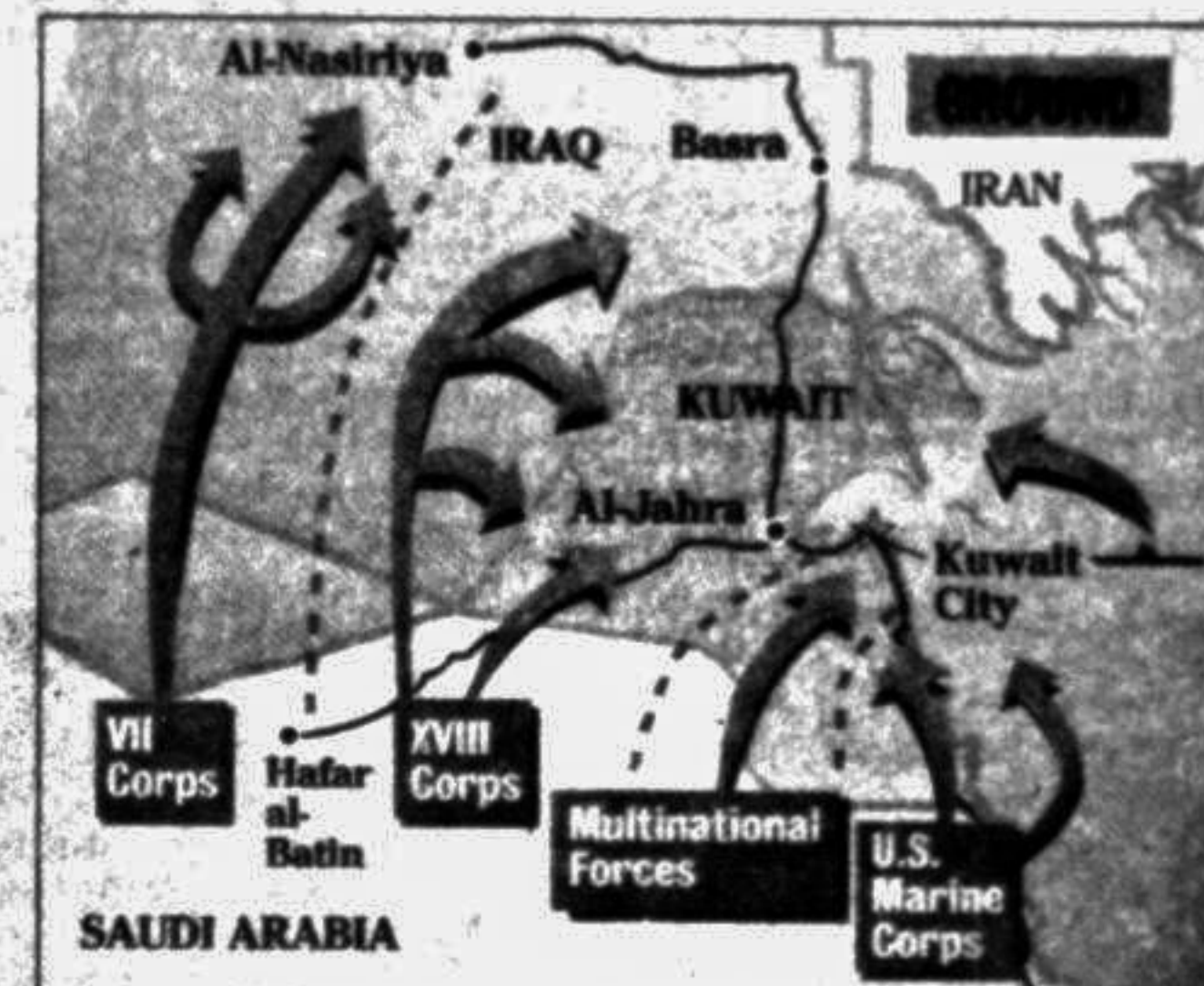
In Washington, rejecting the Iraqi offer President Bush said he had conferred with key

leaders of Allied nations and that the war will continue until there is unconditional withdrawal.

Bush also called upon the people of Iraq 'to take matters into their own hands' to remove President Saddam Hussein as their leader in order to stop the war. According to AP, the White

Highlights

- ★ Allies to continue operations
- ★ Kuwait welcomes Iraqi willingness
- ★ Iraq wants full and comprehensive peace
- ★ Iraqi offer puts added pressure on Bush
- ★ Iraqi statement is a bogus sham: UK
- ★ France counsels caution
- ★ UN Security Council continues closed-door session
- ★ GCC suspicious of Iraqi proposal



The Ordinance amending the Newspaper Employees (Condition of Services) Act-74 must be withdrawn immediately.

And the final Wage Board award must be announced without further delay.

Repeal all black laws including Special Powers Act '74.

Twentyfour-hour token strike will be observed in all newspapers and news agencies of the country on February 17. No newspapers will come out the next day.

Baath Party headquarters bombed



DO YOUR BEST... Children taking part in Bangla handwriting contest organised as part of National Museum Ekushey programme Friday. —Star photo

BAGHDAD, Feb 15: Low-flying allied aircraft blasted the headquarters of Iraq's ruling Arab Baath Socialist Party in a pre dawn attack Friday.

The party headquarters in the city center apparently was vacant at the time of the attack, but the several-story building sustained massive damage, witnesses reported.

Allied warplanes hit other targets in Baghdad in 31 bombing sorties overnight, a military communique said. It said the targets included 'bridges and vital public utilities', but provided no details.

The communique from the General Command of the Armed Forces said the allies also bombed Iraqi military targets in the southern sector of the operation zone a reference to occupied Kuwait and southern Iraq.

Iraq said that six allied warplanes were shot down. The elite Marine unit that is the honour guard at the White House has been called into combat for the first time since 1906.

'We're the postcard image of the U S Marines,' said Staff Sgt. Don Smith of the unit, called the 8th and I, after the streets on whose corner it is based.

On Jan 1 about a third of the 1,000 strong, Washington based outfit arrived on Saudi soil, leaving their spit-and-polish image and blank ammunition for grimy foxholes and prospects of real combat.

Here, the 8th and I is protecting a key unit of the 2nd

Marine Division. Along a 1,500-meter front the paratrooper soldiers live two to a foxhole, manning machine guns, rockets and grenade launchers.

British officers in Riyadh said Friday that a British bomber was lost on a combat mission the previous day and the two pilots were listed as missing.

The Tornado GR-1 bomber was the sixth lost since the war began.

The multinational coalition has lost two other aircraft in the past two days, a US Air Force EF-111 Raven radar jammer and a Saudi F-5 fighter, for an overall total of 38. The two US pilots were killed, and the Saudi was listed as missing.

Meanwhile, a US military cargo plane carrying German anti-aircraft missile launchers left for Turkey Friday, a week after the crew of a Soviet Plane refused to fly the mission.

Airport officials said the Galaxy C-5 plane took off from Cologne's military airport with two launchers for Roland missiles.

It was the first of a planned 10 flights to take German air defence systems to Turkey, the only NATO member bordering Iraq.

Chancellor Helmut Kohl has agreed to send Roland and Hawk air defence systems and 6000 airmen to protect two air bases in Turkey from possible Iraqi attack.

Arms case: Ershad goes on trial today

By Staff Correspondent

The trial of ousted president HM Ershad on charge of possessing illegal arms begins today at a special tribunal.

The tribunal headed by Mohammad Habibullah, session and district judge, Dhaka will start functioning this morning at the official residence of the leader of the opposition at Gulshan.

Today's agenda of the tribunal are production and accusation. Ershad will be produced at 10.30 am and then will be charged formally by the tribunal.

Attorney General Aminul Haque, Additional Attorney General Abdul Wadud Bhuyyan and Deputy Attorney General See Page 10 Col 1

Dhaka welcomes Iraqi decision

Bangladesh has welcomed Iraqi willingness to withdraw from Kuwait as a 'positive development' and expressed the hope that this would lead to a ceasefire in the Gulf war.

Foreign Affairs Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed told BSS last night that Dhaka received the news of Baghdad's desire to pull out from occupied Kuwait with a great sign of relief.

The United Nations Security Council is now seized with the matter and the latest development would hopefully lead to the cessation of the hostilities in the troubled region, he said.

Zahir, Gazi DUJ president, general secretary

Zahirul Haq and Ruhul Amin Gazi were reelected President and General Secretary of the Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) for one-year term (1991), according to results announced on Friday night, reports UNB.

Zahir-Gazi panel swept the election held Thursday capturing all but one post of office-bearers and 13 out of 19 members of the 31-member DUJ executive committee.

Zahirul Haq polled 450 votes against his rival Abul Kalam Azad who managed 380 while Ruhul Amin Gazi secured 433 votes against 393 polled by Altaf Mahmood.

The others are: Vice-Presidents: Mahbubur Rahman See Page 10 Col 3

AL-Jamaat clash at Mirpur: 7 injured

By Staff Correspondent

At least seven persons were injured when Jamaat workers allegedly attacked an Awami League procession in Mirpur on Friday.

Awami League sources said that seven workers were injured when the procession was attacked by the Jamaat activists. The procession was going to participate an election rally of Awami League leader Dr. Kamal Hossain.

Some out to protect Ershad: Khaleda

DINAJPUR, Feb 15: BNP leader Begum Khaleda Zia today urged the interim administration to put Ershad and his goons on trial promptly otherwise, she said, the people would question the neutrality of the neutral government, reports UNB.

'A vested quarter is trying to protect Ershad and his cronies, which will demean the anti-autocracy popular upsurge,' she told a huge gathering at Gorashahid maidan here. Khaleda said the deposed president and all his corrupt accomplices must be tried to ensure free and fair polls and restore democratic order in the country. Begum Zia charged the Ershad regime with plundering. See Page 10 Col 4

Hartal observed in Rajshahi

RAJSHAHII, Feb 15: A dawn-to-dusk hartal was observed in the city Friday protesting Thursday's BDR firing and killing of a government employee, reports UNB.

Students and local people brought out processions. They demanded justice and also withdrawal of the local BDR commander.

Meanwhile, Namaz-e-Janaza for Harunur Rashid was held at the court premises at 10 am. See Page 10 Col 8

Strong govt a must to rebuild economy: Hasina

SHIBCHAR (Madaripur), Feb 15: Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina said here today that a strong government would be essential in the country to salvage the bankrupt national economy, a legacy of the misrule and misdeeds of autocratic government during the last 15 years, reports BSS.

The situation, she said, has further aggravated following the outbreak of Gulf war which poses a threat to the world economy. She said that the Gulf war would inflict severe injuries on the Third World economy including that of Bangladesh. 'We want immediate cessation of the war,' she said, adding that huge resources involved in the war could be diverted to improve the lot of the poor people of the developing countries. See Page 10 Col 5

Revolt in Dhaka Central Jail

By Staff Correspondent

About 100 prisoners of Dhaka Central Jail revolted yesterday Friday against the jail authority and held hostage Jailer Zaker Hussain and several other jail guards for about one hour. The prisoners charged the Jailer for transferring one Jashim, who earlier gave leadership in the revolt of Dhaka Jail during mid-January, from Dhaka Jail to Mymensingh Jail. According to jail authority sources the prisoners have broken open the doors of prison's cells and now have assembled at a place named 'panchkata' within the jail premises. When the jailer along with some others went to see them they encircled him and demanded the release of the convicted persons. However, they were rescued by some prisoners from the melee. The prisoners also assaulted guards of the jail. The sources said that deadlock was still prevailing there.

Demra water treatment plant likely to be shelved

By Chapal Bashar

The proposed Demra water treatment plant is likely to be shelved to facilitate the implementation of a less costly one at Saidabad in the city. The Saidabad project will cost half as much as estimated for the Demra plant.

A project concept paper for the Saidabad water treatment plant has already been submitted to the government which is now under active consideration. The plan for a water treatment plant at Demra to increase water supply in Dhaka city was initiated in 1964 and a site was also selected for the purpose. But the implementation of the project was much delayed resulting in the manifold increase of its cost. In December, 1989, the cost for the Demra project was estimated at Taka 800 crore, which was, according to concerned authorities, too high. See Page 10 Col 1