

Iraq rejects ultimatum

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US officials said the Iraqis began locking the batteries' radars onto patrolling allied aircraft, a move considered hostile because it indicates the planes are being targeted.
"I don't think it would be hard to take them out," CIA director Robert Gates said on public television's "MacNeil-Lehrer NewsHour" program.
Aziz denounced "the clamor made by American circles over the deployment of defensive air weapons in the south of the country."
Referring to the no-fly zone imposed Aug 27 by the Gulf War allies to protect Shiite Muslim rebels in the south, Aziz reiterated that "Iraq does not recognize the ban."
He denied that Iraq was using the approaching Jan 20 inauguration of President-elect Bill Clinton as an opportunity to test allied resolve.
"Iraq's keenness on its sovereignty, independence and legitimate rights has no connection with the changing of the person of the US president," Aziz said.
Iraqi President Saddam Hussein made a defiant speech Wednesday, saying the Iraqi

army had the "unwavering ability to confront aggression."
Saddam has been locked in a war of nerves with the allies since his Gulf War defeat in 1991.
He has repeatedly engaged in brinkmanship, provoking the allies, then backing off at the last minute when military action is threatened.
The allies have some 200 combat aircraft in the region, plus long-range Tomahawk cruise missiles on US warships in the Gulf.
Among the military options open to the allies are air strikes on the missile batteries' radars, without which the weapons are useless.
The United States also could bomb the runways of the air bases from where Iraq is launching the intrusions below the 32nd parallel, officials said in Washington.
In Kuwait, the prospect of renewed hostilities raised fears that the emirate which neighbours Iraq could be a target for Baghdad's retaliation.
Kuwait's defense minister, Sheikh Ali al-Sabah, announced that any Iraqi attack on the emirate would be met with force. The US Embassy urged the 5,000-member American

community to be alert over the next few days.
The tension was increased by another shoot-out at the Kuwait-Iraq border, the latest in a succession of frontier skirmishes since the war.
The Interior Ministry said Thursday that about 20 Iraqi border policemen on Tuesday fired on the Kuwaiti post in Azmiya.
There were no casualties in the two-hour gun battle, but the post was damaged, the ministry said.
Reuter adds: President Bush today vowed to enforce UN resolutions against Iraq and denounced Baghdad's defiance of an allied ultimatum on its missiles, a congressman said after a White House meeting.
"He reiterated in the strongest possible way his determination that the UN resolutions are going to be enforced," Republican representative Ernest Istook of Oklahoma told reporters.
He added that Bush had criticised "the total inadequacy of the [Iraqi] response that has been received so far" to the 48-hour warning to remove the missiles from the no-fly zone.

Proposal for 3 public meeting venues

A meeting of political leaders to select the places of public meetings in Dhaka Metropolitan City was held yesterday at the conference room of the Ministry of Works with Barrister Rafiqul Islam Mia Minister for Works in the chair, reports BSS.
The meeting discussed in detail to find out places for public meetings and solve the problems of traffic jam.
Proposals from the political leaders for holding public

meetings were at Ramna Batamul, a part of Suhrawardy Uddyan, a part of Osmani Uddyan and the Gulistan Park.
The meeting decided that final decision in this respect would be taken in the next meeting very soon.
The meeting was attended by Muzaffar Hossain Paltu from Awami League, Abdul Kader Mollah, Jamaat-e-Islami, Bangladesh, Khalequzzaman of 5-Party, Haider Akbar Khan Rono of Bangladesh Workers Party, Advocate Mujibur Rahman of NAP (Bhassan), Shaful Alam Pradhan of JAOPA, Saifuddin Ahmed Moni of Democratic League, ATM Alamgir MP, Mirza Abbas MP and Mayor of Dhaka City Corporation, Sadek Hossain, State Minister for Sports, Dr Abdur Rashid, Secretary Ministry of Works, Chairman of RAJUK and Chief Engineers of PWD and Housing and the senior officials of the concerned ministry.

Pindi to sign chemical arms ban convention

ISLAMABAD, Jan 7: Pakistan will be signing the United Nations-sponsored convention prohibiting production, manufacture and use of chemical weapons, an official said Thursday, reports AFP.
Minister of State for Special Education and Social Welfare Javed Hashmi will represent the country at the signing ceremony in Paris on January 13, a Foreign Ministry spokesman told reporters here.
The spokesman said Pakistan had been calling for a ban on chemical weapons for the last two decades and had condemned their use wherever it had taken place.

27 die in ROK bldg collapse

SEOUL, Jan 7: At least 27 people died when an apartment building collapsed Thursday in a gas explosion triggered by a fire in the central city of Chongju, police said, reports AFP.

Dhaka reaffirms support to UN peacekeeping role

Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman yesterday reaffirmed Bangladesh's support to UN peacekeeping operations, saying it will participate in such operations if called upon by United Nations for maintaining global peace, reports UNB.
"UN Peacekeeping forces have set a very high standard to service of the humanity," he said while opening a day-long seminar on "UN Peacekeeping Operations" at Defence Services and Staff College at Mirpur.
The Foreign Minister said more than 1300 soldiers and officers, and about 300 policemen from Bangladesh have now dedicated themselves to the cause of global peace and security in UNISOM, UNTAC, UNPROFOR, UNIKOM and MINURSO.
Mostafiz said peacekeeping today has assumed a greater and more substantial role and UN peacekeepers have to assume that role in all its novelty and necessity.
UN must resolve the problem of carrying out responsibilities without having concomitant resources, finance and manpower so that its credibility is not damaged by a backlash of unfulfilled expectations from the peace loving world community, he added.
The inaugural function was addressed, among others, by Major General Muhammad Mahbubur Rahman, Commandant of the Staff College, Dr Shashi Tharoor, Special Assistant to Under Secretary General for Peacekeeping Operations at UN Headquarters in New York, spoke on the principles, problems and prospects of UN peacekeeping.
Defence secretary MA Malik, and senior civil and military officials attended the seminar.
The Foreign Minister said although the age of cold war and bipolar era is gone, unfortunately, the end of cold war could not usher the world into an era of peace and tranquillity, he said adding that the peace dividends as was hoped for still remain elusive.
During such a period of bewilderment many states, especially the smaller states, look upon the United Nations with optimism to provide a sense of continuity, for collective security and for building a new, peaceful, just and equitable world order, he added.
The Minister said the United Nations must therefore face the new political realities squarely for the sake of justice, peace and development in the emerging order and opportunities created by the demise of cold war.
Four papers were presented at the seminar by members of the faculty of the Defence Services Command and Staff College.
The papers were presented by Col ANM Muniruzzaman, senior instructor (Army), on "The Second Generation Peacekeeping - New Factors in Peacekeeping Operations," Dr M Afzarul Gader, Director General (UN), Ministry of Foreign Affairs on "UN Peacekeeping Operations - Evaluation of UNPROFOR in Bosnia-Herzegovina," Lt Col Shafi Mohammad Mehboob, Directing Staff on "Post-Mission Assessment - A case study of Bangladesh military contingent in UNTAG in Namibia" and Lt Col Shabbab Ashfaq, Directing Staff on "United Nations Peacekeeping - Functions and Operations in the Field."

Housewife commits suicide

By Staff Correspondent
A young housewife committed suicide by hanging herself at North Jatrabari in the capital yesterday, police said.
Demra police said that they recovered the body of Amena Begum 28, hanging by the neck from the ceiling of her Jatrabari residence at about 9 in the morning.
Police said that the housewife might have committed suicide following a row with her husband.
The Pink Panel are: Dr. Aminul Islam, Professor of the Department of Philosophy and Professor KAM Saaduddin of the Department of Sociology.
Some 839 teachers cast their votes that began at 10 in the morning and continued till 2pm.
The Election Commissioner yesterday announced the result officially at 7.30 pm at DU Club in presence of the teachers and journalists.

Delhi seizes land

From Page 1 Col 4
president who is a figurehead, was delayed after reported objections to some clauses by President Shankar Dayal Sharma.
Semi-official Press Trust of India news agency quoted unnamed sources as saying that Sharma "after a close scrutiny of the draft, was now fully satisfied with the ordinance."
The ordinance also provides for setting up of two independent trusts to build a temple and a mosque on the disputed land in Ayodhya, 500 kilometers (310 miles) east of New Delhi.
Both Muslim and Hindu fundamentalists had condemned the ordinance, which was announced Dec 27.
Syed Shahabuddin of the Babri Masjid Coordination Committee, comprising Muslim groups involved in the case, has said the plan violated Rao's earlier promise to rebuild the Babri Masjid.
The Bharatiya Janata Party objected to a court deciding on the dispute, saying legal opinion was irrelevant to the faith of millions of Hindus.
Bharatiya Janata rode to power in four northern states on a wave of Hindu revivalism. Hindus comprise about 82 per cent of India's 875 million population. Muslims account for about 12 per cent of the people.

Menon returns tomorrow

Bangladesh Workers Party General Secretary Rashed Khan Menon, MP, returns home tomorrow after four months of treatment of his bullet wounds in London and Bangkok, reports UNB.
Menon will be received on arrival at the Zia International Airport at 12:50 pm by party leaders and workers.
The left-wing political leader will then be driven to a mass-reception he is scheduled to address on the Topkhana Road at 2:30 pm.
According to a press release, the condition of Menon has improved "satisfactorily" but a complete recovery takes time.
Menon was shot at and wounded critically by unidentified gunmen August 17 evening in front of his party office. He was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital and later shifted to the Combined Military Hospital (CMH) where he underwent operation for the first time.
After the operation and a 12-day treatment at CMH, Menon was shifted to Kings College Hospital in London on August 30 for better treatment.
He was again operated upon in the London hospital where he remained for another two months.
On November 7, Menon left London for Bangkok and stayed in the Thai capital for treatment at the Vichaiot Hospital.
Workers Party yesterday urged all including democratic political parties, fora, professional groups and organisations to attend the mass-reception to his leader.

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Khodeza Begum, Mother of Shaheed Moin Hossain Raju, inaugurated the 22nd council of Bangladesh Chhatra Union by hoisting national flag at the TSC, Dhaka University, yesterday.

5 killed: 2 outlawed parties clash

JESSORE, Jan 7: Five people were killed in a fierce gun-battle between the activists of two outlawed parties at a village, 54 kilometre off the town, Wednesday night, reports UNB.
Police and witnesses said panic-stricken villagers left their houses as the gunmen of Sarbahara Party (Kamrul) and Biplobi Communist Party fought for three hours at Shaursha village.
Both the underground left groups used Chinese rifle, SLR, handbombs and other sophisticated weapons in the clash that started at 10:30 pm.
The dead were identified as Rezaul (28), Mollah (25) of village Chakal and Rajkumar (28) of village Gobra in Narail district and Iman Ali (28). The identity of another victim could not be known immediately.
Narail sadar thana police took Rezaul's body while four other dead were sent to Avoyanagar police station in Jessore district as the village is split into two halves falling in the two thanas of the districts.
Meanwhile, police went to the scene today and recovered six tin shields, six handbombs and a bullet of 303 rifle.
Police Super of Jessore and ASP of Narail visited the spot this afternoon. A case was filed with Avoyanagar police.
All the bodies will be sent to Jessore Sadar Hospital tomorrow (Friday) for autopsy, police said.



Prof Dr Badrul Alam (Left) and Prof Dr K M Mohsin.

DUTA elections

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The Pink Panel has won only two member posts of executive committee.
Dr. Sayed-Ur-Rahman of the Department of Bengali has been elected Vice President and Dr. Anwar Hossain, Professor of the Institute of Business Administration has been elected Treasurer. Both of them were nominated from the White Panel.
Dr Md. Anwar Hossain, Assistant Professor of the Department of Bio-Chemistry, from the Blue Panel has won the Joint Secretary post.
The newly elected President Dr. K M Mohsin, Professor of the Department of History got 366 votes while the General Secretary Dr. Badrul Alam, Associate Professor of the Department of Physics got 312 votes. The elected members are: Dr. A F M Yusuf Halder, Professor of the Department of Physics, Dr. A K M Nazrul Islam, Professor of the Department of Botany, Dr. M Ershadul Bari, Professor of the Department of Law and Md. Shafiqur Rahman, Professor of the Department of Statistics from White Panel.
From the Blue Panel the elected members are: Md. Anis Ahmed, Assistant Professor of the Department of English, Dr. Md. Shahadat Ali, Professor of the Department of Zoology, Dr. Mohammad Moshihuzzaman, Professor of the Department of Chemistry and Dr. Mohammed Mohabbat Khan, Professor of the Department of Public Administration.
The elected members from

BCU national council begins

By DU Correspondent
The 22nd two-day national council of the Bangladesh Chhatra Union began at the Teachers' Students Centre (TSC) of the Dhaka University yesterday (Thursday).
The BCU supporters and activists brought out a procession on the university campus and arranged a discussion at the TSC auditorium.
Mother of late BCU leader Moin Hossain Raju who was killed during a violence on the DU campus last year inaugurated the council while Dr Muzaffar Ahmed a renowned economist attended the function as the chief guest.
The discussion was presided over by the BCU President Nasir-Ud-Doza.
The speakers at the discussion stressed the need for an appropriate education policy in the country.
The council will conclude with the election of a new central committee today.

Aurango's trial begins

The trial of Awami League MP Hemayetullah Aurango began in the Additional Sessions Judge court here yesterday, reports UNB.
The court, however, adjourned the hearing till January 23 as no prosecution witness was present.
Public Prosecutor Abdur Razaque Khan assisted by APP Masud Ahmed Talukder appeared for the government while Advocate Sirajul Haque and Khondoker Mahub Hossain defended the accused.
Hemayetullah Aurango is facing the trial for his alleged involvement in the murder of Naik Ali Azam, an army intelligence man in January 1980.
Aurango was charged with the murder in the same year but the case was stopped for indefinite period. It was, however, revived by the present government and he was arrested on October 24, 1992 from a hotel in Dhaka and was sent to Mymensingh jail.

Body to probe Halihsahar incidents

The government has constituted a one-member Inquiry Commission with Justice Sultan Hossain Khan (Former Chief Election Commissioner) to investigate the incidents which occurred in south Halihsahar including Bandartila areas of Chittagong on January 2 and 3, according to an official announcement here yesterday, reports BSS.
The commission will submit its report with recommendations to the Home Ministry as early as possible.
The Additional District Magistrate of Chittagong district AFM Abdul Haque Chowdhury will provide secretarial service to the Inquiry Commission.

Garments

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child labour or not.
According to sources, Walmart alone imports about 50 per cent of Bangladesh's export of garments.
Meanwhile, Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) has set up a committee to ensure the standard of garments according to the labour law.
The committee has also set up seven zonal sub-committees to monitor the work of the garment sector so that no child labours are engaged. Of the seven sub-committees, five are based in Dhaka while the rest in Chittagong.
The Bangladesh High Commission in the US has already communicated to the US Department of Labour and Commerce about the BGMEA's stance, sources said.

Long march body threatens to obstruct Rao's arrival Jan 12

Organisers of the Long March Action Committee yesterday warned that they would not allow Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao to land in Dhaka for the forthcoming SAARC summit unless the demolished Babri Mosque is rebuilt, reports UNB.
"The demolition of Babri Mosque has threatened the foundation of SAARC," said a written statement from Maulana Azizul Haq who led Monday's abortive long march. Rao's role concerning the historic mosque has "turned the SAARC into a farce," it added.
The statement was read out by Maulana Fazul Haq Amintee at a press conference organised by Long March Action Committee at National Press Club where Maulana Azizul Haq was not present.

The Midnight File

China welcomes START-II treaty

BEIJING, Jan 7: The Chinese government welcomed today the signing of the START-II Nuclear Arms Reduction Treaty between the United States and Russia, but urged the destruction of all such weapons. "Even after the implementation of START-II, the quantity and the quality of the nuclear weapons of the United States and Russia will still outstrip those of other nuclear countries," said Foreign Ministry spokesman Wu Jianmin, reports AFP.

Quake shakes Iran

NICOSIA, Jan 7: Earthquake shook two areas of Iran, causing damage in a region in the south hit by a tremor in September, the Iranian news agency Irna said today. A quake measuring 5.8 on the Richter scale jolted Firuzabad, 760 km (470 miles) south of Tehran and the wintering grounds of one of Iran's biggest migrating tribes, the Qashqai, it said, reports Reuters.

Emergency declared in Dushanbe

MOSCOW, Jan 7: A state of emergency was declared Thursday in Dushanbe, the embattled capital of the former Soviet Central Asian republic of Tajikistan, the ITAR-Tass news agency said, reports AP.
Rival clans and political groups have been at war for months in Tajikistan, the poorest of the former Soviet republics. Thousands have died, and thousands more have fled into neighbouring Afghanistan.
The emergency decree bans virtually all public gatherings, imposes a 9 pm to 6 am curfew and authorizes security forces to stop and search vehicles and individuals, the report said.
The aim of the decree is to ensure the earliest normalization of the situation, the personal safety of citizens to seize weapons and to curb looting, ITAR-Tass said in a dispatch from Dushanbe.
The state of emergency was to begin at midnight (1700 GMT) Thursday in the Dushanbe area, it said.
The decree was issued Thursday by the presidium of the Tajik Supreme Soviet, the Central Asian nation's highest legislative authority, the dispatch said.
The state of emergency comes a month after forces loyal to Tajik leader Emomali Rakhmonov wrested control of the capital from a loose coalition of pro-democratic and pro-Islamic fighters.
Rakhmonov's forces consists mostly of pro-communist militia, ethnic Uzbeks and fighters from his home region of Kulyab.
Interior Minister Yakubjon Salimov was named "commandant" of the affected region, with powers to enforce the state of emergency, ITAR-Tass said.
The dispatch said the Russian army's 201st motorized rifle division, which is headquartered in Dushanbe, would help enforce the decree with troops.

Kashmiris stage anti-Indian demonstrations

SOPORE (India), Jan 7: Thousands of Kashmiri Muslims staged anti-India demonstrations and went on strike today to protest the massacre by Indian security forces of at least 42 civilians in this northern town, reports AFP.

Ahmadi sect wins court ruling in Pakistan

LAHORE, Jan 7: Members of the Ahmadi sect, an Islamic breakaway group reviled as heretics by Pakistan's Muslim majority, have won a landmark court battle guaranteeing them freedom of expression, reports AP.
In a stunning decision, the Supreme Court on Wednesday ruled that the millions of Ahmadi believers can use traditional Islamic greetings like "Assalamu-olai-kum" (God Be With You) or "Inshallah" (God Willing).
The ruling freed an Ahmadi family that had been jailed for defiling the name of the Prophet Mohammed by using an Islamic expression on a wedding invitation, and exonerated a village that used Islamic greetings.
Hard-line Muslims contend the Ahmadis are not true believers and argue that by invoking the traditional greetings, they are trying to pass themselves off as Muslims.

Hasina

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duced with the fall of Ershad, BNP is governing the country in an "autocratic style".
Hasina alleged that late President Ziaur Rahman had rehabilitated the anti-liberation forces while Begum Zia assumed power in entente with and support of the "enemies of independence and war criminals".
To remain in power, Prime Minister Begum Zia made such a man President of the country who opposed country's Liberation War in 1971, the Awami League chief alleged.
Trial of the killers of '71 and '75 must be held on the soil of independent Bangladesh, she asserted.
Accusing the government of pursuing a meek foreign policy, Hasina said BNP had failed to settle the issues like sharing Ganges water, push-in by India and Rohingya refugees.
She also criticised "double standard" in dealing with the Ayodhya long march, which ended in a tragedy in Jessore on January 4.
The Awami League leader was also critical of the Anti-terrorism Act. The law is being used to persecute the opposition instead of curbing crimes.
Hasina said Awami League had announced a new economic policy to remove stagnation from national economy and ensure welfare of the people. "We're determined to attain a self-reliant economy by removing unemployment and poverty."
The Awami League President also addressed a number of wayside rallies including two at Ashuganj and Shariat.

Diarrhoea

From Page 1 Col 4
In Bagerhat two persons died and over one hundred were attacked by diarrhoea during 24 hours until Wednesday afternoon.
Our Staff Correspondent from Khulna reports: Diarrhoea claimed 24 lives in different islands in the Bay of Bengal during the last fortnight.
Chairman of Dujra fishermen group, Major (Retd) Ziauddin after visiting the area disclosed that the disease has spread in an epidemic form in different char areas where more than twenty thousand fishermen are now fishing.
More than five hundred fishermen were attacked by the disease and twenty four fishermen have died so far, he said adding that there were no medical facilities available.
About two hundred affected fishermen and woodcutters were shifted to different hospitals at Bagerhat, Barguna, Ayodhya and Khulna during the time.
Dublar Char, Kochikali, Amboria, Narikelbaria, Shaler Char and Alor Kol are some of the most affected areas, he said.
When contacted the Deputy Director, Health said that no such information was received from those areas.
He, however, said that twelve persons had so far died in southern areas of Khulna and some 311 persons were attacked by diarrhoea during the time.
He also disclosed that about 87 medical teams were now working at Rampal, Bagerhat, Sakop, Mongla and Chandpur. Five makeshift hospitals have been installed at Bagerhat.