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Iraqis thrust into Kuwait, take away missiles

KUWAIT, Jan 11: Unarmed Iraqis in civilian clothes crossed into Kuwait for a second time in as many days Monday and began dismantling warehouses at a naval base it considers within its own territory, a UN official said, reports AP.

The United States and its coalition partners responded by calling for an immediate UN Security Council meeting to discuss Iraq's latest moves.

And in Bonn, Germany, UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali said he hoped the Security Council would come up with a tough response to Iraq's incursions.

The incursions came as tensions remained high over Iraq challenges to the United Nations as well as Washington and its allies.

Reuters says: Hundreds of Iraqis thrust into Kuwait, plundered arms stockpiles left behind from the Gulf war, and drove off with four missiles and other weapons in a spectacular 90-minute raid.

Up to 500 unarmed Iraqis were involved in Sunday's incursion — the most serious since the 1991 six-week war over the Emirate, United Nations officials said.

They hemmed in UN guards who tried to stop them and systematically stripped six bunkers of virtually all their contents, including Chinese-made Silkworm missiles of the type used by Iraq during its 1980-88 war with Iran.

The Iraqis crossed the border with heavy transport vehicles barely 24 hours after the United States said Baghdad appeared to have complied with a UN ultimatum to withdraw missiles from the Western allies' no-fly zone in southern Iraq.

United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observer Mission spokesman Abdellatif Kabbaj said: "Efforts by UNIKOM vehicles to block the Iraqis were thwarted by Iraqi personnel who formed human shields around each UNIKOM vehicle, preventing their movement."

Within 90 minutes the Iraqis returned to Iraq. During the incident one United Nations vehicle was damaged when it was rammed by an Iraqi truck. There were no personnel casualties.

Kabbaj told Reuters by telephone the Iraqis were unarmed civilians. During the raid their number increased to about 500.

He said the weapons and missiles belonged to Iraq but their removal violated a Security Council decision of November 3, 1992, regulating the clearance of weapons from the demilitarized zone between the two countries.

In Cairo, Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammed Saeed el-Sahhaf told the Middle East News Agency that the men who crossed the border on Sunday were "workers for a private contracting company" and that they were removing the remainder of property left behind by Iraqi forces as they retreated in the war.

He insisted that Iraq had UN permission.

"They entered Kuwait yesterday (Sunday) on the basis of an agreement with Gen Dibuama, commander of UN forces, to remove the equipment within a time limit that ends January 15," Sahhaf said.

It was a reference to Maj Gen Timothy Dibuama of Ghana, commander of the UN

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Bomb blast kills 13 Protest in Sind against return of Biharis

KARACHI, Jan 11: A bomb exploded in a Southern Pakistan town inhabited by ethnic Biharis, killing 13 people on the day 323 Biharis arrived from Bangladesh where they had been stranded for 21 years, officials said on Monday, reports Reuter.

Local officials said the bomb was planted in a motorcycle in Bihari colony in the town of Kotri in the southern province of Sind late on Sunday.

The blast demolished five houses and started a fire that engulfed dozens of shops and houses.

"I could hear the cries of the victims and all I could see was blood and human remains splattering whatever walls were left standing after the deafening blast," a local newspaper quoted an eyewitness as saying.

Officials said 13 people were killed and 14 injured, some seriously.

People opposed to the return of the Biharis from Bangladesh called 'a black day' of protest in the interior of Sind province on Monday, hanging black flags at schools and universities.

Many people in Sind oppose the planned repatriation of 238,000 Biharis to central Punjab province, fearing they will eventually move into Sind.



REDS EXIT FROM PRESIDENT CUP

Sports Reporter

Bangladesh Reds, the seniors of the two national selections, bowed out of the seventh President Gold Cup football tournament when they lost to fancied Krylia Sovetov of Russia by two goals to nil at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

Polonia Warszawa of Poland emerged as the Group A champions by eliminating Olympic team of Malaysia 6-1 in the other match of the day.

Detailed Reports on Page 10



Workers Party leader Rashed Khan Menon, presenting a bouquet to Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina when he called on her at the Minto Road residence yesterday. — Star photo

Menon, Hasina exchange views

Workers Party General Secretary Rashed Khan Menon, MP yesterday called on Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League president Sheikh Hasina at her Minto Road residence, reports BSS.

A party press release said, Menon had expressed his gratitude to the Leader of the Opposition for expressing sympathy to him after he had sustained bullet-injuries and also for her support to the anti-terrorism movement.

They exchanged views on fundamentalism, communalism, terrorism, prevailing political situation and Parliament related issues during the one-hour talk.

Menon was accompanied by Workers Party Politburo member Binul Biswas while Awami League leaders Abdus Samad Azad, Abdul Mannan, Zillur Rahman, Mozaffar Hossain

Commentary A dangerous fascination for controversies

By Mahfuz Anam

This is mischievous at best. What possible agenda of BNP's 19-point programme could this serve? Unless, of course, there is one that we do not know about? How will proving that Mujib uttered 'Joy Pakistan' advance our national interest, 21 years after the fact. The DCCI has just released a report of our dismal performance in attracting foreign investment — the key to our breaking the poverty stranglehold. Will another round of controversy help it?

Information Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda is at his favourite game again — raising totally unnecessary controversies which far from serve the aims of Begum Zia's government. What it does, instead, is create bitterness and acrimony. It diverts national energy from the core issues of development and deflects our focus from the need to work together. Of the controversy games he loves to play, the one closest to his heart is Mujib-bashing. In its latest version Barrister Huda has claimed that Sheikh Mujib ended his famous 7th March '71 speech with the slogan 'Joy Pakistan' after saying 'Joy Bangla'.

Minister Huda's claim can easily be verified because it was not only we, but hundreds of foreign journalists recorded

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Storm death toll rises to 43 in Sylhet

From Our Correspondent

SYLHET, Jan 11: The total number of deaths caused by the cyclonic storm that hit Sylhet and Sunamganj districts on Friday last rose to 43.

At least two thousand people were injured in the eight affected thanas of the districts.

Seventy villages in 19 unions have been completely damaged and about five thousand thatched houses out of 11,000 have been razed to the ground. The number of cattle-head died in storm would be over 4,000. Standing rabi crops on thousands of acres of land have been damaged totally as the cyclone was followed by hailstorm.

An official source said, though the extent of damage could not be ascertained immediately, it would be about Taka 10 crore.

Premadasa for fixing Dhaka Summit date without delay

COLOMBO, Jan 11: Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa Monday called for the holding of a postponed regional summit as soon as possible, adding discussions were being continued to finalise fresh dates, reports AFP.

Premadasa made the remarks in discussion with Indian State Minister for External Affairs, Eduardo Faleiro, on the fate of the summit of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) originally planned for Wednesday.

A foreign ministry statement here quoted Premadasa as saying that current SAARC programmes 'should be continued with the least interruption and therefore dates for the Seventh Summit should be agreed as soon as possible.'

"It was agreed that considering the current achievements of SAARC and the progress of important programmes... the present momentum of SAARC should be maintained," the statement quoted Premadasa as telling Faleiro.

The statement said Premadasa, the current chairman of SAARC, would continue to hold discussion with Bangladesh Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, who is due to take over the chairmanship, and other SAARC leaders to arrange fresh dates.

The two-day summit of the

Nepali daily says Postponement of Dhaka summit 'unfortunate'

KATHIMANDU, Jan 11: Leading Nepalese English daily The Rising Nepal said in an editorial today that the postponement of the summit of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) is an 'unfortunate development'.

The annual meeting of the heads of state or government of the (SAARC) member countries has always been a significant event, it said.

As mutual cooperation through SAARC is a key element in the massive effort to improve the living conditions of the people, the postponement may have the sad effect of retarding the movement, it noted.

India has cited the tense situation prevailing in the Sub-Continent over an explosive Temple-Mosque dispute in northern India as a reason for Rao's decision to keep away from the Dhaka meeting.

Rao sent two of his junior ministers including Faleiro to neighbouring states to explain the reason for his inability to make the trip to Dhaka.

SAARC groups Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Bombay riots spread to new areas

BOMBAY, Jan 11: Hindu-Muslim clashes spread to new areas of Bombay today as Indian army troops and police opened fire on rioters in at least a dozen places and thousands of residents sought desperately to flee the chaos, reports AFP.

Police reported that violence subsided in a number of districts but broke out in others, including the posh Colaba residential neighbourhood.

In Bombay's working class Dongri area, while flags fluttered atop houses in an appeal for an end to the six days of violence which have left nearly 130 people dead.

Incidents are under control but we can't guarantee the same about people's feelings," senior police inspector Shrish Inamdar said after a tour of some of the worst-hit areas of the city, India's financial capital.

The Press Trust of India said police and infantrymen opened fire on rampaging mobs in at least a dozen places Monday, but did not provide any casualty figures.

Police said 129 people have been killed and 642 injured here during the past six days in a renewed outburst of violence linked to the December 6 razing of the Babri Mosque in the northern town of Ayodhya by Hindu fanatics.

Firefighters reported sporadic incidents of shops and

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Cabinet okays proposal for financial institution act

The cabinet has approved in principle the proposal of the Ministry of Finance to enact a new law to ensure proper operation of non-banking financial and investment institutions and also to ensure financial discipline thereof, reports BSS.

The approval was given in the regular weekly meeting of the cabinet, held at Bangabhaban yesterday with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in the chair.

The proposed financial institution act aims at providing adequate framework to enable Bangladesh Bank to regulate the non-banking institutions including the investments

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Rao's letter to PM: Bhatia leaves 'No summit unless region is normal'

By Toufique Imrose Khalidi

India yesterday told Bangladesh that new dates for the twice-postponed Seventh SAARC Summit could be fixed only after the region returned to normalcy, a senior Indian official said.

The official said that Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao in his letter to his Bangladesh counterpart stated that the situation in the subcontinent was not 'conducive' to holding the summit, necessitating a further postponement.

The letter was handed over to Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday when Indian Minister of State for External Affairs R. L. Bhatia called on her.

Bhatia arrived in Dhaka Sunday as a special envoy of the Indian Prime Minister, whose inability to attend the summit rescheduled for January 13-14 after putting off the

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200 die of hunger in Bosnia RU Syndicate, Deans polls today

SARAJEVO, Jan 11: Nearly 200 people died of cold or hunger in five isolated, mainly Muslim pockets of eastern Bosnia in the 24 hours up to midday Sunday, Sarajevo radio said, reports Reuter.

The radio, basing its figures on reports sent by radio amateurs from the towns, said 104 people had died in Zepa, 47 in Srebrenica, nine in Cerska, 22 in Konjevic Polje and 13 in Kamernica.

Zepa has been cut off since March and is believed to have at least 33,000 people in desperate need of food, medicine, clothing and fuel.

RAJSHAHI, Jan 11: Election of five teachers' representatives to Rajshahi University Syndicate and Deans of the six faculties will be held tomorrow (Tuesday), reports UNB.

Candidates split into two panels, named Yellow and Green, will be contesting the polls to be held at the university's Jubery Bhaban from 9.30 am to 2 pm.

The candidates of Yellow panel for the syndicate membership are: Abul Fazal Haq, Professor of Political Science, Dr Md Nuruliah, Associate Professor of Psychology, Maitur

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Syndicate fails to take decision JU tense as JCD continues protest

By JU Correspondent

The Jahangirnagar University Syndicate at its special session yesterday failed to decide measures to defuse tension on the campus.

Meanwhile, the defiant Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) activists attacked several rooms of teachers, opened fire and exploded crackers Sunday demanding review of punishment to their leaders.

The Syndicate, highest body of the university, that went into closed-door session yesterday also could not reach any decision on the issue arising out of the punishment of two JCD leaders for insulting a hall provost.

The Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) activists attacked several rooms of teachers, opened fire and exploded crackers Sunday demanding review of punishment to their leaders.

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Get more and more involved in politics, Hasina urges women

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina Monday urged women to involve themselves in politics in large number so that they can realise their demands.

She was addressing the concluding session of a two-day seminar titled 'Gender and Development' organised by the Unitarian Service Committee of Canada in Bangladesh at the auditorium of Bangladesh Management and Development Centre.

"Take your stand in politics and you will see the demands have automatically been realised," Hasina told the audience adding that "her party

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OIC demands 'vigorous military action' in Bosnia

DAKAR, Jan 11: The Organisation of the Islamic Conference wants "vigorous military action" in Bosnia-Herzegovina to ensure that UN resolutions are respected, Senegalese President Abdou Diouf said today, reports AFP.

Diouf, who is current OIC chairman, was speaking at the opening of a mini-summit called to discuss the Bosnian conflict and the plight of 400 suspected Palestinian militants expelled on December 17 by Israel.

"The practice of ethnic cleansing perpetrated daily against the Bosnian population threatens the very existence of a whole people," Diouf said, referring to the Serbs' policy of forcibly expelling the Croat and Muslim population from their home regions.

The OIC was in favour of "vigorous military action to ensure that United Nations Security Council and General Assembly resolutions are respected."

The Security Council is currently weighing calls for the military enforcement of a "no fly" zone over Bosnia, Herzegovina aimed at grounding Serb aircraft.

Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic flew to Dakar to press for military intervention, but also wants a UN arms embargo against former Yugoslavia to be lifted.

Bosnia's beleaguered Muslims say the arms embargo is preventing them from defending themselves against the heavily-armed Serbs. But opponents of easing the embargo say it would only worsen the bloodshed.

OIC foreign ministers after a stormy two-day meeting in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia on December 3 urged the United Nations to approve military action to end the "genocide" of Bosnian Muslims.

The ministers representing 50 Islamic countries as well as the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) at that time urged the UN Security Council to review the situation in

Hosnia by January 15.

AP from Paris adds: Foreign Minister Roland Dumas met other senior officials Monday to discuss his proposal that detention camps in Bosnia be forcibly liberated, even if France had to act alone.

"Somebody must take the initiative on something," said Foreign Ministry spokesman Daniel Bernard. "We propose to do something because, we consider the current situation unacceptable — we propose to do something practical, concrete, right away."

The first step, according to Health and Humanitarian Action Minister Bernard Kouchner, would be a plan to free "a certain number of women" held in the camps. He said he would have this plan ready no later than Tuesday, and would leave shortly thereafter for Bosnia to assess its implementation.

Defense Minister Pierre Joxe, while praising Dumas' proposal, noted that a final

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2166 more Rohingyas return home

CON'S BAZAR, Jan 11: Two thousand one hundred and sixty-six Rohingya refugees today went back to their homeland in Myanmar through Rongkhali, Noyapar-2 and Jumnapara transit camps at Teknaf, official sources told BSS here to-night.