

Three Somalis killed in clash with US-led troops

MOGADISHU, Jan 25: Three Somalis were killed and at least five were wounded in clashes Sunday with troops of a US-led coalition trying to safeguard efforts to feed the country's starving, reports AP.

Despite the presence of more than 38,000 allied troops, Somalia remains dangerous. In the volatile southern port city of Kismayu, three people were slain on Sunday.

The violence led Col Marc Jacquin, the commander of Belgian troops here, to warn development officials from the European Community and Belgium not to visit Kismayu as they had planned.

Belgian Development Minister Eric Derycke, who was to visit Kismayu on Monday, is visiting to see if it is safe to re-establish an EC presence. EC delegates were evacuated in 1991, along with most foreign diplomats and aid workers, as the country

slipped into chaos.

In Brussels, the aid group Doctors Without Borders announced it had evacuated seven of its nine volunteers from Kismayu to Nairobi after a demonstration Saturday protesting the presence of foreigners became violent. Shots were fired and stones were hurled at cars of the relief group.

It was not clear if the demonstration was spontaneous or staged by a local warlord opposed to the presence of the allied troops.

In Kismayu on Sunday, Belgian soldiers surrounded and stormed a building after coming under fire from snipers. They killed two Somalis, wounded one and captured four, Belgian and US military spokesmen said here.

In Brussels, Belgian army spokesman Col Guy Vermotte also described the incident.

OIC urges UN to authorise use of force in Bosnia

JIDDAH, Jan 25: The Organization of the Islamic Conference has urged the UN Security Council to authorize the use of force to implement UN resolutions on Bosnia, reports AP.

The 51-member organization, in a statement issued Sunday night, said Secretary-General Hamid al-Gabid had initiated contacts to reconvene the UN General Assembly session to review the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The Jiddah-based OIC is umbrella for the world's Muslim nations.

"The secretary-general has urged the Security Council to take immediate cognizance of the worsening situation and authorize the use of force for the implementation of all UN resolutions pertaining to Bosnia-Herzegovina," the statement said.

At an emergency meeting of its foreign ministers and December, the OIC had set Jan 15 as a deadline for the Security Council to "review the situation in Bosnia with a view to implementing its decisions on it."

Gabid strongly denounced what he called "the deliberate Serbian raids against UN weapon depots in Croatia," insisting that the Serbs have "continued to defy the will and the conscience of the international community."

"Such wayward behaviour and flagrant disregard of the international resolutions are an affront to the United Nations and the Security Council must be enabled to fulfil its responsibilities under the UN charter," he said.

AFP adds: Five hundred civilians and 150 Serb militiamen have been killed in fighting

between Croats and Serbs which broke out in southern Croatia on Friday, Yugoslav Deputy Premier Radoje Kontic said Sunday.

The toll, which also includes hundreds of wounded, "testifies to the force of the aggression, by Croatian forces, he said in a letter to the UN Security Council quoted by Tanjug news agency.

Yugoslavia was calling for an urgent meeting of the Security Council and was ready to "act strongly to protect these (Serb) regions and their population" from attack by Croatian forces, he added. Croatian President Franjo Tudjman had earlier said that more than 120-Serbs and 10 Croats had died in the clashes in south-west Croatia, where Croatian forces have been inaction against Serb militiamen from the self-styled Serbian republic

of Krajina after intervening to repair a destroyed bridge.

Tudjman also said 30 Croatians had been injured in the fighting which follows a year-long ceasefire and the deployment of UN peace-keeping forces in the region.

Meanwhile: The president of Serb-dominated Yugoslavia and the leader of Bosnian Serbs on Sunday accused Croats of sabotaging peace talks on former Yugoslavia with their offensive on the Adriatic coast.

The angry comments by President Dobrica Cosic and Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic came as fighting in Croatia continued to overshadow peace talks to try to end the bloodshed in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Cosic demanded stronger action by the UN Security Council.



BEVERLY HILLS, California: Actress Lauren Bacall gets congratulatory kiss from actor Anthony Hopkins on Saturday after she received the Cecil B DeMille Award given for outstanding contributions to the entertainment field at the 50th annual Golden Globe Awards. — AFP/UNB photo

BRIEFLY

Thurgood Marshall dead: Thurgood Marshall, a leading fighter in the civil rights struggle of American blacks who became the first black to sit on the US Supreme Court, died on Sunday, a court spokesman said, Reuter reports from Washington.

Marshall, 84, died of a heart attack at Bethesda Naval Hospital near Washington. He had been in failing health for several years and cited that as the reason for his retirement from the Supreme Court in June 1991.

Physically imposing and a lustrous name in the annals of the civil rights struggle, Marshall led the fight as a lawyer before the Supreme Court in the 1950s to abolish racial segregation in American schools.

A feisty man who liked a good joke, Marshall told his farewell news conference he was retiring because he was getting old and coming apart.

Saudi navy men in Karachi: A number of naval units of Royal Saudi Army arrived at Karachi Port Sunday to participate in joint maritime exercise with Pakistan Navy, says Xinhua from Islamabad.

According to local press reports yesterday, the exercise code-named Naseem-ul-Bahr is scheduled to last for about two weeks.

The exercise has been divided into harbour tactical and analysis phases with the second phase taking place in North Arabian Sea.

Various tactical doctrines involving different types of weapons and sensors will be exercised for the mutual professional benefit of the two navies.

29 Palestinians shot at in Gaza: Israeli troops shot and wounded 29 Palestinians in clashes in the occupied Gaza strip on Sunday, local hospital officials and military sources said, reports Reuter from Jerusalem.

But the army said 13 Palestinians were wounded.

The hospital officials said 27 Palestinians were shot and wounded by troops in clashes in Gaza city and Jabalya, Shati and Burceji refugee camps.

Eighty Palestinians suffering from the effects of tear gas fired by troops in Jabalya were treated by the United Nations Welfare and Relief Agency (UNWRA) clinic there, UNWRA officials said. They said troops also shot tear gas into the clinic.

Turkish newsman killed in blast: A prominent left-wing journalist was killed when a bomb planted under his car exploded Sunday, Turkey's prime minister pledged that the killers would be brought to justice, says AP from Ankara.

Ugur Mumcu, 50, a columnist for the Istanbul newspaper Cumhuriyet, had been an outspoken critic of Islamic fundamentalism and Kurdish separatism. Islamic Jihad and two other Islamic groups that had never been heard of previously claimed responsibility for the assassination.

Mumcu, a vigorous defender of secularism in Turkey, had reported receiving death threats from extremist Islamic groups.

He died instantly when the bomb exploded as he started his car outside his apartment. The Anatolia news agency quoted officials as saying the bomb was planted under the car.

Kuwait-US jt military exercises end

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 25: Kuwait announced yesterday that the four-day joint Kuwait-US military exercises ended in Kuwait earlier in the day, reports Xinhua.

The exercises, code-named Iris Gold, began on 21 January involving an American battalion that recently arrived in the Gulf country.

Speaking to reporters, an official source of the Kuwaiti Defence Ministry said that various Kuwaiti units of the Amir Guard Brigade, military police and national guard took part in the maneuver, which has been the first of its kind in 1993.

He said that the exercises involved day-and-night combat, diverse field skills, firing live ammunition using light and medium-sized weapons, dealing with prisoners of war and field clearing operations.

The source stressed that Kuwaiti troops have established high combat capabilities during the exercises, and this would certainly be useful when it comes to joint coordination with other forces and to steadfastness in combat.

The exercises were conducted within the context of Kuwaiti-US joint defence cooperation.

Kuwait has signed defence cooperation agreements with each of the US, Britain and France in the wake of the Gulf War.



KUWAIT CITY: A Kuwaiti father and his children visit on Sunday the wreckage of Iraqi tanks exposed at the Kuwait International Fair. Thousands of pieces of Iraqi military equipment destroyed by the coalition during 'Operation Desert Storm' are stocked in scrap yards all over the country. — AFP/UNB photo

Indian Muslims blast Rao for failing to protect their lives

NEW DELHI, Jan 25: Indian Muslims Sunday lashed out at the Government of Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao for failing to protect their lives and property, reports Reuter.

Around 300 leading Muslims gathered in New Delhi to protest at a wave of violence sparked by the destruction by Hindu extremists of a mosque in the town of Ayodhya on December 6.

More than 1,700 people mostly Muslims, died in the ensuing riots.

The Muslims blamed the spread of violence on the government's indecisiveness and weak administration.

The state apparatus collapsed completely and continues to drift aimlessly in the hands of fanatics and religious leaders, said a resolution passed by the meeting attended by lawyers, academicians, students and journalists.

"The state must revitalise itself and take command, it said. The responsibility of safeguarding the lives and property of its citizens rests with the state. It cannot abdicate its responsibility."

Muslims have accused the predominantly Hindu police force of deliberately firing on them during a recent outbreak of rioting in India's commercial capital Bombay.

Muslim politicians were also held responsible for the recent violence. Many were out of touch with the people they claimed to represent, speakers said.

The state itself repeatedly puts up non-representative Muslims, Hindus and others as community leaders in callous

disregard of people's aspirations, said the resolution.

Shahid Siddiqui, Editor of a popular Urdu weekly said, Indian Muslims have been dramatised by what has happened since December 6. This is a time for introspection and throwing out traditional Muslim leaders who have let us down.

But speakers also condemned a call from some Muslim politicians to boycott India's Republic Day celebrations tomorrow in protest at the violence.

"Such statements misguide Muslims and create inter-community misunderstanding, shrinking goodwill among large sections across communities, said Ihtiaz Ahmed a Professor at New Delhi's prestigious Jawaharlal Nehru University.

No progress in Korean N-talks

SEOUL, Jan 25: South Korea formally told rival North Korea Monday that it would resume joint military exercises with the United States because Pyongyang has refused to resolve suspicions about its nuclear programme, officials said, reports AP.

At a border meeting, Communist North Korea countered by demanding that the military exercises be canceled first to smooth the way for progress on the nuclear issue, said the officials at the South Korea's National Unification Board.

The pro-West South had made settlement of the dispute over nuclear inspections a condition for canceling this year's 'Team Spirit' military exercises, set to begin in early February and last until mid-April.

During past exercises, the North has called off most dialogue with the South in protest, calling 'Team Spirit' a rehearsal for invading North Korea. The exercises, an annual event since 1976, were canceled last year to encourage inter-Korea dialogue.

But last fall, South Korea and the United States decided to restart 'Team Spirit,' which they describe as purely defensive, this spring to press the North to accept inter-Korea nuclear inspections.

The two Koreas, bitter rivals since the division of their peninsula in 1945, adopted a reconciliation accord early last

year but relations have remained chilly, largely because of the nuclear dispute.

Under an inter-Korea nuclear arms ban accord adopted last year, the two were to inspect each other's suspected nuclear weapons sites, but they have failed to adopt inspection rules.

The North, one of the world's few remaining hard-line Communist states, allowed the International Atomic Energy Agency to inspect its nuclear facilities five times last year. But Seoul and its allies say the IAEA inspections are not thorough enough to dispel suspicions.

The North insists that its nuclear programme is purely for peaceful purposes.

Sharif hails Major's role in Kashmir issue

ISLAMABAD, Jan 25: Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has welcomed British Prime Minister John Major's emphasis on negotiations between India and Pakistan to resolve the Kashmir issue, reports Xinhua.

Nawaz Sharif said on Sunday that Pakistan was ready to engage in meaningful negotiations with India to achieve a peaceful solution of the Kashmir problem.

He appreciated the initiative of Major in promoting a peaceful settlement of Kashmir and expressed the hope that the personal interest of the British Prime Minister would lead a way out of the present impasse, an official handout reaching here today said.

In an interview with All India Radio Sunday, John Major said Pakistan and India should develop a satisfactory political dialogue on the Kashmir issue without external assistance.

Any role of a coordinator or mediator by any third party or country would be very difficult and unproductive.

John Major arrived in New Delhi on Sunday for a six-day visit to India.

Rabin to meet Clinton in Mar

JERUSALEM, Jan 25: Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin will meet new US President Bill Clinton in March in Washington, Israeli national television reported Sunday, says AP.

It said Rabin and Clinton had arranged the meeting during a phone conversation on Saturday. They had also discussed a possible Middle East tour shortly by Secretary of State Warren Christopher, the television said.

The White House press service and the Israeli Prime Minister's office reported the conversation on Saturday without mentioning the meeting.

According to Rabin's agenda, he will be going to Washington in March for the annual congress of the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee, the US Jewish lobby.

Israeli press reports recently said he might go to Washington early in February.

Russia sends relief to Abkhazia

MOSCOW, Jan 25: A Russian helicopter carrying emergency food aid took off Monday for a besieged separatist stronghold in Georgia, a news agency reported, says AP.

The helicopter left the Russian Black Sea port of Sochi and flew to Tkvarcheli, a city in the breakaway region of Abkhazia, the Interfax news agency reported. Georgian troops reportedly have blockaded the city.

Chelsea attending classes alone

WASHINGTON: Chelsea Clinton was attending classes Monday for the first time since the choice of her pricey private school drew criticism to her education-conscious father, reports AP.

White House Press Secretary Dee Myers said Sunday she did not know whether President Clinton or first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton would accompany Chelsea, 12, to Sidwell Friends.

"The last conversation I had with them they sort of lamented the fact that junior high school students don't want their parents to drive them to school," Myers said. "It's bad enough to have your parents drive you to school, but it's worse when your dad travels with sirens blaring."

Clinton or his wife frequently took Chelsea to her public school in Arkansas. Chelsea, who turns 13 next month, was an eighth-grader at Mann Junior High, a magnet school with more black students than whites.

Use of women in ads absolutely banned

TEHRAN: Iran has banned the use of women in advertising, even veiled ones, the conservative Dally Ressaalat reported Sunday, says AP.

The paper, close to Tehran's tradesmen, said the measure follows a protest from the Iranian women's association led by a daughter of the late spiritual guide, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

The offensive publication of a picture of a veiled woman on an advertising page in a newspaper is behind this ban," said Ressaalat without giving other details.

The Registrar of business firms in Iran has been notified of the ban and no longer records trademarks of products using female pictures to promote their sales, the paper added.

"We should not tolerate the re-emergence of women's pictures on trademarks of products" as was the case before the Islamic revolution which toppled the Shah in 1979, the women's group headed by Zohra Mustafaei said.

Advertising, which was banned following the revolution, was permitted again two years ago in Iran and veiled women hawking household products, recently began appearing in newspapers.

Clinton to learn diplomatic pointers

WASHINGTON: Don't give Prince Charles a tea bag. Don't confuse Mauritius with Mauritania. And if the king of Saudi Arabia asks for an autographed picture, please comply.

These are a few diplomatic pointers culled from the experiences of past presidents that might help Bill Clinton now that he's moved into the White House, reports AP.

Clinton will soon learn that being president is more than drafting economic recovery plans and avoiding the dangers of an unstable world. It's also mastering those personal touches that can make or break relationships with foreign leaders.

Ronald Reagan tells of the day Prince Charles visited the White House. A steward brought tea as the Prince and the President sat in the Oval Office.

"I noticed the prince was staring rather quizzically down into his cup," Reagan recalled in his autobiography. "Finally, it dawned on me. The ushers had given him a cup containing a tea bag. I thought, well, maybe he had never seen one before."

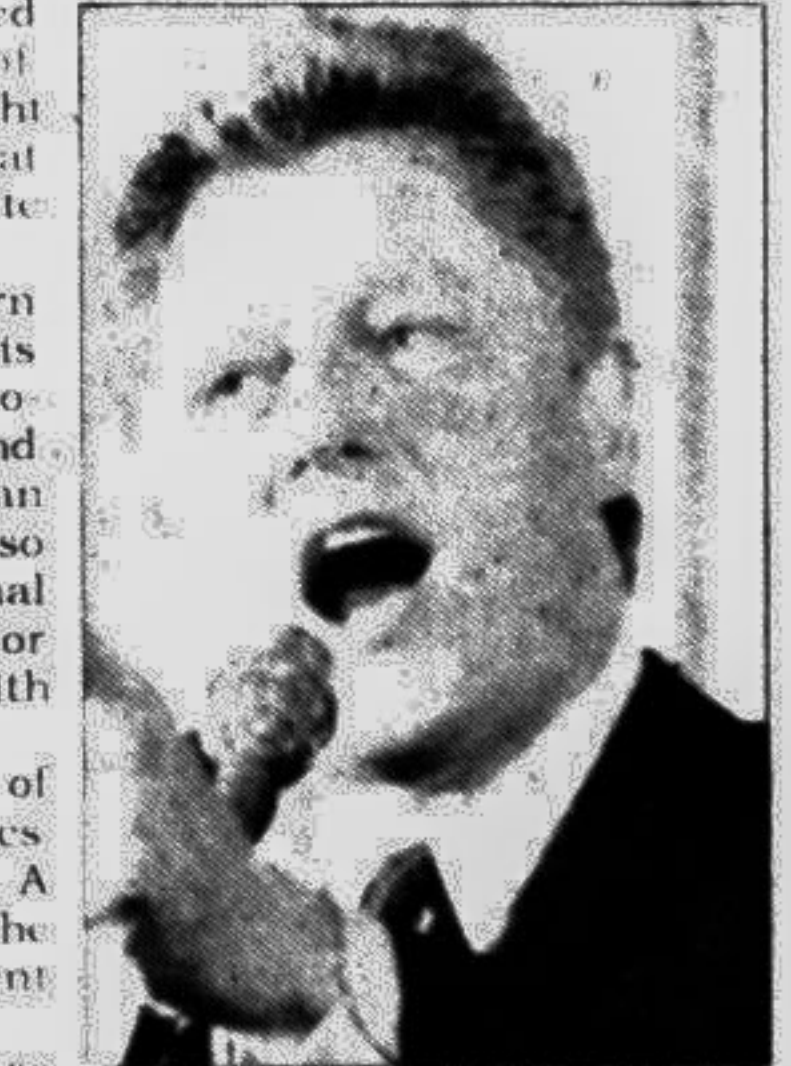
It was nine in the morning of Jimmy Carter's first full day as president that he asked Evan Dohelle to serve as his chief of protocol.

"I don't like pomp and I don't want anything that looks phony," the president told Dohelle.

Like Clinton, Carter had been a Southern governor with little experience dealing with foreign leaders.

Did that mean Dohelle had to spend a lot of time briefing the president on the niceties of protocol?

"No," he recalled. "Protocol is really instinctive courtesy. If you're a courteous person then you're going to do well in protocol."



Explosion inside Israel's security zone in Lebanon

MARJAYOUN, Lebanon, Jan 25: A roadside bomb exploded Monday as an Israeli patrol passed through a village inside Israel's self-styled 'security zone' in south Lebanon, security sources said, reports AP.

The sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, said there was no immediate report of casualties from the fourth bomb incident in three days.

They said the patrol was passing through the village of Alshaych at 9:45 a.m. (0745 GMT) when the bomb went off.

It was the fourth bomb that was found or detonated inside the zone since Saturday.

Demirel starts Gulf states tour to forge closer ties with Arabs

ANKARA, Jan 25: Turkish Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel sets off today on a five-nation tour of Gulf states in a bid to forge closer links between Ankara and the Arab world, reports AP.

The mini-tour comes just a week after his trip to Syria during which he discussed bilateral and international issues, including the civil war in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Judged "very important" by Ankara, the January 25-29 tour will take in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates. It aims to "re-evaluate and reinforce at the highest level" links between Turkey and the Gulf

states, Turkish diplomatic source said.

High on the agenda will be the plight of the Muslim community in war-ravaged Bosnia. Turkey has historic religious and cultural ties to the region which, like parts of the Arab world was part of the Ottoman empire for five centuries.

Turkey, which now chairs the "contact group" of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), is in permanent touch with the warring parties in the former Yugoslavia.

The OIC recently held a mini-summit on the issue in the Senegalese capital Dakar, which tried to persuade the international community to

back military intervention in Bosnia on the lines of the Gulf War against Iraq in 1991.

The recent tension between Iraq and the allies — the United States, Britain, ADN, France — and bilateral relations between Turkey and the five states will also be discussed, particularly oil and natural gas sales, diplomatic sources said.

The trip is the first by Demirel since he became Prime Minister in November 1991 at the head of a coalition of his traditionalist right-wing true party and the populist social democratic party of Deputy Prime Minister Erdal

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Turkish President Turgut Ozal conducted a tour of the Gulf region short after the Gulf War in a bid to present Turkey as a defender of stability of the near east following its high-profile participation in the anti-Iraq coalition.

During his sweep through the region Demirel will be beating the drum for Turkish-built F-16 fighter-bombers made at Turkish aerospace industries factory in Ankara, the semi-official Anatolia news agency said.

Turkey has already made 100 of the warplanes, built on licence from US contractor

General Dynamics. Out of the 160 agreed in a 1984 accord with the US firm until now Egypt has been the only country to express an interest in the planes, and is negotiating the purchase of 46 aircraft.

On his trip Demirel will be accompanied by Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin, Agriculture Minister Necmettin Cevheri, and defence and economics ministry officials.

In Kuwait, Demirel will hold talks on a 200 million dollar tranche of aid promised by the Kuwaiti government for 1993, to compensate Turkey for the estimated 7 billion dollar that

Fiji won't crawl back to C'wealth, says Rabuka

SUVA, Jan 25: Fiji will not 'crawl back' into the British Commonwealth, which it left after two racially-inspired military takeovers in 1987, Prime Minister and former coup leader Sitiveni Rabuka said in an interview published Monday, reports AP.

Fiji's membership in the Commonwealth, which groups Britain and its former colonies, lapsed when Rabuka declared a republic in the name of indigenous Fijian rights by ousting Queen Elizabeth as head of state after overthrowing an ethnic Indian-dominated government.

enforcing UN sanctions against Iraq cost Ankara

To date Turkey has received 3.1 billion dollar in international aid including 1.2 billion from Kuwait, 100 million dollar from the United Arab Emirates, 1.36 billion dollar in oil from Saudi Arabia, 163 million dollar from Germany, 18 million dollar from the Netherlands, and 250 million dollar from the United States.

The European Community has extended a 243 million dollar credit to Turkey, with Japan offering 618 million dollar and France 30 million dollar.