



Impeachment debate opens

WASHINGTON, Dec 18: Opening only the second debate in history on removing a US president from office, the House of Representatives weighed today four articles of impeachment against President Bill Clinton. The debate went forward amid US military action in Iraq and after a top Republican lawmaker made a stunning confession of infidelity, reports AP.

In a somber voice, House reading clerk Paul Hays read the resolution of impeachment: "Resolved, that William Jefferson Clinton, president of the United States, is impeached for high crimes and misdemeanors."

House Judiciary Committee Chairman Henry Hyde called up the four articles against Clinton that his committee had approved last week despite Democratic objections to moving forward during the Iraqi military action.

Democrats forced a failed vote to adjourn and stepped up demands that majority Republicans allow a vote on censuring Clinton as an alternative to impeachment.

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BIMSTEC meeting begins today

By Staff Correspondent The second BIMSTEC ministerial level meeting begins in the city today to explore ways of greater co-operation among its member countries, particularly in the fields of trade and investment, communication, energy and tourism.

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad is expected to inaugurate the meeting at the Sonargaon Hotel.

Abul Hasan Chowdhury, State Minister for Foreign Affairs of host Bangladesh, Mrs. Vasundhara Raje, Minister for External Affairs of India, U. Khin Maung Win, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Myanmar, Lakshman Kirella, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka and Sukhumhand Paribatra, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Thailand will represent their respective countries, a senior foreign ministry official said.

Official level discussions. See Page 12 Col 8

Dhaka deplores US attack on Iraq

Bangladesh deplored the US attack on Iraq and asserted that situation could have been resolved through negotiations, reports BSS.

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad "deplored the US attack on Iraq" and said "this is a violation of international law and breach of sacred principles of UN charter."

In a statement to BSS, the foreign minister expressed his apprehension that "this attack will cause immense sufferings to the innocent civilians, including women and children."

"Bangladesh firmly believed that the situation in Iraq could be resolved through dialogue and negotiations and the United Nations has a vital role to play," the statement said.

The foreign minister while urging the US government to exercise restraint said that Bangladesh expects Iraq to co-operate with the United Nations and comply with its resolutions."

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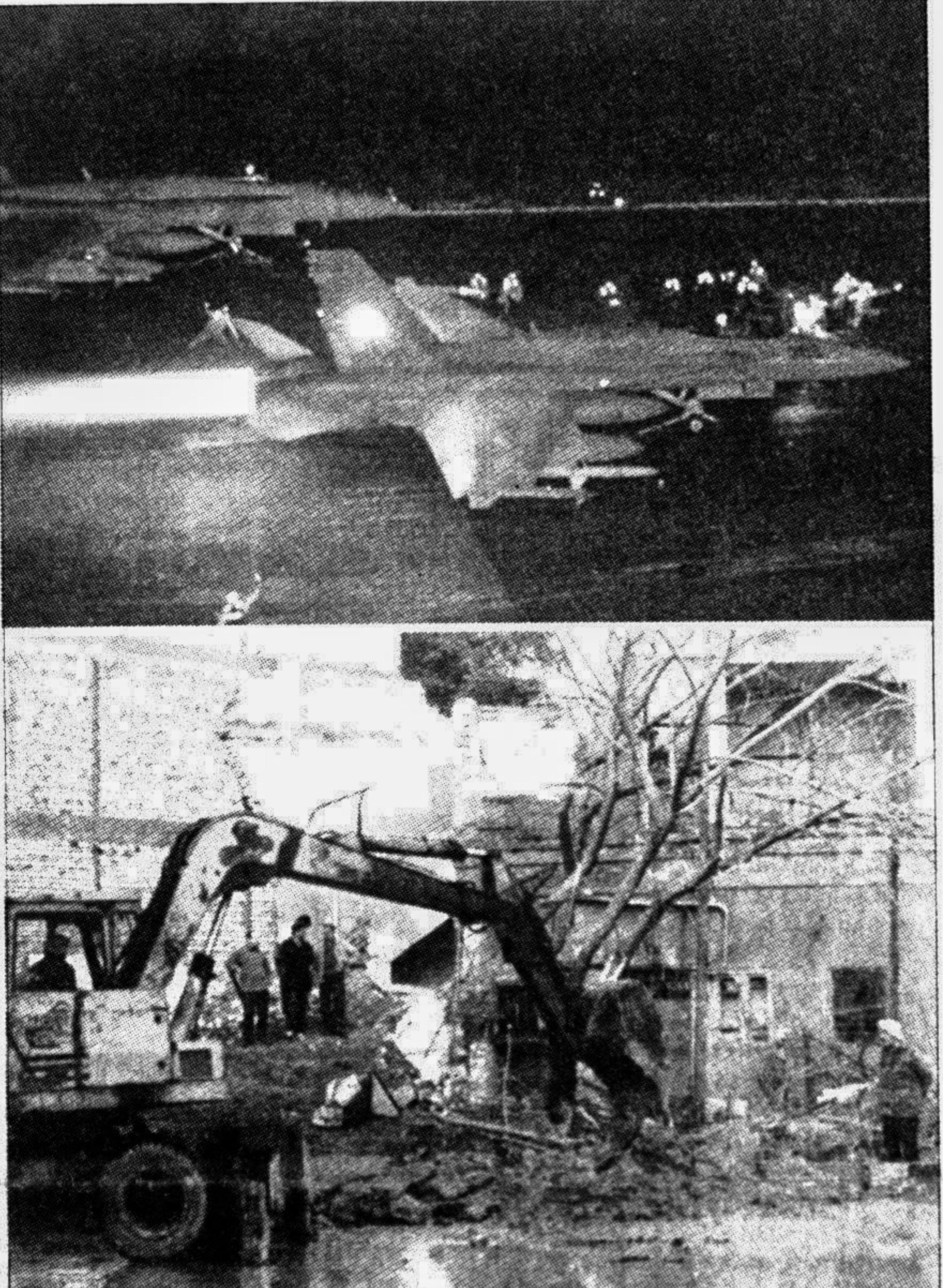
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Third day of air strike



An F/A-18 Hornet, from Strike-Fighter Squadron One Zero Five, launches from the flight deck of the USS Enterprise, during the second round of strikes against Iraq on Thursday, (top) and Iraqis try to repair a burst water mains after a missile hit a residential area and demolished a house in southern Baghdad early Thursday morning. — AP/UNB photo

KUWAIT, Dec 18: British warplanes based in Kuwait launched fresh attacks today against Iraqi targets in a third day of a US-led air campaign.

"Yes, RAF tornadoes are taking part in the operation but I cannot disclose how many," a Royal Air Force (RAF) spokesman told Reuters.

Deafening explosions rocked Baghdad today in the latest wave of US and British air raids that Iraq says have killed at least 25 people in the last two days, says AP.

The Iraqi capital came under missile attack hours before dawn, capping a barrage of strikes that began late Thursday night. The bombardment covered Baghdad with a pall of smoke and set the skyline aglow in orange.

Again and again air-raid sirens sounded the warning and the sky was lighted by anti-aircraft fire and tracer bullets.

But as a new day dawned, the tension of the night was less evident and early risers were seen going about their normal business. Traffic was light since Friday is the Muslim Sabbath, but worried motorists queued up at gasoline stations to make sure their tanks were full.

Iraqi newspapers urged the public to rally behind President Saddam Hussein.

The newspaper urged Iraqis to show their readiness for sacrifice and their readiness to face the evil aggressors.

In an apparent effort to incite the public to rise up against Saddam, US aircraft dropped leaflets over southern Iraq on Thursday, an Information Ministry officials said.

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Russian forces on red alert

MOSCOW, Dec 18: ITAR-Tass news agency said today Russia's military, including its strategic nuclear forces, was being placed on heightened alert because of the Iraq crisis, reports Reuters.

A defence ministry spokesman said by telephone he could not confirm the Tass report, which quoted one defence source as saying, "All measures are being taken to carry out the main role of the defence ministry — guaranteeing the security of the state."

Earlier, Defence Minister Sergei Sergeyev called into question relations with NATO and said the Iraq crisis was forcing Moscow to rethink its overall security strategy.

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina handing over the certificate of honorary citizenship to Amartya Sen at Ganabhaban yesterday. — PID photo

Freedom holds the key to development, asserts Sen

By Sabir Mustafa

Sen cited the two examples as a way to illustrate his point that both the state and the market have their own roles, and it would be a mistake to get dogmatic about either.

It is very important to avoid dogmatism of all kinds. The role of the market and what it has to offer has to be seen in non-dogmatic terms", Sen said.

Sen dismissed suggestions that the absence of rebellion among the masses in South Asia indicated a state of mental welfare or justice. He said that

absence of rebellion "should not generate a feeling that they face no deprivation. That happiness is not one of justice, but a quiet acceptance of injustice".

On the other hand, Sen suggested that existence of anger in people facing uncertainty and deprivation would not be a bad thing. "This anger may lead to social change", he said.

Both quiet acceptance and anger were in evidence at the National Museum Friday morning as hundreds of people who turned up to listen to the 1998 winner of the Nobel prize for economics, were denied entrance.

The scene outside the museum resembled one usually associated with presence of movie stars, as hundreds waited patiently to catch a glimpse of Sen. Several hundred more were within the museum ground, refusing to leave even after being turned away from the door.

Entrance was on an invitation-only basis, but even then the organisers had to arrange for extra seating for several hundred people in the lobby of the museum with a giant video screen relaying the lecture de-

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Film star Sohel Chy murdered

By Staff Correspondent

Film star Sohel Chowdhury was shot dead in front of a club at Banani in the city in the early hours of yesterday.

According to Gulshan police, the film actor was shot dead by some unidentified gunmen in front of the Abedin Tower while he was on his way to the club — Tramp — at about 3 am. He was accompanied by three friends, one of whom, Kalam, was also bullet-hit.

Relatives of Sohel said that the miscreants waylaid them in front of the building and started an altercation with Kalam. At one stage, they fired several shots, one of which hit Kalam.

When Sohel attempted to save him, a bullet hit his chest and he fell on the ground. He was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where doctor declared him dead.

Sohel's friend Kalam was admitted to the hospital with bullet injuries in his abdomen. He is now undergoing treatment at Ward No 31. Shilpi and Hafis, two other friends of Sohel who were in his car, were unhurt.

One of the assailants, Adnan Siddique, was caught by two employees of Abedin Tower and handed over to police. The arrested will be produced in court today.

The two persons, identified as Dayan 35, and Nirab, 21,

Murdered film star Sohel Choudhury

— Star photo

Choudhury, and assistant driver of the train Mohammad Hossain, 45. One of the three who died at the hospital was identified as Bidhan Chandra, 40, of Laksam, Comilla. The identity of two could not be

known till filing this report.

One critically injured person was sent to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital while two others were admitted to Phulbari Thana health complex.

Of the dead, four were identified as Abdul Jabbar 40 of Sherpur Thana, Abdul Khaled 35 of Bakshiganj Thana, Shafiqul Islam 16 of Sreerampur Thana and Basali 4 of Sherpur Thana.

The drivers of the vehicles managed to escape immediately after the accident, police said.

District administration and police officials visited the place of occurrence.

Ten killed as trucks collide in Mymensingh

MYMENSINGH, Dec 18: At least 10 people were killed and three others injured when two trucks collided in foggy weather at Guatala, some nine kilometres from Phulbari town headquarters, on Mymensingh-Sherpur Highway early this morning, police said.

His Qui Khwani will be held after Asr prayer on Monday at their Gulshan residence, family sources said.

Sohel, former husband of actress Diti, performed in over 50 Bangla films. His last film was 'Mahan Bandhu'. Lamia and

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Four of the seven critically injured persons admitted to Jhenidah and Kaliganj hospitals are Zahurul Haq, 40, Abdul Ali, 35, Soleman Ali, 30, and Uzzal, 20. The rest three could not be identified.

UNB quoting survivors and witnesses said the gate of the level crossing near Mobarakan railway station was open and there was no gate man on duty at the time of the accident.

Railway officials have been directed to launch a departmental investigation and to identify the causes and individuals responsible for the accident.

Train communications were restored at 2:40 pm after a crane from Jessore cantonment removed the coach from the tracks.

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13 killed, 40 hurt as train rams night coach in Jessore

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, Dec 18: Thirteen people were killed and 40 injured when the Khulna-bound 'Shimanta Express' train rammed a Chaudanga-bound night coach at Kashipur level crossing in the early hours of today.

Ten of them died on the spot and three on way to hospitals, police said. Condition of seven is stated to be critical.

The accident took place near Mobarakan railway station at about 4:45 am 18 miles off the district town. The bus of the Chittagong-Patna Paribahan had started from Dhaka at 10:30 pm Thursday night.

Of the injured, 15 were admitted to Jhenidah hospital, 14 to Kaliganj health complex and six to Jessore General Hospital, police said.

Those died on the spot are bus driver Abdus Salam, 36, supervisor Raisuddin, 35, and helper Altaf Hossain, 34, passengers Buli Khatun, 30, and her son Biplob, 10, Abdul Kalam, 40, Pannu, 30, Abdur Rashid, 40, and Babu, 35, of

Chittagong, and assistant driver of the train Mohammad Hossain, 45. One of the three who died at the hospital was identified as Bidhan Chandra, 40, of Laksam, Comilla. The identity of two could not be

known till filing this report.

We consider the present government as the biggest autocrat. Whoever is on the street and wants to oust the government to protect the economy and country's sovereignty may join us," she told a questioner when asked if she would join hands with Ershad whom she had branded as autocrat.

The main opposition BNP for the first time in last seven years did not observe the "anti-autocratic day" to mark the fall of Ershad on December 6, 1990.

The BNP chairperson portrayed a gloomy picture of the country's economy and the law and order. She said the Awami League government has completely failed to run the country.

Asked for her comment on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's "no-harsh" call in future, Khaleda said a detailed background and the present context

BNP won't rule out movement in league with JP

Opposition leader Khaleda Zia yesterday indicated that her party would not mind to launch simultaneous movement with Jatiya Party of deposed president Ershad to unseat the government, reports UNB.

She gave the indication at a meeting with Overseas Correspondents Association, Bangladesh (OCAB) at Hotel Sheraton yesterday afternoon.

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Striking interns threaten to lock up hospital directors' rooms

By DMC Correspondent

The indefinite strike by some 1200 intern doctors of eight government medical college hospitals across the country passed the third day yesterday.

They began the strike on Tuesday to press their six-point demand which include enhancement of salary. The Victory Day was exempted from strike.

A good number of patients were seen leaving the Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday due to lack of treatment. Services at the outdoor patient department (OPD) and at wards were also badly affected. No scheduled operation was performed, sources at the DMCH

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3 foreign ships with 'damaged' rice still at Ctg port

From Nurul Alam

CHITTAGONG, Dec 18: Three