

US opens new front, supply line sniped

1,000 parachuted in north; tank attack on US forces in al-Sammah; 30,000 more troops being flown in; guerrilla attack wounds 30 US men in central Iraq; heavy fighting still in Nassiriya, Basra

STAR DESK

With the invasion of Iraq entering its second week, the US-British forces have opened a second front in the Kurdish-controlled north by parachuting 1,000 troops.

The aggressing troops advance toward Baghdad also suffered setbacks as Iraqi forces launched severe attacks on the key supply line in the southern town of al-Sammah.

Iraqi elite forces with tanks advanced on the supply route and attacked US troops who also fought back. Iraqi attackers then drew back into the town, which came under heavy shelling.

Columns of black smoke billowed up in the air. Not a single truck could pass through the strategically important road since the attack.

In Basra and Nassiriya, the fight raged on and the joint forces are trying to make the civilians rise against the Iraqi regime.

They knocked off the Basra television and radio stations and aired their own programme calling people to fight Iraqi forces. But the

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Chink in US armour

REUTERS, north of Nassiriya, Iraq

Convoys of trucks hauling food and ammunition to troops spearheading the US-led thrust into Iraq are looking increasingly like a chink in the invasion force's armour.

In a surprise attack witnessed by Reuters on Wednesday, a small group of Iraqis using guerrilla tactics pinned down a column of some 80 vehicles supporting US Marine combat units.

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PHOTO: AP

A US Army Paladin artillery vehicle explodes due to a misfire during the Third Brigade's firefight with Iraqi forces north of Najaf yesterday. Two soldiers were injured in the incident.

India agrees free access to 39 categories

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

India has agreed to grant duty-free access to Bangladeshi products bracketed in 39 tariff categories.

The agreement was reached during the secretary-level talks

between the two governments held in New Delhi on March 24 and 25, according to a press release of Indian High Commission in Dhaka yesterday.

The products include 11 out of

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Security Council members line up to condemn war

AFP, United Nations

Most speakers in a public session of the UN Security Council on Wednesday condemned the US-led war on Iraq, noting that it was not authorised by the council and likely to cause a humanitarian disaster.

"We call upon you to put an end to this war and to call for the immediate withdrawal of invading forces," the Arab League's representative to the United Nations, Yahya Mahmassani, said.

"The credibility of the council, the credibility of the whole interna-

tional system, is collapsing under the bombing of Basra and Baghdad," he warned.

The meeting, the council's first on Iraq since the war began, was called at the request of the Arab League and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

Speaking on behalf of the NAM, Malaysian deputy ambassador Yahya Zainuddin said the US government's assertion of the right to pre-emptive action "is not acceptable and threatens the basis of the international law."

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Bush, Blair weigh UN role at Iraq war summit

AFP, Washington

With the war in Iraq yet to reach a climax, US President George W. Bush was huddling Thursday with British Prime Minister Tony Blair, his closest ally, on the role the United Nations ought to play when the conflict is over and President Saddam Hussein is gone.

Bush and Blair, meeting face to face for the third time in as many months, were also to explore ways to reinvigorate the Israel-Palestinian peace process, and mend badly strained Euro-US relations, during a second day of talks at Camp David, Maryland.

And on day eight of the US-led

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Outrageous, obscene

ROBERT FISK, *The Independent, UK*

rain Wednesday morning.

It's a dirt-poor neighbourhood, of mostly Shia Muslims, the same people whom Bush and Blair still fondly hope will rise up against President Saddam Hussein, a place of oil-sodden car-repair shops, overcrowded apartments and cheap cafés.

Two missiles from an American jet killed them all -- by my estimate, more than 20 Iraqi civilians, torn to pieces before they could be 'liberated' by the nation that destroyed their lives. Who dares, I ask myself, to call this 'collateral damage'?

Abu

Taleb Street was packed with

pedestrians and motorists when the American pilot approached through the dense sandstorm that covered northern Baghdad in a

cloak of red and yellow dust and

rain.

Everyone I spoke to heard the plane. One man, so shocked by the headless corpses he had just seen, could say only two words. "Roar, flash," he kept saying and then

closed his eyes so tight that the muscles rippled between them.

How should one record so

terrible an event? Perhaps a medical report would be more appropriate. But the final death toll is

expected to

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Khaleda calls for end to Iraq war

UNB, Dhaka

Voicing concern over the casualties of innocent civilians, including women and children, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday called for immediate end to war in Iraq.

Her call came when newly appointed Iranian Ambassador to Bangladesh Mohammad Beheshti paid a courtesy call on her at her office.

Underlining the importance of an effective role by the UN in stopping the war and assuaging human sufferings in Iraq, Khaleda called

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