

Spy report on Iraq reflects divided agencies

Portions of Oct 2002 intelligence report released

AP, Washington

The White House declassified portions of an October 2002 intelligence report to demonstrate that President Bush had ample reason to believe Iraq was reconstituting a nuclear weapons program.

But the material also reflects divisions and uncertainties among intelligence agencies as to Saddam Hussein's activities.

The State Department, for instance, expressed deep skepticism over claims that Saddam was shopping for uranium ore in Africa to use in making atomic bombs - an allegation that wound up in Bush's Jan. 28 State of the Union address but which administration officials have since repudiated.

"Claims of Iraqi pursuit of natural uranium in Africa are ... highly dubious," said a State Department addendum included among the documents.

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Jamuna Bridge tender proceedings stayed for a month

UNB, Dhaka

The High Court yesterday stayed for a month the operation of proceedings of a tender for toll collection, operation, management and maintenance of the Jamuna Bridge.

The Court also extended by 30 days tenure of the contract awarded in July 1998 to JOMAC, a multinational consortium doing the work.

The 5-year contract expired yesterday.

The Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge Authority (JOMBA) has earned Tk 450 Crore in last five years from the first Operation and Maintenance contract.

The orders came upon a writ pending before the court, filed by JOMAC on July 16, challenging the "transparency" of the tender floated by the JOMBA in January this year.

Earlier, the division bench comprising Justice Amirul Kabir Chowdhury and Justice AFM Ali

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Crash stalls vehicle movement on Dhaka-Aricha road

A CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Vehicular movement on Dhaka-Aricha highway was stranded for three hours at Joypura due to an accident yesterday morning.

Witnesses and police sources said the accident occurred when a Dhaka bound passenger bus from Aricha terminal collided with a fertiliser loaded truck at Joypura at 7.35am.

At least 11 passengers were injured. They were admitted to Savar Gono Swasthya Kendro.

The bus and the truck remained on the road from 7.35am to 10.15am with at least 400 vehicles both ways stranded.

The vehicular movement resumed at 10.15am when forces from the Dhamrai Police Station removed the bus and truck from the road.

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
July 20		6-47 pm
July 21	5-22 am	

Prayer Timings

	July 20	July 21
Azan	4-15	4-50
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Magrib	5-52	5-57
Esha	8-15	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

US soldier manning Baghdad bank killed

AP, Baghdad

A US soldier was fatally shot guarding a bank Saturday in the capital, while the US military concluded two separate sweeps in and around Baghdad - arresting more than 1,200 people and seizing weapons, explosives and ammunition, the military said.

The death came a day after two separate attacks on convoys in which one soldier was killed. It brought to 149 the number of US personnel killed in combat since the March 20 start of the war - two more than the 1991 Gulf War total for US deaths in combat.

The soldier guarding the Baghdad bank died at about 2 a.m. outside the Al-Rashid Bank in western Baghdad, Corp. Todd Pruden said.

Pruden also announced that a US serviceman was injured Friday when the convoy he was in was attacked north of Baghdad with small arms fire, rocket propelled grenades and mortars. Three vehicles in the convoy were damaged.

US authorities have captured 34

aged in the attack in Mqaddiyah, 60 miles northwest of the capital, Pruden said.

In another convoy attack Friday, a US soldier was killed when a bomb was detonated by remote control at a traffic circle near the main bridge over the Euphrates River in Fallujah, a city west of Baghdad.

The military also announced it had wrapped up two sweeps - dubbed Operation Ivy Serpent and Operation Soda Mountain earlier in the week. Some 1,210 people were detained in the two operations, including 112 people suspected of close ties to the former Saddam Hussein regime.

The operations, which both ended Thursday, netted some 6,000 mortar rounds, more than 1,400 rocket propelled grenades, explosives, AK-47 assault rifles and other weapons. None of those captured, however, were among those still at large from a list of 55 most wanted Iraqis from the former regime.

Iraq's minority Sunni Muslims have long ruled the country, and

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Australia skipper Steve Waugh acknowledges crowd's applause on scoring century against Bangladesh at Darwin yesterday.

Bangladesh 70/1 Records roll for Waugh

AFP, Darwin

Steve Waugh reached another cricket high-water mark with a trailblazing century as Australia tightened the noose around Bangladesh in the first Test at Manuka Oval here on Saturday.

The redoubtable 38-year-old Australian skipper scampered for two runs to raise his

100 and promptly declared his team's first innings closed at 407 for seven.

That left Bangladesh with the daunting task of having to score 311 runs against the world's premier bowling attack to avoid yet another innings defeat their 19th in Tests.

At the close, Bangladesh had

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Fate of fake-free exam certificates uncertain

MUSTAK HOSSAIN

The fate of the move to introduce anti-counterfeit certificates and registration cards for public examinations hangs in the balance as the authorities failed to award the job, a key official of the education ministry said.

The education boards came up with the project in the wake of increasing forgery of board certificates and mark sheets of the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) examinations, sources said.

The current certificate printing technology and paper used lack adequate guard against counterfeits.

The project was taken to introduce a highly technical logo, visible

only with a special focused beam of light, board officials said.

They said the logo was designed in a way that any attempt to remove or otherwise tamper with it would distort the product and the distortion could be detected under the beam.

The boards planned to bankroll the project with their surplus money earned by holding public examinations.

A committee of the project floated an international tender for supply of retro-reflective lamination and automatic laminating machine for making the logos.

State Minister for Education ANM Ehsanul Hoque Milon said

Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan has requested Australia to consider migration of workforce from and transfer of technology and free flow of capital to a labour-surplus country like Bangladesh, particularly in the context of globalisation.

The request was made when visiting Australian Minister for Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs Philip Ruddock

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Canberra asked to ease visa regime, transfer of technology

UNB, Dhaka

Two year-old Pakistani girl Noor Fatima lies recuperating from heart surgery at Narayana Hrudayalaya Hospital in Bangalore in India. Fatima was brought to the hospital after her parents took the first bus to travel between the neighbours in 18 months on July 11. The baby has emerged as a symbol of newfound hopes for reconnection.



Children paddle to school through floodwaters at Helachia in Ghor yesterday. Although the month-long flooding has swamped much of Manikganj district, schools remained open on government orders.

PHOTO: STAR

Floods take toll on vegetables, rice seedlings

REAZ AHMAD

Floodwaters sweeping through a third of the districts including the prime farming zones have caused great damage to summer vegetables, but have not had the same impact on the staple cereal, rice.

Quoting preliminary estimates, official sources put the damage at five to seven per cent of an average output of 6 lakh tonnes of summer vegetables at this stage.

However, officials of the agri-

culture extension and farm marketing departments said the floods during an 'in-between' period of a crop-cycle have spared the rice growers of major losses.

In the low-lying farmlands, peasants had already reaped the aza paddy before the floodwaters submerged the fields. On the other hand, most of the aza growers are patiently waiting for the water to recede.

An official of the agriculture marketing department, however, feared that if the flood period is

prolonged it would be a looming threat to aza farmers. The official also said the farmers who raised aza seedlings in advance might have already lost some due to flooding of seedbeds in some places.

However, production of more aza seeds this year, compared to the past few years, by the Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADC) comes as a solace to the farmers who

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Nasrin rescue abandoned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government postponed the rescue operation of M V Nasrin-1, as recommended by the local administration of Chandpur, sources said.

The recommendation was made at a tripartite meeting of Navy personnel, Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) officials and the local administration yesterday.

The meet agreed that work is not possible during the current monsoon tide and strong currents.

The Navy personnel detected the sunken vessel at around 150 feet south of the confluence of the rivers Dhatia, Meghna and Padma near Chandpur Puranbazar.

"The chances of salvaging the vessel at this time are nil," said Deputy Commissioner of Chandpur Abdur Rob.

But the operation for recovering dead bodies would continue for some more days, headed.

"The salvage operation would be suspended tomorrow," said Chairman of BIWTA Abul Hossain Chowdhury.

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Political culture must adjust itself to present world order: PM

UNB, Dhaka

At least five activists of Hizb ut Tahrir, Bangladesh (HTB) were injured while Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) activists attacked them on Dhaka University (DU) campus yesterday.

The BCL beat up Sheikh Mohammad Towfiq, a HTB activist and a PhD student of Sociology Department of DU.

Three other activists of the same party were also beaten up in front of the DU Registrar building.

The BCL activists also chopped Mohammad Ejaj Ahmed, a member of the HTB, a pro-Islamic party, in Hanmondi area.

He was rushed to the Dhaka

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gathering the 9th National Convention of Bangladesh Political Science Association (BPSA) at Hotel Sonargaon here yesterday.

Presided over by President of BPSA and former vice chancellor of Dhaka University Professor Enajuddin Ahmed, the function was also addressed by DU VC Dr SMA Faiz, General Secretary of BPSA Dr M Ataur Rahman and the

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ANU MURDER Arrestees placed on remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Two persons, arrested in connection with the killing of BNP leader Anwarul Haq Anu, were placed on a one day remand yesterday.

Kotwali police produced the two -- Farida Begum and Delwar Pramanik -- before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM's) Court, Dhaka, at 4:00pm seeking a two-day remand.

In the petition, police said the arrestees are the domestic help and security guard of DCC Commissioner Saidur Rahman Shahid, who was earlier given death sentence in the Advocate Habibur Rahman Mondal murder case. They were arrested under Section 54 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC). So, they were not shown arrested in the Anu murder case.

Anu, 40, was shot dead by a gang of unidentified assailants near the Police Club, about 100 yards away from the CMM's Court Building on July 17.

Rejoinder

Hizb ut Tahrir protested a news item published in The Daily Star on July 16 under the headline 'New outlaw group swing into action'.

A rejoinder of the organisation signed by its Amir, Prof Muhammad Abul Bashar, said the report was untrue, fictitious and baseless. It claimed Hizb ut Tahrir is not an underground organisation and its all activities are transparent and overt.

It also denied involvement of the organisation with any arms and explosives deal.