

67 more killed in Iraq spate of violence

Rumsfeld's surprise visit to Baghdad

AFP, AP, Baghdad
US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's surprise visit to Iraq yesterday, as the country was rocked by yet more violence, with 14 people killed by a car bomb near a Shia mosque that added fuel to fears of sectarian strife.

In lightning visits to training bases around the country, Rumsfeld told US troops they could "go home with honor" once Iraqi forces were able to defeat insurgents.

The latest insurgent attack underlined how vulnerable those forces still are.

In Balad Ruz, some 65 km north-

east of the capital, Iraqi forces were lured into a death trap when they received a tip that a car bomb attack was being planned against the local Imam Hussein mosque.

"Security was deployed around the mosque to search for the car but, when they found it, another one went off," said officer Maher Salah.

Nine civilians and three policemen were killed, he said, adding that another body had not been identified and 23 more people were wounded.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility, but a similar attack against a Shia mosque in Baghdad three weeks ago was claimed by the

network of al-Qaeda's frontman in Iraq, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

The deadly trap was sprung as the dust still settled in the lawless town of Salman Pak, some 33km southeast of the capital, following a spectacular attack Thursday by hordes of gunmen against police forces.

A fierce battle, which lasted several hours and saw US gunships come into action, left 10 policemen and 20 insurgents dead, another 75 policemen wounded and some 45 police cars destroyed.

"When we arrived, the shops were shut and the empty streets

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Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina, and leaders and members of professional bodies, ahead of a meeting at the Institution of Engineers yesterday, observe one-minute silence in memory of those killed in the Habiganj grenade attack.

50 die, hundreds missing in Pak dam burst

AFP, AP, Quetta
At least 50 people were killed and hundreds missing in Pakistan after a dam burst and swept whole villages into the sea, officials said yesterday, as the death toll from a week of record rains hit 112.

A wall of melted snow and rain-water escaped from the ruptured Shadi Kor dam near the coastal

town of Pasni in southwestern Baluchistan province late Thursday, washing away people, houses, cars and buses in its path.

The 485-foot-long Shakidor Dam burst late Thursday near Pasni, a remote village in Baluchistan province. Between 400 and 500 people were still unaccounted for, provincial Cabinet minister Sher Jan

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'Crossfire' kills 3 more raising toll to 228

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Three alleged criminals including a regional leader of outlaws were killed in 'crossfire' between their accomplices and police in the capital, Pabna and Chittagong early yesterday.

With this, the number of people killed in 'crossfire' between their accomplices and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and police rose to 228.

A constable was also injured in the shootout in the capital, and some illegal arms and ammunition were seized, police sources said.

The outlaw was killed in Pabna.

Dhaka
An accused in six criminal cases, Rahimullah Khokan alias China Khokan, 33, was killed in a gunfight between his associates and police in Sarakunja Residential Area on the bank of the river Buriganga at about 4:00am, police said.

The cases against him, filed with Hazaribagh and Lalbagh police stations, include one for murder and three under Arms Act.

Constable Ali Hossain suffered bullet wounds in his leg and was under treatment at Rajarbagh Police Lines Hospital.

Police seized a shutter gun, a

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Eminent citizens condemn 'killings in the name of crossfire'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
One hundred and eight personalities from across the citizenry in a joint statement yesterday strongly condemned the killings in the name of 'crossfire'.

Doctors, poet, artists, academics, journalists and other professionals in the statement described killings without trial as bestial acts and said the criminals must be brought to justice. The killings in 'crossfire' if go unhindered will severely undermine people's respect for the judicial

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Schoolboy 'murdered', another abducted

Outlaws kidnap businessman

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia
Police yesterday recovered the body of an abducted schoolboy in Chuadanga and rescued another abducted boy Thursday in Kushtia, while outlaws Sunday kidnapped a businessman.

Chuadanga police said they recovered the body of Ahmed Hossain, 13, son of Julmat Ali of Pire Bazar village in Kaliganj in Jhenidah, from Nehalpur field.

He seemed to have been strangled.

Criminals Wednesday abducted him from Jhenidah but did not demand ransom for his release, the police added.

In Kushtia, Jamirul and Dulal, cadres of outlawed New Biplobi Communist Party, abducted Azmot Ali, 56, a businessman and retired schoolteacher. He was returning home at Chadat village in Khoksa upazila after withdrawing Tk 20,000 from the Sonali Bank's Khoksa Bazar branch.

Locals Tuesday held Jamirul and

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BEA blasts govt for 'creating a climate of impunity'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Economists of the country mourning the killing of their fellow Shah AMS Kibria yesterday blasted the government for what they said was creating a climate of impunity that is allowing unabated murders of intellectuals.

Referring to the killings of Prof Mohammad Yunus of Rajshahi University and former finance minister Kibria in two months, the economists said elimination of

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IIFC rejoinder and our reply

The Infrastructure Investment Facilitation Center (IIFC) has sent a rejoinder to the news titled 'BTRC to pay Tk 48 lakh for services it never got' published in The Daily Star on February 8, 2005. IIFC has termed the news misconceived, misleading and contrary to the facts.

Its rejoinder says, "IIFC is mandated to be a commercial organisation and charge for its services. The agreement calls for the price to be negotiated between the two parties,

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Prayer Timing		
February 12		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5:30	6:05
Zohr	12:45	1:15
Asr	4:15	4:30
Maghrib	5:52	5:56
Esha	7:15	7:45

Source: Islamic Foundation

