

Texas A&M

The Battalion

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USSR, Iraq discuss end to war

DHAHRAN, Saudi Arabia (AP) — Iraqi President Saddam Hussein has told a Soviet envoy that Baghdad is prepared to cooperate with the Soviet Union and other nations to find a peaceful solution to the Gulf War, Baghdad radio reported early today.

The radio, monitored in Nicosia, Cyprus, said Soviet envoy Yevgeny Primakov gave Saddam a message from Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev during talks late Tuesday. The message contained the Soviet's view of the regional conflict, the radio said without providing any other details.



Gorbachev

Saddam readies to extend cooperation to other nations

"Iraq is prepared to extend cooperation to the Soviet Union and other nations and agencies in the interest of finding a peaceful, political, equitable and honorable solution to the region's central issues, including the situation in the Gulf," the radio quoted Saddam as saying.

Baghdad's radio claim was in the shadow of impending battle. In a foretaste of all-out war, Marine and naval gunners combined their fire with U.S. air strikes Tuesday to pound Iraqi tanks and artillery massed in southern Kuwait.

Battle-ready American units shifted and maneuvered as they readied for ground war.

The thunderous land-sea-and-air barrage could be described as part of "our

training program," the U.S. command said.

Despite the non-stop air raids, Iraq retains its "lethal developed weapons," the Iraqi Parliament speaker said Tuesday in an apparent reference to chemical and biological weapons.

Iraqi deserters confirmed that front-line trenches have been filled with oil, to be set ablaze beneath advancing allied troops.

President Bush talked over war plans at the White House with the visiting defense ministers of Britain and France, allies in Operation Desert Storm.

Commanders here recommend three to four more weeks of air bombardment before launching a ground offensive,

U.S. military sources say.

"There's some work to be done" before any ground attack, Britain's Tom King said after meeting with Bush.

In Baghdad, where two government ministry buildings were devastated by direct bomb hits Tuesday, a Soviet envoy was expected to meet with Iraqi President Saddam Hussein in a search for a solution short of a fight to the finish in the desert.

A French newspaper suggested that Soviet advisers are still aiding the Iraqi military.

If true, it could wreck the U.S.-Soviet consensus on the Persian Gulf.

A senior U.S. military official said the combined-forces bombardment, which began at 4 a.m. Tuesday and lasted three

hours, was the biggest battlefield action yet initiated by the allied forces.

Reconnaissance had spotted Iraqi artillery, tanks and other armored vehicles concentrating and "hunkered down" in an area of southern Kuwait, Marine Brig. Gen. Richard Neal, a U.S. command spokesman, told reporters.

The giant 16-inch guns of the battleship USS Missouri, Marine artillery and warplanes, Saudi artillery and rocket launchers opened fire.

The results could not be immediately determined, but the senior official said there was "a high probability of enemy casualties."

Said Neal: "You almost could say that it's part of our training program of trying to put together this combined arms teams with coalition members, and it worked exceptionally well."

Professor experiments with magic of science

By Elizabeth Tisch
The Battalion

A Texas A&M professor performed a chemist's type of magic Tuesday before a crowd of wide-eyed, speechless middle school students in College Station.

Dr. John Hogg shared his scientific expertise with Oakwood Middle School students during an hour-long "chemistry magic show."

Hogg, who told students he was "sweating like a pig," performed more than 20 science experiments that he said go unnoticed everyday.

"Some call this magic," the chemistry professor said. "But actually, it is science."

The A&M chemistry department provided funds for the middle school's administration to organize the same performance that won a national award in 1989.

About 300 students seemed in awe as Hogg shattered frozen carnation petals soaked in liquid nitrogen.

The "magician" also caused an acid rain storm in a flask. He then explained the cause of acid rain and its damaging effects on the environment.

Students screamed with delight at the "bang-up" results of applied fire to a hydrogen-filled balloon and to a balloon filled with a hydrogen-oxygen mix.

The purpose of the experiment was to show how oxygen quickens the combustion rate, as seen when the oxygen-filled balloon blew up faster and louder than the hydrogen-filled balloon. Hogg compared the experiment's results to naturally occurring reactions.

Shawn Parker, a fifth-grader from College Station, said the balloons were his favorite part of the program.

Lee Norman, Parker's classmate, agreed.

"The program was all right," he said. "I loved it when he busted the balloons."

Hogg said he enjoys performing science as magic before young students.

"We need to get kids more excited about science," he said. "I think middle school science teachers are doing an excellent job, but they just don't have the facilities to do such experiments."

Hogg left the satisfied students with a bit of advice about their future.

"I want to encourage you to study science because there is a shortage of scientists right now," he said. "So, study your science, math and English. Because if you can't write about what you're doing, then it won't work."



MIKE C. MULVEY/The Battalion

Here comes the sun

A&M senior Lisa Benston is turned into a silhouette by the bright sun reflecting off the lake at the Research Park Tuesday afternoon. Wednesday's forecast also calls for sunny weather.

Proficiency exam falls under scrutiny of internationals

By Twila Waddy
The Battalion

International students voiced their concerns about the English Language Proficiency Exam Tuesday night, saying the test was unnecessary in some cases.

The exam is mandatory for all international students at Texas A&M, who must pass the test as an entrance requirement or take English Language Institute courses designed to help them learn the English language.

Students who fail the test are allowed to retake it after completing the ELI course or courses.

International students were able to air complaints and ask questions about ELI at the open forum, held by the Provost's Committee on English Language Testing of International Students.

The committee was formed by Dr. E. Dean Gage, provost and vice president for academic affairs.

The cost of ELI courses and their effectiveness were discussed also.

The courses do not help the students learn English and they are expensive, said Joseph Yip, a research associate for the department of meteorology.

"I believe it was a waste of my time and it was not worth what I paid for," Yip said.

Although international students may pass the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) they still are required by A&M to pass the ELP exam which is administered by A&M.

Yip and other international students said insufficient information concerning the ELP and ELI courses was sent to them before they attended A&M.

They said the University sent them a letter before they arrived at A&M informing them what was expected of them, including having to take the ELP. However, Yip said the letter didn't explain everything clearly.

"The letter sent was not that clear," he said. "It mentioned (the ELP and the ELI courses) but did not explain them."

The committee is reviewing the process for English language certification for international students at A&M. Students, staff and faculty make up the committee, which is headed by history professor Dr. Ralph Adams.

"The purpose of our committee is to try to find the problems," Adams said. "Any kind of input is helpful."

Adams said the committee will gather the information they have into a report and make a recommendation to the provost at the end of this month.

"Some of our recommendations are long term," he said. "You cannot change some things over night."

Bush anticipates rebound from stressful recession

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Bush conceded Tuesday that the recession is causing "genuine economic distress" but, in his annual economic report, predicted a quick recovery that could well exceed the record-breaking expansion of the 1980s.

"Despite the economic events of 1990, we have reason for both hope and optimism in full measure as the nation approaches the next century," Bush said in his introduction to the "Economic Report of the President."

With the economy in its first recession since the 1981-82 downturn, Bush was less upbeat than last year, when he had proclaimed the nation's economy to be "in excellent health"

with not a hint of a recession in sight. "The events of 1990 were a reminder that even a healthy economy can suffer shocks and short-term setbacks," Bush wrote.

"I know that in some regions of the country, people are in genuine economic distress," he said.

The administration blamed the recession on the jump in oil prices and the jolt to consumer confidence that occurred after Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait Aug. 2. Bush insisted that the downturn would be short and milder than the other eight economic contractions since World War II.

Democrats in Congress said the

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Director enlightens students on African-American history

By Katherine Coffey
The Battalion

Black History Month is necessary to correct the negligent portrayal of blacks in textbooks and the media,

says the director of Texas A&M's Department of Multicultural Services.

"Maybe a time will come in history when we don't have to have Black History Month," said Kevin Carreathers. "This will take place when black history will be in textbooks and when the media portray blacks differently."



Carreathers

Carreathers spoke Tuesday during a meeting in Rudder Tower about the importance of Black History Month and the relevance of African-American history.

"For so many years, the history, heritage and accomplishments have been written out of textbooks," he said.

"But there is so much we should know, so we can identify with all the great accomplishments of the many people who helped shape our nation and world."

He said people need to recognize this important and great history.

Black History Month — celebrated in February — originally started as a black history week, but through the hard work of many people it was extended to a month, Carreathers said.

Most textbooks portray the beginnings of black history when the slaves were forced to move to America in the 1700s, he said.

"But black history goes beyond that, and even beyond the birth of Christ," he said.

Carreathers said black history, including the history of black women, usually is neglected and much of it has not been shared.

"I hope you know that some of these names are names you can go back and help write into history books, into textbooks, into stories and tales you share with your family, friends and colleagues," he said.

Carreathers spoke during a meeting of the Texas A&M University

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Chinese jury sentences 3 Tiananmen activists

BEIJING (AP) — Two long-time democracy activists were sentenced Tuesday to 13 years in prison, apparently receiving the most severe punishment yet stemming from the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests.

The court gave a six-year sentence to a third man convicted of sedition and released a fourth who it said was guilty but repented.

Wang Juntao, a 33-year-old

newspaper editor, and Chen Ziming, 38, the head of a private social science research institute, received the 13-year prison terms after being convicted of sedition.

Robin Munro, a researcher for the human rights group Asia Watch, said authorities were seeking to make the two the scapegoats for the 1989 democracy movement, which drew millions of protesters into the streets of cities nationwide.

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