**Gulf War**

**Bush asks for $56 billion for war**

A senior Bush administration official said the White House will ask Congress to authorize $56 billion for the first three months of fighting in the Persian Gulf.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the White House expected a ground war might start, but indicated it would not be within the next few days.

Next week, President George Bush is expected to present Congress with a supplemental request for the military. Congressional sources said the request could be for as much as $30 billion, but senior administration officials put the figure at $56 billion.

One senior official said the United States would reconfigure 80 and 90 percent of the money from allied donations. Another source said the actual cost for the United States would be around $15 billion. That source said allies have already pledged $44 billion, and additional contributions are expected.

**Iraqi denies hotel used as military command-and-control center**

A Baghdad hotel manager denied United States claims that his building houses a military communications center. He took foreign reporters on a tour of the hotel yesterday to support his claim.

The unusual excursion through the 14-story Al-Rashid Hotel followed reports that a secret sub-basement of the hotel contains a major military communications center. In the basement, reporters passed through a communications room which the manager described as the base of the hotel's internal communications system. Two men were working in the room.

Associated Press reporter Dilip Ganguy was one of those who took the tour. He said he saw large cables, phones and a radio network, but he could not tell exactly what they would be used for.

A U.S. official said that because of the danger to civilians, the allies do not plan to attack the hotel, even though it may now be Iraq's main command post. The Al-Rashid's 150 guests include many of the foreign journalists and diplomats posted in Baghdad.

**UN begins closed discussion of war**

The United Nations Security Council has opened debate on the gulf war in its first closed-door formal session since 1975.

The speaker of wide-scale civilian casualties in Iraq is expected to be a prime topic in the debate, the Security Council's first since the war began. The United States and Britain wanted the session closed because, they said, a noisy debate and criticism of allied air strikes might give Saddam Hussein the impression that the United States was divided in the U.S.-led coalition.

Arab, Muslim, and other states are expected to question the scope of allied bombing—contending reports of hundreds of civilian deaths is cause to rethink the war. Cuban and Yemeni envoys said they would call a vote on a cease-fire.

The North African states which had originally requested an open meeting, indicated they might boycott the meeting.

**Local Weather**

Cold and blustery

The cyclone which produced up to six inches of snow in northeastern Massachusetts and rain and fog for our area yesterday will slowly intensify over the next 36 hours as it tracks to the Northeast. In its wake, strong northwesterly winds will bring significantly colder air into our region. An upper air disturbance moving north along the Atlantic coast this afternoon and evening will enhance chances for snow. Rapidly accumulating snow is possible in some areas early tomorrow morning. A passing system on Thursday brings more snow.

Friday: Mostly cloudy and mild early. Turning cloudy and windy later. Snow showers and squalls likely. Winds west to northwest 10-15 mph (16-24 kph) through the morning.

Friday night: Cloudy and cold with occasional light snow and flurries. Winds east to southeast 5-10 mph (8-16 kph). Low temperatures 10°F (-10°C).


**State agencies receive federal aid**

Three state agencies that help families and friends of homicide victims received up to $57 million each in federal grants, Attorney General Robert B. Torricelli said today.

The awards came through the federal Victims of Crime Assistance Act. He said the new homicide survivor programs will offer family and individual counseling, crisis intervention, support groups and emotional support.

Three chapters of Mothers Against Drunk Driving received awards. Torricelli said the grants will provide survivors of crimes with assistance in medical care, family arrangements, victim compensation claims and the criminal justice system.

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