

The Bruns International

U.N. agency finds radioactivity at eight sites in Kosovo

GENEVA (AP) - U.N. scientists who visited 11 sites struck by NATO munitions in Kosovo say they found signs of radioactivity at eight of them - the latest evidence in a growing debate about the dangers of depleted uranium, a material used in some NATO weapons.

The 11 sites that the U.N. Environment Program visited were among 112 identified by NATO as having been targeted by ordnance containing depleted uranium during the 1999 Kosovo bombardment. UNEP collected soil, water and vegetation samples and also conducted tests on buildings and destroyed vehicles.

"At eight sites, the team found either slightly higher amounts of Beta-radiation immediately at or around the holes left by depleted uranium ammunition, or pieces and remnants of ammunition, such as sabots and penetrators," Pekka Haavisto, the chairman of the assessment team, said in a statement Friday.

UNEP said it is analyzing the depleted uranium samples it collected to determine whether they

present health or environmental risks. It said it expects to have the results in early March.

"It was surprising to find remnants of depleted uranium ammunition just lying on the ground, 1 1/2 years after the conflict.

Also, the ground directly beneath the ammunition was slightly contaminated," Haavisto said. "For this reason, we paid special attention to the risks that uranium toxicity might pose to the ground waters around the sites."

The agency has advised that precautions be taken when handling ammunition found at the sites where depleted uranium was used.

A heavy metal with low levels of radioactivity, depleted uranium is used in ammunition to penetrate tanks and other armor. Some scientists believe the dust created when rounds hit targets may be harmful, but studies of Gulf War troops have found no proof it caused diseases.

The controversy in Europe over NATO's use of depleted uranium in Bosnia in 1994-95 and later in

Kosovo flared in December after Italy's Defense Minister Sergio Mattarella announced an investigation of 30 cases of illness involving soldiers who served in the region, 12 of whom developed cancer. Five have died of leukemia.

Most recently, NATO member Denmark's military health authorities announced that one Danish veteran of Kosovo is being treated for leukemia. They declined to release any other information. Denmark's top military authority Surgeon Gen. Hans-Michael Jelsdorf said Friday he would consider an investigation after a meeting at the NATO headquarters in Brussels on Jan. 15.

Spain, Portugal, Greece, Finland, Belgium, Turkey, Russia, Bulgaria, Czech Republic and the European Union have said they would screen troops and check radiation levels where their peacekeepers are serving.

The Pentagon said this week that regular health checks have revealed no problems with leukemia and other illnesses among U.S. troops who served in the Balkans.



Portuguese and Italian KFOR soldiers measure radiation levels on a Yugoslav Army tank destroyed during the NATO bombing campaign, in the western Kosovo town of Klina Tuesday Jan. 9, 2001.

Sudan's president renews state of emergency

KHARTOUM, Sudan (AP) - President Omar el-Bashir has renewed the state of emergency he imposed on Sudan during a power struggle in 1999.

Sudan's official news agency SUNA said Wednesday that the president issued a decree renewing the emergency provision for 12 more months. It confers sweeping powers on the president and restricts the freedoms of expression and assembly.

El-Bashir - re-elected last month in polls boycotted by the major opposition parties - first imposed the state of emergency in December 1999, when he disbanded Parliament, effectively unseating its speaker, Hassan Turabi, whom he accused of trying to undermine him.

Turabi, an Islamic fundamentalist, had long been seen as the architect of policy and the real power in the military-backed regime.

The president used the emergency provisions to appoint his supporters to the governorships of various provinces. The state of emergency expired on Dec. 30, 2000.

Nepal's prime minister survives no-confidence vote

KATMANDU, Nepal (AP) - Nepal's prime minister on Thursday survived a no-confidence vote brought against him by dissatisfied members of his own party who claim he has failed to provide the country with political stability.

The lawmakers who initially supported the vote last week wound up boycotting on Thursday, saying the ballots should have been cast in secret. Many in the Nepali Congress Party were afraid to vote openly against Girija Prasad Koirala, who has held power most of the time since multiparty democracy was restored in Nepal in 1990.

Of the 205-member lower house of parliament, 69 Congress Party members voted against the motion to dislodge Koirala. There were no votes in favor and non-Congress

members were not part of the vote.

Fifty-six of the 113 Congress party members in the lower house of parliament signed the no-confidence motion last week. They accused Koirala of failing to quell a Maoist insurgency and provide political stability to Nepal.

Nearly 1,500 people have died since the Maoist rebels, who model themselves after Peru's Shining Path guerrillas, began fighting government forces in 1996. The guerrillas are demanding an end to the country's constitutional monarchy and the feudal social structure in parts of Nepal.

Koirala took office in March, his third time as prime minister since 1990. In ousting Prime Minister K.P. Bhattarai last year, he accused him of failing to maintain law and order.

10,000 Turkish troops cross into northern Iraq

ISTANBUL, Turkey (AP) - Some 10,000 Turkish troops have crossed into northern Iraq and are preparing to battle Kurdish rebels there, local officials and reports said Saturday.

The troops were stationed near the city of Sulaymaniyah, more than 100 miles into Iraqi territory, Turkey's daily Hurriyet said. Hurriyet and Belgium-based Kurdish Medya TV said the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), which controls the area around Sulaymaniyah, had asked Turkey to send in troops to help in its battle against Kurdish rebels in the region.

Northern Iraq has been governed by two rival Iraqi Kurdish factions since the aftermath of the 1991 Gulf War.

Medya TV and Al-Iraq daily, a state-run paper in Iraq, reported that some 200 PUK fighters have been killed in clashes with the rebels of the Kurdistan Workers Party, or PKK. The casualty figure could not be confirmed.

Both the PUK and its rival Iraqi

Kurdish faction have agreed to join Turkey to fight the PKK rebels. Turkish troops have battled the PKK since 1984, frequently crossing into northern Iraq, in a war that has killed some 37,000 people, mostly Kurds.

Hurriyet said the troops, backed by tanks, had crossed into Iraq on Dec. 20 and were preparing for a large-scale "cleanup" operation. Kurdish sources reported no clashes between Turkish troops and the rebels.

Officials in southeastern Turkey confirmed that Turkish troops, including special forces, had crossed into Iraqi territory, but gave no details. Turkey's military refused to comment on the reports. PUK officials were not available for comment.

The PKK withdrew most of its fighters from Turkey and announced an end to their armed struggle for autonomy in southeast Turkey last year. Turkey has rejected the cease-fire and vowed to fight on until all rebels have surrendered.



A student shoots a small pistol towards police during a protest at the Central University in Quito, Ecuador Wednesday, Jan. 3, 2001.

Ecuador police disperse students protesting subsidy cuts

QUITO, Ecuador (AP) - Police used tear gas Wednesday to disperse about 300 students protesting government subsidy cuts that have driven up fuel prices.

Police said 44 high school and university students were arrested after they tried to disrupt traffic around the state-run university in central Quito and six nearby public high schools.

One student suffered minor injuries when he was struck by a tear gas canister, according to radio reports.

Meanwhile, some 200 students marched peacefully through the streets of Cuenca, an Andean city 183 miles south of the capital. No arrests were reported.

The government last week doubled home cooking fuel prices, increased gasoline prices by 25 percent and upped bus fares by as much as 75 percent, from 8 cents to 14 cents.

The National Transportation Council on Wednesday halted the fare hike after a judge ruled it unconstitutional.

The subsidy cuts are part of President Gustavo Noboa's economic recovery program. Multinational lenders, led by the International Monetary Fund, have pledged a three-year, \$2 billion aid package contingent on the cash-strapped nation carrying out austerity measures.

Pack mules outsmart NATO-led peacekeepers

PRISTINA, Yugoslavia (AP) - A group of pack mules managed to elude NATO-led peacekeepers in Kosovo despite being chased by soldiers and a helicopter, an alliance statement said Wednesday.

A German military patrol deemed the mules to be suspicious Tuesday after spotting three columns with seven animals each approaching Kosovo's boundary from neighboring Macedonia.

Mules are often used to smuggle cigarettes and weapons across Kosovo's rugged terrain. Patrols were dispatched to the border to

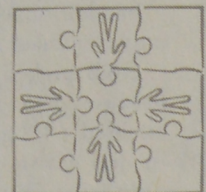
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BRUNS ELECTIONS NOTICE

For the positions of News Editor, Sports Editor and Editor-in-Chief and Staff Rep for the Board of Directors will happen during the staff meeting on January 26th, 2001.

*** If the Managing Editor, Photo Editor or Entertainment Editor run and win for any of these positions than these will be open for competition as well.

MFRC/CRFM



GAGETOWN

The Military Family Resource Centre is looking for volunteers for the Warm Heart Line Program.

The Warm Heart Line Program is a telephone service that provides families of deployed members with an opportunity to maintain a link and remain connected with the community and the base.

If you have experienced a separation due to a deployment and would like to help others in that situation we need you.

Please call our Volunteer Coordinator at 422-2000 ext 2784. All volunteers will receive appropriate training, which is scheduled for February 1st, 9am - 12pm.

Le centre de ressources pour les familles des militaires est présentement à la recherche de bénévoles pour le Programme de la Ligne d'écoute Coeur en or.

La Ligne d'écoute Coeur en or est un service téléphonique qui offre l'opportunité aux familles des membres en service déployé, de garder contact et de maintenir un lien avec la communauté ainsi que la Base.

Si vous avez déjà vécu une séparation dû à un déploiement et vous aimeriez aider les gens qui vivent une telle expérience, nous avons besoin de vous.

Si vous êtes intéressé.es, veuillez s.v.p. contacter la Coordinatrice des bénévoles, Shera Stanley, au 422-2000 poste 2784. Tous les bénévoles recevront une formation adéquate; formation qui est à l'horaire, le 1^{er} février 2001, 9:00 - 12:00