

**IAEA plays down Tehran talk of 'another Chernobyl'**

# Iraqi jets return to the attack on Iran's unfinished N-plant

**Manama, Bahrain:** Iran has claimed that Iraqi planes bombed an unfinished nuclear power plant at Bushehr, in southern Iran, yesterday, in the second attack on the same target in three days.

There was no immediate report from Baghdad about activity by the Iraqi air force.

Tehran radio said no casualties in the attack were reported. Construction on the plant has been halted since the overthrow of the Shah by Ayatollah Khomeini in 1979.

Iran said the 1,200-megawatt plant was also raided on Tuesday and that 11 people were killed in that attack, including a nuclear plant expert and a West German engineer.

In March, it told the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency that it had moved "fissionable material" into the area, indicating it had resumed construction.

Before this week's strikes, the plant had been attacked four times by the Iraqis between March, 1984 and July, 1986. Iran was believed to have moved the nuclear material into the plant to deter the Iraqis.

The IAEA, which serves as a

watchdog on nuclear matters, said yesterday there did not seem to be a radiation danger from Tuesday's raid. The IAEA director-general, Mr Hans Blix, said in Vienna that the agency was ready to send experts to inspect the damage.

A statement issued by the UN-affiliated agency said: "He has also given the agency's preliminary opinion based on existing information, that the amount and nature of nuclear material at the Bushehr site could not create a significant radiological hazard to the public."

Sayed Khali Moosavi, the chief Iranian representative to the IAEA, told a news conference yesterday in Vienna that the Iraqi raid wrecked a control building, but that the nuclear plant "is certainly not completely destroyed."

Reza Amrollahi, an Iranian nuclear official, was quoted as saying the plant contained nuclear material, and the raid could trigger "the same trans-frontier radioactive release and radiological consequences as the Chernobyl accident."

US authorities on nuclear energy said they had no reports of radioactivity from Bushehr.

But they said that they strongly doubted that any threat existed because neither of the plant's two planned reactors was operational.

After the Iranian announcement, Iraq reported that its ground batteries had shot down two Iranian F-5 planes that penetrated Iraqi airspace on separate missions in the northern Kurdistan province.

Tehran's Irna news agency said Iranian planes bombed military installations in Aqra, 35 miles from the border, yesterday morning.

But the Iraqi reports insisted the planes were shot down and others chased away by ground fire before they could attack.

Reports from Baghdad said an Iranian aircraft bombed a hospital on Wednesday at Duhok, in Iraq's northern Sulaymaniyah province. Iraq said the bombing killed nine patients and wounded 64. But Tehran television said the air force attacked "military and economic installations.

Baghdad radio also said yesterday that Iraqi planes scored an "accurate and effective hit" on a "large maritime target," meaning a tanker, off Iran the night before. — AP.