CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Gulf crisis once again demonstrated the explosive nature of the Middle East, a region that is now passing through a delicate transition period. The oil-rich Gulf, rather the whole West Asia, has been characterised by deep-rooted contradictions and hostilities. The region has been experiencing intense ideological competition and power-struggle amongst various states besides the larger Arab-Israel conflict. The struggle for regional dominance by each of the states is based on its own brand of ideology. Revivalism and religious fundamentalism have also affected this region acutely. That is why despite all their high tech toys and comfortable way of life, the Gulf states are prone to vulnerability. Intra-region contradictions have been further accentuated by the economic and strategic interests of the
outside powers. 'Operation Desert Storm' - against Iraq in which, Kuwait, of course, has been liberated after a high tech war of seven weeks, but peace in the region is still a cherished idea. The differences between Iraq and Kuwait led to the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait in August 1990. There was a strong reaction to this in most of the countries of the world and also in the United Nations. Unfortunately Iraq failed to gauge the nerve of the international community and refused to comply with the United Nation resolutions. This led the American air raids on military targets inside Iraq in January 1993. This American led military retaliation has once again revived fears of another major gulf conflict and heightened tension in the Gulf. Undoubtedly, the aftermath of Gulf crisis has been a gloomy period of uncertainty and instability with ominous gathering of war clouds, time and again in the Gulf.

GULF CRISIS

The time was 00-10 midnight on August 2, 1990 - the day of Muharram, Dasman Palace of the Emir, Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah of Kuwait had received a startling information from Egyptian Intelligence Source that the Kuwait was going to be invaded in another few hours by Iraq a deluse for anyone to resist or counter it at a short notice. The message was incredible, but the fact was irrefutable. Immediately following the information pandemonium started in the
seaside Dasman Palace, with several members of Royal family, in flutter and fear started running around - stuffed their bags and suit-cases with whatever they found valuable and got ready to flee in cars along with few women of royal family. The Emir and his children including the Crown Prince and Prime Minister Sheikh Saadal - Abdullah Al-Sabah and four other Cabinet members fled in Mercedes Benz cars by road-way towards Saudi border leaving their fellow citizens and other loyalists in lurch.

At about 01-15 hours warnings were sent to all other scattered Royal family members and Cabinet Ministers, to rush towards Saudi-Kuwaiti precincts to save their lives. Within minutes Dasman Palace became silent and gloomy - with all royal family members evacuated it, except Sheikh Fahd. Al Ahmed Al-Sabah a brother of Emir who was left behind at the Palace for reasons unknown, and about 300 duty bound guards remained inside. All this high drama started at least two hours before the first Iraqi soldier crossed the Kuwaiti border in 105 degrees of desert temperature. Within two hours about 30,000 strong Iraqi soldiers backed by Soviet made T-72 tanks and about 20 helicopters encompassed the Dasman Palace. Sheikh Fahd resisted Iraqi troops with Light Machine Gun with the support of Palace Guards and killed about 15 Iraqi soldiers, before he was shot dead in the counter firing.
As the heavy artillery was reverberating, a few remaining members of the Kuwaiti cabinet gathered abruptly in their French made Mirage Fighter Jets, took off in the direction of border region at random. The state run Radio broadcast started appealing the Arabs "The men, women and the children of Kuwait are calling on you to save them from barbaric invasion of Iraq ..... our honour is being violated, blood is being shed ..... hurry up ....." But despite all these off-handed appeals and preparations the reports which confirmed that the Iraqi tankers and troops which moved into Kuwait at 23 hours of Kuwait time G.M.T. 2.00 A.M. (7.00 P.M. August 1st in Eastern Daylight Time) have seized within eight hours almost all key locations such as the seat of power, the disputed Rumailah Oil-field, the richest Central Bank and all other Administrative Buildings and State-run TV and Radio Stations, despite the fierce but futile defiance from small number of Kuwait Security forces.

Later, within few hours was issued the statement broadcast in Radio Kuwait on the name of 'Transitional Free Government of Kuwait' backed by Baghdad's Revolutionary Command Council headed by President, Field Marshall Saddam at Takriti thus Iraq's invasion of Kuwait was in response to the request from Interim Government of Free Kuwait to defend the revolutionaries and to rescue the Kuwait people from Emir's suppressions. The statement also described the ousted Sabah
dynasty as Traitors and 'Agents of Zionists' and Foreign Schemes. But for the first 48 hours the so-called Interim Government of Free Kuwait was led by and composed of by whom was actually unknown due to several contradictory reports. According to one Baghdad Television report proclaimed three days after the invasion took place, that the new Interim Government in Kuwait was headed by Colonel Al-Hussain Ali who assumed the responsibilities of Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces and about nine other Lieutenant Colonels and Majors were appointed as Members of Interim Government. The Kuwait Embassy in Oman two days after the invasion took place charged that colonel Al-Hussain was none other than the son-in-law of Saddam, but not a revolutionary of Kuwait.

Immediately following the Iraqi's invasion the news spread. Swift and stern warnings came from the America, Russia, and other Western European powers and unconditional withdrawal of all Iraqi forces from Kuwait. However Iraqi strongmen remained defiant and threatened to turn Kuwait a graveyard if any outside power intervened in the conflict. Later, instead of rethinking about the consequences of the growing world pressure on him, Saddam more obdurately ordered for the annexation of Kuwait a week after occupation and declared that the merger was at the request of Free Provisional Government of Kuwait and sent clear message to the United Nations that the annexation of Kuwait is
irreversible and unity between the Two States is indestructible and eternal. When Iraq's Ambassador to United Nations formally told the United Nation of his Nation's stand on the Kuwait, it practically opened the doors for high-level crisis in the Middle East region.

This high level post cold-war crisis for the first time united the world super and major powers in an unprecedented way, against a common aggressor. In spite of some strained relations among themselves. This first post-cold war crisis an unobstructive opportunity for Western Democracies, especially for Britain to explode its stubox at once in Iraqi freedom and on the other side for Washington to crunch its teeth on a tough military ruler like Saddam whom it rates as perpetual war monger. But ever since the crisis began it was America that started the first diplomatic offensive against Iraq and it was the America, that moved and proposed in the United Nations Security Council the longest sanctions of air, naval and territorial blockade and trade and food embassy against Iraq and occupied Kuwait. And it was again America that initiated in gathering impressive show of international condemnation of Iraq's Invasion of Kuwait. While all this was going on, the rest of the world nations cordially speaking did not dare to unheed Security Council resolutions though some of them had such covert intentions, with the fear of exposure to America's resentment.
INGRAINED FACTORS BEHIND INVASION

The Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait though had appeared during the crisis period, a result of unresolved polemics over the increase of oil prices and other related issues between Kuwait and Iraq in particular and among the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) nations in general in the month of June-July 1990. It had also got some shaky reasons behind it, which nurtured the disputes till the outbreak of major aggression on the 2nd August 1990.

Iraq's claim on Kuwait was much older than its independence from Britain in 1961. Iraq's assertion of its rights to control Kuwait, apart from the factors of long time cultural and ethnic ties between both, were based on the fact that even before the British colonialists dominated the region, the Ottoman empire had declared that Kuwait was part of a province controlled from Southern Iraqi city of Basra. The Kuwait Sheikh's historical acceptance of Ottoman suzerainty gave Iraq, as the successor state from the empire, at least the tenuous basis for a claim to Kuwait Territory. Hence Iraq's arguments for time being were the lines of control established by Ottoman Empire should still apply, not the border lines drawn by British rulers later in 1923 on desert sand.
The Ottoman first appeared in Asia Minor in the 13th century as a frontier tribe on the western confines of the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum. "The Ottoman Empire which survived into the third decade of this century formed one of the most extensive and long-lived Imperial Systems ever organised. .... the capture of Constantinople in 1453 from truncated remnant of the Byzantine Empire symbolized that Ottomans had inherited it in the 16th century and brought most of the Arab world within their orbit." But with the apparent growth of British influence, in the Persian gulf region, the Sabah families which have ruled Kuwait over 230 years have refused to acknowledge that it was subject to Ottoman control. And Sabah rulers signed a Treaty in 1899 giving the British colonialists the right of responsibility for their defence and foreign affairs. Later to reward the Sabah rulers for accepting and recognizing the British domination and superiority the British colonialists concluded an agreement in 1913 recognizing the autonomy of the leader of Kuwait.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

"Iraq Invasion of Kuwait" is the problem studied.
SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The crisis (1990-91) unleashed by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait must be counted not only as one of the major international post-war crisis, but as a unique occurrence in several respects. If it bears comparison in the level of conflict with Korea, Vietnam and Cuba, it differs from all of these in being the first major post-war crisis not to have an overriding East-West dimension. For the first time, one member of the United Nations has not merely invaded, but completely occupied and annexed another. With the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people from Kuwait and Iraq resulted in the disruption in the International Trade of two major oil producers, and worldwide economic and financial uncertainty. The coalition of forces led by the United States in response to the invasion - the 'Desert Shield' - then deployed a force of well over half-a-million personnel in Arabia.

The scale of the war can only be measured by looking at it on various levels. The casualty level was far lower than in the major post-1945 wars (compare Korea with 4.5 million killed, Vietnam with over 2 millions, Lebanon with 2,50,000 the Iran-Iraq war with 50,000 or more); but in terms of the mobilization involved and weaponry used, this
was, after Korea, the greatest inter-state conflict since the Second World War.

The rise of new technologies besides what distinguished this war the military level were three other characteristics. The first was the extreme asymmetry in casualties – tens of thousands killed on the Iraqi side, a few dozen on the side of the coalition. The precedents were those of Pre-1912 colonial wars, in which superior technology and organisation made metropolitan armies almost invulnerable and unable to inflict terrible costs on their opponents. the infliction of casualties north of Kuwait from the 24 to the 26 February was an inflated version of the fate that be fell the Tibetan army at the battle of Guru in March 1904; that led into battle by generals and lamas alike, they lost 700 dead as against half a dozen wounded in the British Expeditionary Force.

The Second distinguishing characteristic was the manner in which the war ended - a decisive calling of a halt by Bush at a moment when in strict military terms he could have pressed onto Baghdad. Here, the analogy that presented itself is of a political decision to halt when the road ahead lay clear, was the Chinese decision to stop its war with India in October 1962. In both cases a clause with a caution prevailed over military momentum.
The third, and perhaps most dramatic distinguishing feature of this war was the ecological disaster which accompanied it, following the Iraqi decision to blow up the oil wells in Kuwait during their retreat. This was not the first time that war had been accompanied by ecological destruction, the destruction of forests and farmlands in the first world war, and the widespread use of chemical defoliants in Vietnam were serious enough. In this case, however, there was no military purpose in an unprecedentedly destructive action of Iraq which did much to pollute the atmosphere across a wide area of West Asia.

Middle East Conflict had three unique features. First, it was the first significant conflict involving the armies of Arab States. Second, the inter-Arab division was compounded by the fact that the whole of the Arab world, including North Africa was involved, and by 'implication both in the war and in any future peace process of the three non-Arab states of the region. Israel, Iran and Turkey, the latter two hitherto excluded from Inter-Arab politics. Third, an insight obscured by the degree of anti-American sentiment found for a long time in the region. This was the first time that American forces have in major numbers intervened in the region, except the too much smaller interventions in Lebanon (1958 and 1982-84).
For the Middle East there has been no comparable crisis involving both regional and extra-regional forces since the First World War, which saw the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the intervention of British and French forces, together with their Arab allies resulted in the formation of Iraq, Syria and Palestine. The political map of Ottoman was re-written after the First World War into Iraq, Syria and Palestine. Subsequent interventions in the Second World War, the Suez crisis the British Wars in Oman, are but comparisons. Secondary differences and comparisons are, however, instructive. On the one hand, this war will not have the degree of impact that followed the First World War, in that, the map in the sense of the State divisions of the region will not be significantly altered nor indeed it should in the majority of the cases, the political character of the regimes in power. On the other hand, the past contains several warnings and lessons of history for the present. Like Desert Storm, campaigns of the First World War involved mainly external forces with some Token Arab political attachments, the latter-like the armed forces of some occupied countries in the Second war for political and not military purposes.

Moreover, the history of the First World War was one of the maintenances of a disposable coalition by means of
public unity but private divergence of goals. Specifically behind the goal of defeating the Turks, contradictory promises were made, the Sykes-Pilot agreement, the Husayn-Macma-lon Correspondence, the Balfour Declaration. It does not require much imagination to see that comparable and equally contradictory commitments have been made to a variety of actors in this war, and that the political consequences thereafter may equally arouse rancour and dismay. The coalition may have survived the war; it is less likely to survive the peace.

Three broad political lessons of wars would seem to be especially worth remembering in this context. The first is that, in all wars, states fight for a variety of goals and these may well change as the war progresses. The motives of the states that fought in the Second World War were economic, strategic and ideological all at the same time; the same mixture applied now. The shifting of war aims in common, as the debates among the Allied about what to do with Germany in both World Wars indicated. Secondly, relations between allies both before and after Wars are never easy, and there is always an element of competition between them. The Arab participants in the coalition have their own variant agenda, as do have the non-Arab states. Equally, America while seeking to rally the maximum International support in the West, may also be able to use its military
predominance in the war and the post war situation to exert leverage against its allies, notably Japan and Germany, and to argue that any new international Order should follow its priorities. Third, even when wars do not alter frontiers, they do bring about great strains within countries which may in the aftermath of war produce political and ideological changes. As with the 1948, 1967 and 1973 Arab-Israeli wars, the impact of this war on the Arab world will only be visible years after they have ended. Pan-Arab and Pan-Islamic sentiment did not produce the insurrection that Saddam anticipated. Whether these are really spent-forces of whatever they are capable of further impact on the region can not yet be assessed.

These general considerations should be enough to indicate the extent to which the uncertainties of the current war in the Gulf are common to all such conflicts. They should suggest their own admonitions. Whatever the outcome and whatever the duration of the conflict, this war will not 'solve' the problem of the Gulf, nor of the Middle East in general. A range of policy issues will emerge from it which will remain to bedevil governments as they did after the two world wars and after the various Arab-Israeli wars.
OBJECTIVES

The study "Iraq Invasion of Kuwait - A Case Study of 1990-91 Gulf Crisis" keeps the following objectives in mind.

1. To trace the historical background of the problem.

2. To examine the relevant factors that have led to the Gulf Crisis.

3. To assess the worldwide concern on the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq.

4. To examine the role of major world powers towards the crisis.

5. To estimate the efforts of the United Nations in resolving the problem.

METHODOLOGY AND CHAPTERISATION

The source material has been drawn from primary and secondary sources. The method followed is historical and descriptive.
The material has been collected from Libraries of American Studies Research Centre, University of Hyderabad, Osmania University, Sri Venkateswara University and Sri Krishnadevaraya University libraries. The material has been duly processed and analysed.

The Introduction Chapter states the Problem and Importance of the Study. The Second Chapter traces the historical background of the Gulf Crisis. The Third Chapter refers to the role of America and other major world powers. The Fourth Chapter examines the major role played by the United Nations. The last Chapter deals with summary and conclusion.