

Sixth OIC summit a victory for US

DAKAR (Senegal), Dec 13: The Islamic summit's refusal to endorse calls for a holy war to liberate Israeli-occupied territories signals the waning influence of the militant PLO and shifting alliances in the wake of the Gulf War, reports AP.

The sixth summit of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, representing the world's 1.1 billion Muslims, was an indirect victory for the United States.

The tone of summit, which closed late Wednesday after three days, was set by Senegalese President Abdou Diouf's opening speech urging support and encouragement for the Washington-sponsored Middle East peace talks.

Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani failed in an attempt to strike from the conference record all references to the talks, from which the Palestine Liberation Organization is barred.

Syrian efforts to change references from Israel to "the Zionist enemy" also were rebuffed.

Senegal, among Washington's staunchest allies in Africa, delivered the final blow to militants with a successful late-night call Wednesday for the conference to renounce jihad, or holy war, as a means of forcing Israel to return occupied Arab lands. Senegal was backed by another American friend, Egypt, which earlier had been told by radicals to "leave its US mandate back home."

Clauses urging Muslims to "prepare ourselves for jihad to

liberate the Palestinian territories and occupied Arab land," and "to wage jihad to liberate Jerusalem with all the means at our disposal" were toned down.

A final Dakar declaration read, "We vow to make the struggle the greatest Islamic cause of our generation until Al-Quds (Jerusalem) and occupied Palestinian territories are liberated and returned to their rightful owners."

PLO leader Yasser Arafat booted from the meeting, his face rigid with anger.

"Arafat said the declaration effectively renounced the war against Israel. He said it was to abandon the Palestinian cause and that they were betraying the vanguard Arab cause," said one of a group of journalists who secretly recorded the dispute. Senegalese soldiers later seized their cassettes and notes.

"No kisses please," Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah snapped when Arafat rushed to embrace him in a hotel lobby on Monday.

The heir to the Saudi throne also turned his back pointedly when he was approached by Jordan's King Hussein.

Arab delegates said the anti-Iraq coalition had not forgiven Arafat and Hussein for sympathizing with Baghdad in the war that followed Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

Western observers were encouraged by a resolution condemning terrorism and promising to work with the international community to end terrorism.

Fund crisis, clashes rend tribal insurgents

RANGAMATI, Dec 13: The tribal insurgents have become desperate in extorting toll due to acute fund shortage and are not even sparing their own religious institutions, reports UNB.

A reliable source said Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity, the mentor to the tribal insurgents, used to raise about Tk 8 crore annually from the Chittagong Hill Tracts, to carry out its subversive activity.

But the toll collection of PCJSS might have fallen sharply below one crore this fiscal year. The slump was attributed to resistance and preventive measures by both tribal and non-tribal people as well as security forces stationed in the troubled hill areas.

Forest resources, fisheries, transport and some development sectors were the main sources of its funds. They collect money through intimidation from the employees in government and private sectors in the remote areas of the three hill districts.

The receipts issued by the toll collectors showed that Taka 50 lakh would be collected from a single area — Manikchhari — an important crosspoint of Rangamati, Chittagong and Khagrachari districts. But, the source said, the amount squeezed to only Tk 20,000 this year.

Nandita Chakma, so-called Sylhet Sector Commander, who surrendered recently to the security forces, also confirmed the "near famine" situation in their hideouts and

camps across the border. PCJSS has also been facing leadership clash both within itself and its armed wing, Shanti Bahini.

As such, the insurgents have taken recourse to indiscriminate drive for money, even from religious institutions like Kiang, a Buddhist temple, where they used to worship before taking up arms.

Ranjan Kumar Chakma, member of the Local Government Parishad of Khagrachari hill district, entrusted to supervise renovation work of the Kiang a Baghachhari Mukh in Dighinala upazila, told UNB he was also threatened recently with dire consequences when he had refused to subscribe to the gunmen.

The Shantibahini men in a letter asked him to pay 10 per cent of the total Tk 1.5 lakh sanctioned for the temple. He declined.

"Later, the insurgents sent to me a woman with letter signed by a so-called Area Toll Collector asking me to pay the toll or face dire consequences," he named the self-styled area toll collector as Sujan Chakma.

Finally, Ranjan said, the insurgents assaulted his labourers indiscriminately and "threatened to kill my people."

Another report adds: A tribal insurgent surrendered to the security forces of Jurachari zone in Kaptai region today, officials sources said.

Kali Bikash Chakma of Botrachara village in Jurachari upazila of the district also laid down a country-made gun.

Gorbachev may resign soon

MOSCOW, Dec 13: Five Central Asian republics on Friday agreed to join Russian President Boris Yeltsin's new commonwealth, ignoring Mikhail S. Gorbachev's hopes of preserving the Soviet Union.

Gorbachev is likely to resign when the legislatures of most of the remaining 12 Soviet republics formally vote to join the Commonwealth of Independent States, said a Kremlin source. That could come as early as next week, said the source, who spoke on condition that he not be further identified.

Commenting on reports of Gorbachev's pending resignation, the president's official spokesman Andrei Grachev said "There will be no sensation today."

But Grachev noted that Gorbachev told Soviet journalists on Thursday that he would resign "as a matter of principle" if a majority of republics joined Yeltsin's commonwealth.

AFP adds: Talks planned for Saturday between the presidents of the Slav and Central Asian republics have been postponed, the Independent News agency reported today. Related story on page 5

Bush

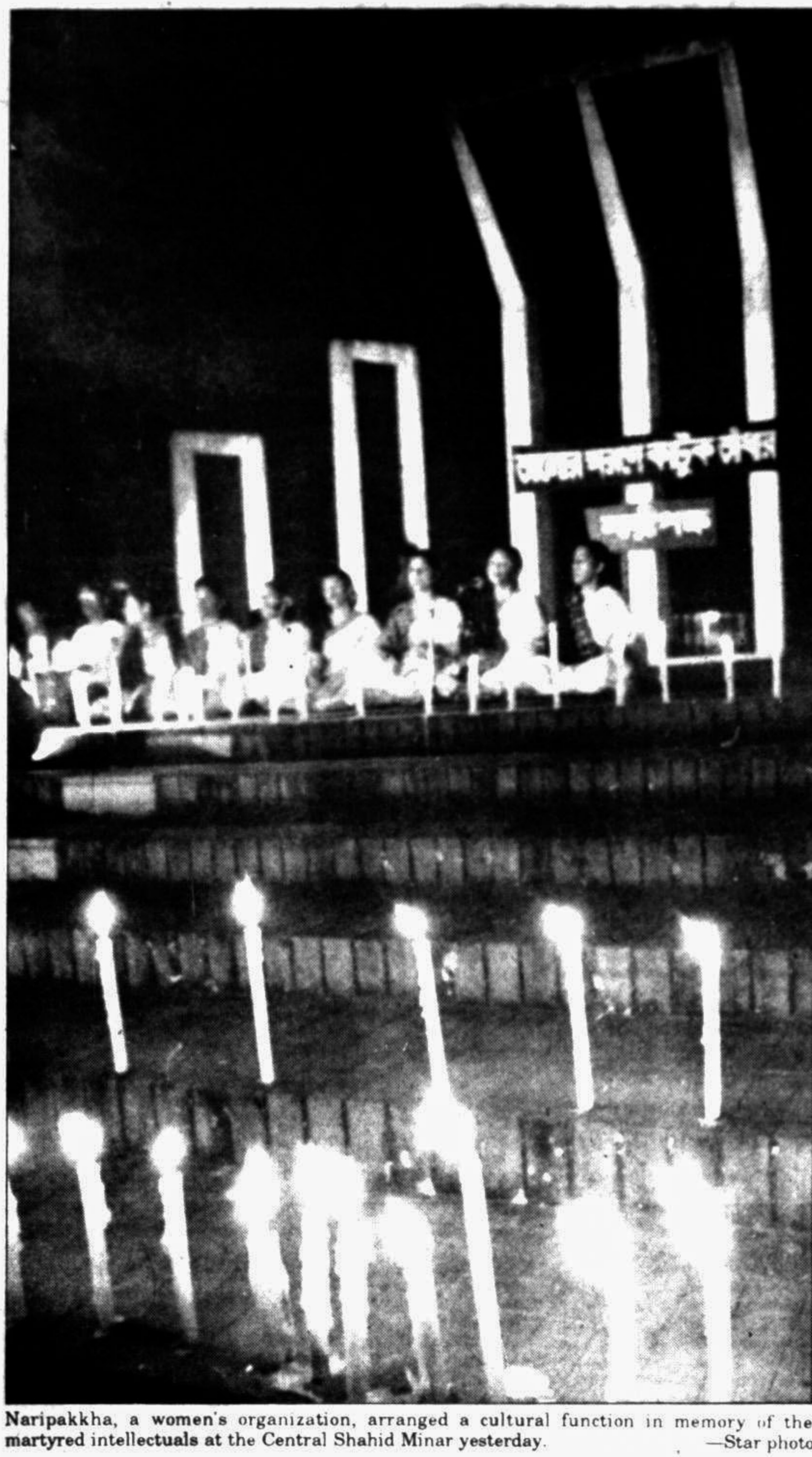
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in the Soviet Union, especially where nuclear weapons were concerned. He said he had received "very good" assurances in that area.

"We're watching that situation very closely," said Bush before a meeting on health care. This is not a helpful time to editorialize on personalities inside the Soviet Union," he said when asked who the United States was dealing with as the former superpower fragments.

"We're supporting those who are reformers, we're supporting (those) who are for democracy, whoever they are, wherever they are, in whatever republics they are and in the center, said Bush.

The US President, who has not spoken with Gorbachev since Russia, Ukraine and Belarus combined to form the commonwealth of independent states last Sunday, has given the impression over the past several days of abandoning the Soviet leader as his power eroded.

Thursday, Thomas Niles the Assistant Secretary of State for European and Canadian affairs, said "there was no farewell to President Gorbachev, at least not today."



Naripakkha, a women's organization, arranged a cultural function in memory of the martyred intellectuals at the Central Shahid Minar yesterday. —Star photo

Intellectual day today

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Abul Basher and Abul Kalam Azad.

Different political parties, socio-cultural and other organisations have chalked out elaborate programmes to observe the day. The Bangladesh Radio and TV will put up special programmes on the occasion.

The day's programme begins at the martyred intellectuals' memorial at Mirpur, where wreaths will be placed. Discussions will be held on the departed souls will be offered.

Teachers, students and members of staff of the Dhaka University will gather at the foot of Aparajeyo Bangla monument at 6.45 am and start for the intellectuals' mausoleum to lay wreaths at 7 am. Vice Chancellor Prof M Muniruzzaman Miah will lead the team.

At 10 am, a discussion will be held at the Teacher-Student Centre. The Vice Chancellor will be in the chair. Besides, the University authorities have arranged a special prayer after Zohr prayer. On the day, offices of the university will remain suspended from 10 am to 1.30 pm.

Vice-Chancellor of the Jahangirnagar University Prof Kazi Saleh Ahmed along with students will place wreaths at 8 am to pay tributes to the martyrs.

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) will observe the day through hoisting the national

and party flags halfmast and black flag atop the party central office at 7 am. At 8 am, a gathering of the party leaders and workers will be held at the central office from where they will start for Mirpur memorial to lay wreaths. The party will also hold a discussion on the martyrs at the central office at 4 pm.

Awami League will hoist black flag and the national and party flags halfmast atop the party office at 6 am. A gathering of the party leaders and workers will be held at the Bangabandhu Bhaban at 8 am. The central leaders of the party will pay tributes to the martyred intellectuals by laying wreaths at the Mirpur monument at 9 in the morning.

A discussion meeting under the auspices of Awami League will be organised at the party central office of Bangabandhu Avenue at 3 pm.

Fresh vow

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tuals sacrificed their lives. She said we had high expectations from the successors of martyred intellectuals and hoped that they would give us correct guidance through their patriotism and wisdom to attain the cherished goal.

"In this way we will be able to repay our debt to the martyred intellectuals," she said.

The Prime Minister prayed to the Almighty Allah for the peace of the souls of the martyred intellectuals.

Ishaq covering up gang rape: Benazir

ISLAMABAD, Dec 13: Pakistani opposition leader Benazir Bhutto accused President Ghulam Ishaq Khan today of covering up the alleged gang rape of her dressmaker, reports Reuter.

"What has happened is savagery and the President has conspired to cover up this savagery," she said during a visit to dressmaker Farhana Hayat's family home where she is recovering from last month's attack.

Hayat was allegedly gang-raped at her Karachi home last month by five men who repeatedly questioned her about her links with Bhutto.

Hayat named Sind Chief Minister Jam Sadiq Ali and his Home Affairs Adviser Irfanullah Marwat as the people she suspected were behind the attack that has convulsed Pakistan. Marwat is the President's son-

in-law.

Rape is common in Pakistan where a woman has to have four male Muslim witnesses to successfully prosecute, but the Hayat case has brought crimes against women into the limelight.

"This is the height of their revenge to bring me under pressure," said Bhutto, breaking into tears during her visit to the Islamabad home of Veena's father Shaukat Hayat.

"Irfanullah Marwat is the principal accused in the case. I fail to understand why the President is protecting his son-in-law."

Normally a rape is covered up by the victim's family because of the shame attached to it, but Hayat broke with tradition to make the attack on his daughter a major political issue.

Candlelight vigil

By Staff Correspondent

A candlelight vigil in memory of those who laid down their lives during the country's War of Independence was observed in the capital on Friday.

The solemn ceremony "Let the light of remembrance remove the darkness of our mind" was organised by Naripakkha, a women's organisation, at the foot of the Central Shaheed Minar.

Hundreds of people at the Shaheed Minar paid their tributes to the millions of people who sacrificed their lives during the nine-month-long bloody War of Independence.

A group of artists from the Chhayanaat chanted Tagore's "Aaguner parash mori chhoao praney" while men, women and children placed the lighted candles at the foot of the Shaheed Minar.

Reading out a declaration, convener of the function Fazila Banu Lily called for imbuing the spirit of the Liberation War and educating the posterity with its lofty ideals.

She said each death during the War of Independence was painful to us but it also strengthened the determination of the freedom fighters.

All-party talks to solve workers' problems urged

Opposition Chief Whip Mohammad Nasim on Friday urged the government to sit with all political parties and trade unions to solve the problems of the workers in jute, textile and garments sectors, reports UNB.

He said just demands of the workers who called for 72-hour blockade across the country beginning December 22 should be settled through discussion for the interest of revitalising the national economy, now in shambles.

Nasim was addressing a joint rally of students and workers at Siddhirganj playground this afternoon.

"By giving up self-complacency that everything is alright, the ruling party should seek honest advice of the opposition to overcome unrest and indiscipline in political and economic fronts," he told the rally.

Nasim, also the Publicity Secretary of Awami League, alleged that inefficiency and ineptitude of the government have harmed the environment of hard-won democracy.

"Even the donor agencies have been expressing concern at the present chaotic situation in the administration and economic sector."

Awami League repeatedly offered its cooperation to the government in consolidating democracy and strengthening national economy, he said, but the ruling BNP's "intransigent" attitude pushed the opposition to street agitation.

Parliament

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Prof Zillur Rahman Siddiqui called upon the political parties to take vow so that the hard-earned democracy would not get lost due to their insincerity, weakness and lack of foresightedness.

He said the rule of law and freedom of the press and the electronic media must be ensured for giving democracy an institutional shape.

Prof Salahuddin said the people are becoming frustrated for the unabated corruption and terrorism in the country.

He complained that the government has failed to ensure security of public life.

Poet Sufia Kamal said, though a democratic government has been installed in the country, "we are yet to taste its favour."

She said all should be imbued with the spirit to lead the country towards prosperity and happiness.

The Midnight File

Soviet Defence Minister rules out fresh coup

MOSCOW, Dec 13: Soviet Defence Minister Yevgeny Shaposhnikov today ruled out the possibility of another military coup. "Tass news agency said, 'As minister of defence I can declare with full authority—in the military all is peaceful and under control,' he said. 'There can be no putsch with participation of the army.' 'We have learnt from the bitter experience of the August events when they tried to use the military for political ends', reports Reuter.

Rao to visit Beijing

NEW DELHI, Dec 13: The Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao, today accepted an invitation from his Chinese counterpart, Li Peng, to visit Beijing at a mutually convenient date. Extending the invitation during the second and concluding round of official talks, Li said he was confident that such a visit would serve to further promote cooperation and friendship between the two countries, reports PTI.

ADB loans for power projects

MANILA, Dec 13: The Asian Development Bank announced Friday it has approved loans for power projects in Pakistan and India, and for a ports development project in China. Pakistan's two loans, totaling \$250 million, and a technical assistance grant worth \$85,000 will be used to finance a power generation project, the Manila-based bank said in a statement. The first loan, worth \$125 million, will come from the bank's concessional window, the Asian Development Fund. It is interest free and is payable over 35 years, including a grace period of 10 years. The loan will have an annual 1 per cent service charge, reports AP.

ME peace talks

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Israeli-occupied Golan Heights, Israel wants a peace treaty but is not offering territory in exchange.

Syrian delegation leader Mowafaq Al-Ali said on Thursday Israel continued to insist on a "distorted interpretation" of UN Resolution 242, which advocates Israeli withdrawal from Arab territory in exchange for secure and recognised borders.

Israel says it fulfilled 242 when it gave the largely uninhabited Sinai desert back to Egypt in the early 1980s.

Israeli spokesman Benjamin Netanyahu, however, said there had been movement in Syria's position.

"There is a greater willingness to look at 242, if not in completely new light, at least in a conditional light... it's different from the place where we were yesterday and I think it's a good sign," he said.

The Israeli-Lebanese talks are less complicated because Israel does not claim any Lebanese territory.

It controls a self-declared "security zone" in the south but

has offered to withdraw as part of a deal including Lebanese government control over the area and a timetable for the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon.

The technicality at issue between Israel, Jordan and the Palestinians is the formal relationship between Palestinians who will negotiate interim self-rule for the occupied West Bank and Gaza and Jordanians who have a separate agenda.

Israel, reluctant to concede the Palestinians a separate identity, want to treat the Palestinian negotiators as a "subcommittee" under the umbrella of the joint delegation.

The Arabs reject this terminology and say any deal the Palestinians reach need not be referred to the Jordanians.

The Israelis, their appetite for talks apparently whetted by the results so far, decided to stay on longer than expected. They had originally planned to stop on Friday.

The Arabs say they want to talk in Washington indefinitely until they start to make progress on substance.

UNGA call to scrap sports boycott of SA

UNITED NATIONS, Dec 13: The General Assembly on Friday unanimously urged all nations to restore sporting, cultural, scientific and academic exchanges with South Africa because of progress made toward ending apartheid.

In its annual resolution on apartheid, the assembly also encouraged countries to review and lift remaining economic sanctions as South Africa creates a new transitional multiracial government and drafts a democratic, non-racial constitution.

For decades, the General Assembly had called for a sports and cultural boycott of South Africa while the government continued to enforce apartheid racial segregation laws.

Many organizations and governments already have lifted their sports boycott of South Africa. The country was readmitted by the International Olympic Committee this past summer, the ATP Tour Doubles championships were held in South Africa in November and a South African cricket team recently completed a tour of India.

Although the assembly resolution could not be enforced, the UN Secretariat annually published lists of athletes, film stars, musicians and other performers who traveled to appear in South Africa, embar-

assing some into pledging not to return.

On Dec. 20, the white-minority government, African National Congress and other anti-apartheid groups are scheduled to begin a constitutional conference to lay the groundwork for a non-racial, democratic political system.

The conference will consider proposals for an interim government to organize new elections, but it is not certain whether such a transitional administration will be formed. The white-minority government has said it will not give up power until there is a new constitution.

4 injured as truck rams scooter

Four people were injured when a truck ramed an auto-rickshaw at the Zia International Airport parking area Friday. The injured were first admitted to the Combined Military hospital in Dhaka Cantonment and later shifted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital. They were named Saiful (10), Nesar (32), Hakim Talukder (50) and Khandker Hannan (27), reports UNB.

Hasina

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ory of the martyred intellectuals and expressing her sympathy for the members of their families, Hasina recalled that the Pakistan occupation army and their local lackeys executed the plan as part of their deep-rooted conspiracy just before the final victory on December 16.

She also blamed the post-75 governments for protecting the "self-confessed" killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Hasina alleged that after the fall of the autocratic regime, the BNP government had resorted to torture on the opposition workers who fought last nine years for democracy.

She also blamed the ruling party for violating the November 19 joint declaration which envisaged ending the "politics of killing and coup" and making radio and television autonomous to give democracy an institutional shape.

The Awami League chief called on the people and the pro-liberation forces to fight untidely for salvaging the spirit and values of the Liberation War and building the country following the ideals of martyred intellectuals and freedom fighters.



Former Pakistani Premier and opposition leader Benazir Bhutto (L) is about to embrace weeping veteran politician Shaukat Hayat Friday. Hayat's daughter Farhana, a friend of Bhutto, was assaulted in her Karachi residence by unidentified masked men on November 27. —Photo AFP

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