

Ekushe Padak

Ali requests withdrawal of nomination

Star Report

S M Ali, Editor of The Daily Star has urged the Ministry of Culture to withdraw his name from all considerations for presenting him with the 'Ekushe Padak' for his performance in journalism.

Referring to recent press reports that he has been nominated for this prestigious award and to the controversy touched off by the move, Ali says, "I have no intention of figuring in this controversy in any manner. This is my principal reason for urging you not to nominate me for the award."

The Editor has explained his position in a letter sent to the Minister for State for Cultural Affairs, Jahanara Begum, whose contents have been released to the press.

The letter says that if the press reports are correct, the government has indeed done Mr Ali a "great honour" by nominating him for the award. Then, the Editor adds, "However, I am now writing this letter to request you, in all humility, to withdraw my nomination and to take whatever steps you consider necessary to ensure that I do not receive the 'Ekushe Padak' either this year or next year."

Giving his reasons for taking this position, the Editor says, "I have noted that reports of nominations for the awards in journalism have touched off a controversy which casts a shadow over the credibility of your choices, whether they are tentative or final. There may also be some truth in the argument that the whole exercise has become politicised, instead of reflecting a national consensus."

Continuing, the letter says, "This controversy is particu-

larly unfortunate since 'Ekushe Padak' symbolises a milestone in our national struggle. Any award given to anyone to mark this occasion should certainly remain above all political considerations."

Outlining his personal position vis-a-vis the proposed award, Ali says in his letter, "As a journalist, my sole aim is to contribute to the continued growth of The Daily Star as an independent non-partisan newspaper which stands for responsible constructive criticism, upholds broad-based national interests and accords the highest priority to the economic betterment of our impoverished millions. The acceptance of this role by the Star by an ever-increasing number of our readers and, indeed, by all political parties is the only recognition sought by myself and my colleagues in The Daily Star."

Then, he adds, "If our newspaper has gained in stature and if, as its Editor, I have earned a place for myself in the field of journalism in Bangladesh, the credit must indeed go to the team of dedicated, hard-working and non-partisan journalists, which I have the honour to lead."

"This being the case," Ali adds, "the award, if any, should indeed go to The Daily Star, rather than to any individual in this publication, including myself."

Concluding the letter to the State Minister, Ali says that he would have no choice but to decline the award if it is still offered to him, despite his request to withdraw his nomination "even at the risk of causing unintentional offence to the government."

JU closed till Feb 2

From Page 1 Col 7

Al-Berunt Hall were earlier expelled from the university for one year for insulting and threatening a hall provost on November 27.

Following Syndicate decision the JCD activists held nine Syndicate members as hostages December 3, 1992. Two ministers from the ruling BNP had to intervene to free them after about 16 hours.

The ministers assured the JCD leaders that they would look into the matter and the Vice Chancellor was supposed to hear appeals from the accused two.

The Syndicate, however, did not discuss about the prayer in its regular monthly meeting on December 31.

The Syndicate went into a special session Saturday to discuss university development projects, but the JCD members expected that the case of their colleagues would be considered.

Hearing that the Syndicate was dropping the issue from the agenda 'as per rules' the JCD activists immediately brought out processions Saturday to protest the Syndicate decision.

Some 50 rounds of gunshots were fired and crackers were exploded during the protest.

JCD members laid a total siege by locking the office rooms, stopping all examinations and regular classes and disrupting the transport service Sunday.

President of JCD and Vice President of Jahangirnagar University Central Students' Union (JUCSU) Masud Hasan Talukder in a memorandum submitted to the Vice Chancellor however withdrew the siege yesterday afternoon when the Syndicate was on close-door session.

JUCSU VP urged the Syndicate members to find out a "honourable solution" to the problem.

The Syndicate ended its meeting at 5-30 after a five-hour session. Provosts of the seven halls and proctor of the university went into another meeting but decided to ask students to vacate halls.

Eight special trips from the campus to Dhaka have been arranged today to evacuate the residential students.

Expressing their reaction the General Secretary of the JCD JU unit Aminul Islam Alam told The Daily Star that they are 'stunned' at the abrupt decision of the Syndicate to close down the university.

Leaders of the JCD will meet the Prime Minister today to decide their future course of action, he added.

The JCD also has a plan to challenge the decision of the Syndicate at the High Court, he said.

The JUCSU VP in a press briefing blamed the Syndicate and the administration for the whole situation.

Meanwhile, a large contingent of police force has been deployed on the campus.

Writ challenging provision for MPs' pension

A High Court Division Bench yesterday issued a rule upon the Secretary, Ministry of Law and Justice and Secretary, Bangladesh Jatiya Sangsad to show cause within six weeks why the Article 8A of the Members of Parliament (Remuneration and Allowances) Order, 1973 and amendment by the Act 18 of 1992 should not be declared void, illegal, ultravires and unconstitutional and of no legal effect, reports BSS.

The bench comprised Justice Anwarul Huq Chowdhury and Justice K M Hasan.

Dr Ahmed Hussain, senior advocate of the Supreme Court filed the writ petition challenging the legality of the Article 8A of the Members of Parliament (Remuneration and Allowances) Order, 1973 as amended by the Act of 1992. The said article provides that a member of parliament in recognition of his political contributions shall be entitled to a pension of Taka one thousand per mensem while he will not be a member of parliament. This article will take effect from April 4, 1991.

Dr Hussain argued that this Article 8A violated the Article 68 of the constitution. The provision of salaries, allowances and privileges do not provide for pension, he submitted.

Probe body on Ctg incident starts work Jan 14

CHITTAGONG, Jan 12: The one-man inquiry commission will start work on January 14 (Thursday) to probe the January 2-3 incidents at South Halishahar and Bandartilla in the city which left at least 10 people dead, reports UNB.

Justice Sultan Hossain Khan will hear witnesses to the incident and the affected people everyday between 10 am and 5 pm till January 30.

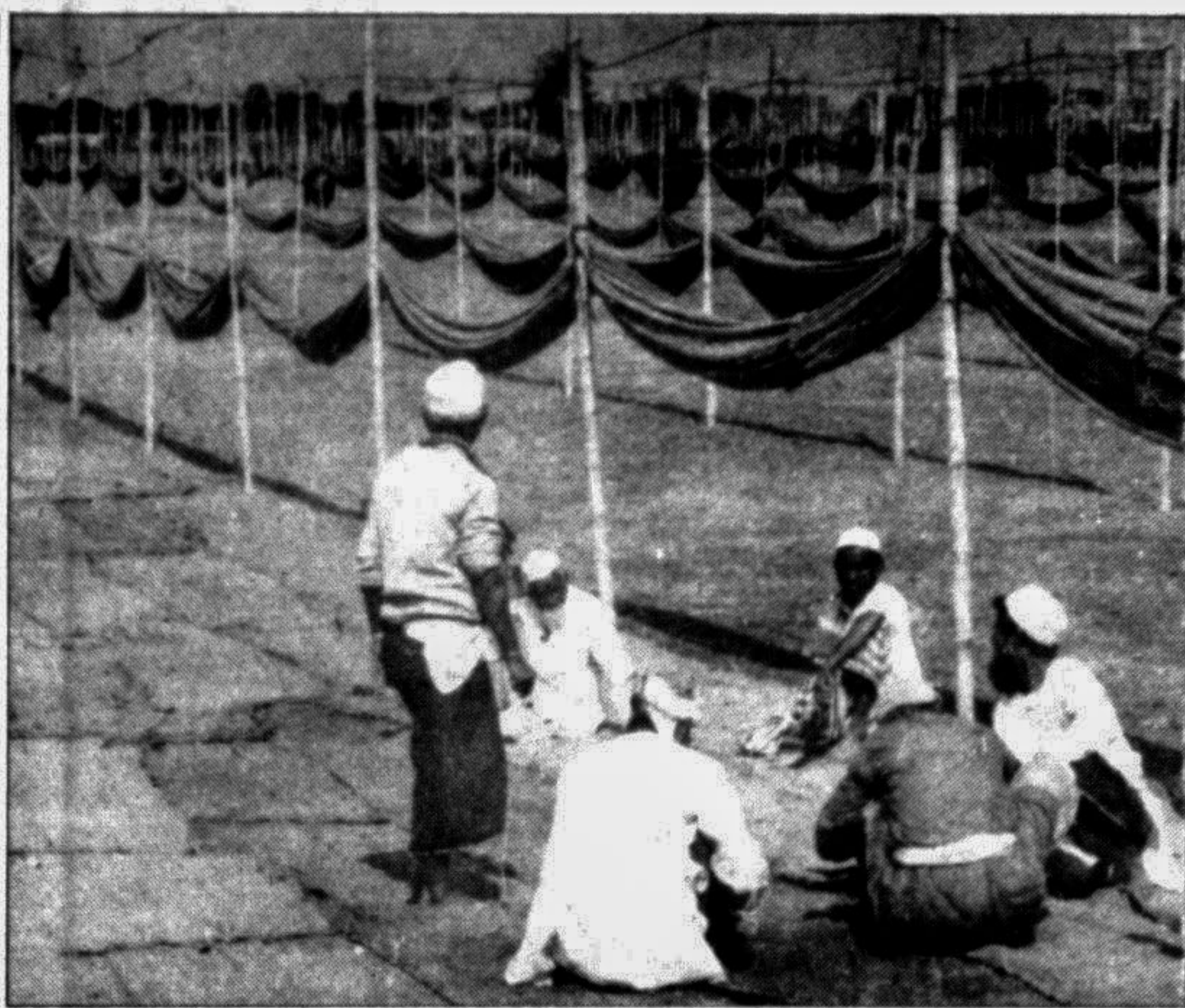
Two drowned in Khulna

From Staff Correspondent
KHULNA, Jan 12: Two boatmen drowned at the Peoples Jute Mills ghat early hours today when the boat they were sleeping in sank in the river Bhairab.

Ismail (20) and Zafar (22) died as the fishing boat, which was anchored in the low tide, sank during high tide.

Gen Waheed new Pak army chief

ISLAMABAD, Jan 12: President Ghulam Ishaq Khan today appointed Lieutenant General Abdul Waheed as the new Chief of the Pakistan Army, state-run television reported, says AFP.



Preparations for holding Bishwa Ijtema (world Muslim congregation) nearing completion at Tongi. —Star photo

Preparations for holding Bishwa Ijtema afoot

From Our Correspondent
GAZIPUR, Dec 12: Preparations are afoot to hold a three-day 'Bishwa Ijtema' the second largest congregation for Muslim Ummah begins on the eastern bank of the River Turag at Tongi January 16.

An area of five square miles is being covered with canopies for the congregation expected to be attended by over two million Muslims from 60 countries, including Bangladesh.

The congregation is being held at the present venue since 1967.

The Tablig Jamaat organisers are expecting over twenty thousand Muslims from abroad will attend the world congregation which discusses the teachings of Islam for three days.

President Abdur Rahman Biswas is expected to attend the Akhri Munajat (concluding prayer) in the noon of January 18. Maulana Ashhanul Haim, the Amir of World Tablig Jamaat, will conduct the Akhri Munajat. The Bishwa Ijtema or the world congregation draws the largest number of Muslims only after the Hajj.

Tripartite clash leaves 10 hurt in Mirpur

By Staff Correspondent

At least 10 people were injured and several vehicles damaged in a tripartite clash among students, transport workers and police at Mirpur Tuesday.

The clash ensued in the morning when a group of students took to the street in front of Mirpur Bangla College protesting the death of a student and the transport workers chasing them.

Awal, a student of Bashiruddin High School, was killed in a road accident at Mirpur Monday.

Violence flared up at Mirpur near Bangla College, Darus Salam and Shyamoli when police intervened to bring the situation under control.

Menon unhappy over probe

From Page 1 Col 7
anything about the medical expenditure, Menon said.

According to the medical report, Menon's liver function has come back to normal and the lung has also started functioning quite normally.

The CMH doctors now treating the WP leader, however, advised him rest for a few more days.

Although Menon was looking confident while receiving visitors at his Eskaton residence yesterday, his family members seemed anxious about his health.

Annek, his eight-year-old son studying at an English medium school in the city, was seen persuading him to take medicine in time while his wife was requesting visitors not to talk much with Menon for the sake of his health.

The WP leader is now receiving treatment on alternate day at the Combined Military Hospital (CMH) for an infection that he developed 10 days ago.

Describing the moment he was shot, Menon said that he had felt a sudden jolt and a fire ball penetrating into his chest. "Momentarily I thought that somebody had lobbed a crude bomb on me," the WP leader added.

"What I wanted to know from the people rushing to-

Govt announces Hajj policy

All intending pilgrims have to travel by air and deposit Taka 84,725 each as expenses for performing the holy Hajj, to be held on May 30, subject to the sighting of the moon, a Religious Ministry press release said yesterday, reports BSS.

According to this year's Hajj policy, approved by the government a total of 12,000 people will be allowed to go for Hajj from Bangladesh under official management. The Haj applicants would be selected on zila-wise quota basis and 10 per cent quota would be kept reserved for 'Hajji-e-Badl'.

The break-up of the total expenses to be deposited mandatorily are Air Freight—Taka 41,000; Foreign Travel Tax—Taka 1,200; Terminal Fee—Taka 300; Pilgrim Pass and Ahkamul-Haj Book—Taka 25; Bank Service Charge—Taka 200 and Taka 42,000 for buying foreign exchange equivalent to 4000 Saudi rials to meet the expenses in Saudi Arabia during Hajj period.

Besides mandatory 4,000 Saudi rials, each pilgrim can carry an additional 550 US dollars bought from any scheduled bank at IP rate. The ministry has advised all intending pilgrims to purchase some US dollars in addition to mandatory 4000 Saudi rials for their own conveniences.

The ministry has arranged air-conditioned transport system this year for Bangladeshi pilgrims, considering the adverse climatic condition of Saudi Arabia. The authority will take on rent residential accommodation for only those who will ask for it. Concerned persons have been advised to consider it while filling up the Hajj forms.

Opinion once expressed in the form by individual applicants, is not changeable under any circumstances, the release added.

Persons who will perform the holy Hajj at their own arrangement may also apply to the government for arranging their residential accommodation in Saudi Arabia. This decision has been taken on the ba-

wards me following the incident was whether blood was flowing out of my nostrils. With the answer in the negative I felt, on the assumption that no vital organ of my body had been hit, I would be in a position to fight it back and survive," Menon told this correspondent yesterday.

He, however, attached due importance to the treatment he received in home and abroad.

Talking about the suspects, the WP leader said, "I have no doubt that the people who had been threatening me with death over telephone few days before the incident belong to the fundamentalist forces of the country. Besides, the Jubo Commaad, backed by the Jamaat-Freedom Party axis, printed my name, along with that of other patriotic people of the country, in its hit list. Menon said and hastened to add that it was surprising that government was yet to interrogate those involved with these organisations.

About the other suspects — Ujirpur-based faction of the Sarbahara Party — Menon said "I admit that some of them became my enemy but how could the Daily Sangram say that the Sarbahara Partyman who attempted on my life had already been killed?"

The Daily Sangram, popularly known as the spokesman of the Jamaat-e-Islami, published such a news. Menon claimed. He observed that if the report correct the investigating authority should have asked the editor of the daily to come out with the documents for the sake of unearthing the fact relating to the incident.

On the present political situation of the country, he said that things had deteriorated during the last four months.

"The economy is at stake, law and order situation is yet to be improved, mills and factories are being closed but the major political parties, instead of debating on the ways and means of resolving these problems seem busy mudslinging against one another on less important issues," Menon observed.

"We are yet to make parliamentary democracy effective by means of utilising this institution as the highest national forum for policy decisions of the nation," the WP leader added.

Supreme Court order

'Return personal belongings of Ershad in 7 days'

The Supreme Court has asked the Home Ministry to hand over the personal belongings of former President H M Ershad, stored in a house in Dhaka Cantonment, within seven days, reports UNB.

A Division Bench of the Supreme Court comprising Justice Anwarul Huq Chowdhury and Justice K M Hasan delivered the judgement yesterday.

A writ petition was earlier filed in the Supreme Court challenging the action of the government of locking up and scaling of personal belongings such as cloths, shoes, carpets, paintings, electronic goods, furniture etc which were stored in the rented house by his brother-in-law Mustafizur Rahman.

A contingent of police from Cantonment thana forcibly entered the house on May 7, 1992, locked up the goods and evicted the caretaker of the house owned by one Manik Mia who lives in London.

It was argued in the court that such action of forcibly entering a private house without any warrant or notice was in violation of Articles 27,31,22 and 43 of the Constitution concerning fundamental rights.

The Division Bench found that the police had entered the house without any authority of law, locked up the goods without any warrant or seizure and declared such action to be illegal and mala fide.

It directed the Secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs to unlock and unseal House No 22A Jahangir Road, Dhaka Cantonment and hand over the personal belongings of the former President.

Armed men raid Dhalpur slum area again

By DMCH Correspondent

Armed men again raided the slum area at City Palli, Dhalpur, under Demra police station Tuesday afternoon.

A minibus driver Golam Mostafa who was passing by suffered bullet injuries during the raid and was admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Yesterday's incident was a follow-up of Monday's armed attack by young gangsters who ransacked and damaged at least 50 thatched houses and left score of people wounded.

Local people said a group of armed men attacked the slum area following a row between two groups over playing carom Monday.

Armed men again raided the area at around 4 pm Tuesday. They opened gunshots and exploded crackers in the area, witnesses said.

Demra police said that a case was lodged with them in connection with the Monday's incident. But no arrest was made until last night, police added.

OIC summit

From Page 1 Col 8

Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) said in a "final declaration."

Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic took part in the closed-door summit along with Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat and representatives of seven key other OIC members.

The final communique said the United Nations Security Council should "take full responsibility for preserving the independence and territorial integrity of Bosnia-Herzegovina".

In view of "the continued intransigence of the Serbian aggressor" the OIC said UN resolutions on Bosnia-Herzegovina including the imposition of an air-exclusion zone should be "put in to application immediately and fully".

The communique said the Serbs policy of "Ethnic cleansing perpetrated against Muslims" was in fact a "campaign of genocide" and called for the "immediate creation of an international tribunal for war crimes committed in Bosnia-Herzegovina and former Yugoslavia."

Alleged killer of Tiger Babul nabbed

Detective police yesterday arrested an absconding accused from Mirpur area and recovered arms and ammunition based on his confession, reports UNB.

Police identified the arrested person as S M Mizanur Rahman alias Chhit Babul (30), the main accused in the murder of Tiger Babul and a terror of Mohanmadpur and Lalbagh areas, who was absconding for long.

The Midnight File

Arab FM's demand UN sanctions on Israel

CAIRO, Jan 12: Arab foreign ministers demanded on Tuesday that the UN Security Council impose sanctions on Israel if it refuses to allow more than 400 expelled Palestinians to return home. The ministers' resolution, read to reporters by Arab League Secretary-General Esamat Abdel-Magid, also called on the Security Council to appoint an international force to protect Palestinians living in Israeli-occupied territories, reports Reuter.

Serbs accept compromise plan on condition

GENEVA, Jan 12: Bosnian Serbs on Tuesday accepted a constitutional plan for Bosnia-Herzegovina, provided their parliament agrees in seven days, a spokesman for the federal Yugoslav Republic said. The agreement, if confirmed, would remove a major obstacle to peace talks here which the co-chairmen said earlier today had broken down over the refusal of the Bosnian Serbs to accept the constitutional blueprint, reports AFP.

Afghan Vice-President dies in Pakistan

PESHAWAR, Jan 12: Vice-President Amir Humza of Afghanistan died Tuesday, a day after he was airlifted to Pakistan for emergency medical treatment, doctors said. He was 42, reports AP.

115 nations sign convention banning chemical arms today

PARIS, Jan 12: At least 115 nations will sign a UN convention banning the manufacture, possession or use of chemical weapons at a three-day ceremony in Paris starting on Wednesday, French officials said on Monday, reports Reuter.

Yellow Panel sweeps RU Syndicate, Dean polls

RAJSHAHI, Jan 12: The Yellow Panel of teachers of Rajshahi University swept Syndicate, Dean and Planning and Development Committee elections today (Tuesday), bagging 15 out of a total of 18 posts, reports UNB.

It won all the five teachers' seats in the Syndicate, four Deans and six Planning and Development Committee members.

Yellow's rival, Green panel got two Deans and one seat in the Planning and Development Committee.

The five Yellow representatives in the Syndicate are Prof Abul Fazal Haque, Associate Professor, M Nurullah, Assistant Professor, Matur Rahman, Lecturer, A K M Shafiq Alam and Provost Rafiqul Alam.

The six elected Yellow Deans are Prof Ali Akbar of Arts Faculty, Prof Lutfof Rahman of Science Faculty, Associate Prof Nasim/Anjum of Commerce Faculty and Prof FR Khan of Social Sciences Faculty while the two others from Yellow panel are Prof 'Abu Taher of Life and Earth Faculty and Prof Abu Baker of Law Faculty.

A total of 475 teachers out of 491 cast votes in the election, held from 8 am to 1 pm without break.

Sylhet storm death toll now 46

From Our Correspondent
SYLHET, Jan 12: With the death of four more persons the number of deaths caused by the storm that swept over Sylhet and Sunamganj districts stood at 46 today.

Besides, one person in Doarabazar and another in Sunamganj sadar were still missing, said an official source in Sunamganj Tuesday.

However, the actual number of deaths would be higher, according to some unofficial source.

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Editor : S. M. Ali
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Published by the Editor on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd., 52 Motiheel C/A, Dhaka-1000 and printed by him at The Sangbad Ltd., 36 Purana Paltan, Dhaka. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices : House No. 11; Road No. 3; Dhanmondi R/A., Dhaka-1205. PABX : 500091-4. Advertisement : 500091. Fax No. 88-02-863035. GPO Box No. 3257. GRAM : DAILY STAR DHAKA.