KARACHI, Dec 4: A Pakistani ' special court rejected today a plea by Mir Murtaza Bhutto, iailed brother of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, that charges against him of hijacking and leading a terrorist group be dismissed, reports BSS.

The judge at the special court for speedy trial said there were sufficient grounds to establish his involvement in the two cases and rejected his application.

The judge was forced to adjourn the hearing after more than 200 supporters stormed through police barricades and burst into the courtroom, shouting: "Long Live Bhutto." "Free Bhutto"

Bhutto, 39, has been held in a Karachi jail since he returned

early last month from the Syrian capital Damascus after

been attributed to the group.

happened today," Bhutto said, referring to the storming of the court. "This could give (the government) a pretext to hold the trial proceedings in camera."

JS: Labour problems

From Page 1 Col 7

this view, sources added. On the other hand, Jute Minister Brig (retd) Hannan Shah and Textiles Minister Major (retd) Abdul Mannan are learnt to have vehemently opposed the views put forward by the labour minister and the party whip.

The Jute and the Textile Ministers argued that the state must get rid of the losing mills and industries on the one hand and free the industrial units from the surplus labourers on the other. Otherwise, industrialisation of the country would be impossible, the minister argued.

The opponents, however, argued that the reality did not substantiate the idea because the already disinvested mills and industries were not running on profit. 'Rather most of the disinvested industrial units had meanwhile been closed down, they said adding the workers of most of those mills were yet to get their dues.

The meeting did not take any concrete decision on the is-

At the meeting there was also difference of opinion on the content of the Zila Parishad Bill, introduced in the House during the last budget session. The bill, while proposing the election of the district level local government, said the head of the body be elected by an electoral college comprising two men and one woman elected by the union parishad chairmen and members from each thana of the respective district.

The Treasury Bench did not pass the bill during the budget session following criticism even from the ruling party MPs.

The policymakers of the ruling party yesterday pre-

sented the bill, in an amended form, at yesterday's meeting. The amended bill now suggested to pick up the district council chairman by an electoral college comprising three directly elected persons - two men and one-woman -from

each thana of the district. However, a large number of the ruling party MPs once again objected to the amended version. According to sources, the MPs opposing the amended bill maintained that the electoral college should be a larger body. The possibility of an attempt by any candidate to influence the voters, through illegal measures, would be checked if the number of the members of the electoral college was higher they argued.

The meeting was adjourned at 9 pm without any decision on the issue, sources said.

The meeting is scheduled to resume this evening. Meanwhile, the parliamen-

tary probe body for investigation into the alleged corruption of the Irrigation and Flood Control Ministry and the Minister concerned will meet at 11 this

Today's meeting, tenth after the formation of the committee on July 13 last, is scheduled to prepare separate versions of the committee members belonging to the Treasury and the Opposition benches on the contentions regarding the body's terms of reference for investiga-

Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali told the House on November 22 that he as chairman of the 15 member probe body, would submit a primary report on the progress of the committee during the current session of the parliament.

Experts maintain that the

The clause on coal in the

loop-holes in the Import Policy

provide the traders with ample

opportunity to import low-grade

coal having high sulphur con-

Import Policy (1993-95) only

says a Pre-shipment Inspection

Certificate from an internation-

ally reputed surveyor should be

obtained to import coal which

would certify that 'the declared

quantity, measurement and

qualitative standard of the

not enough to stop importation

of coal containing toxic sub-

stances," said an expert sug-

gesting that the Import Policy

should clearly specify

'qualitative standard' of the coal

including permissible level of

immediate measures by the

government in this regard until

the relevant clause of the Im-

port Policy is amended accord-

of Environment said the sul-

phur content in coal must re-

main below one per cent for

however, mentioned the lack of

facilities for monitoring the

the high officials of the Ministry

of Commerce including the Coal

Controller declined to comment

Importers Association alleged

that the Customs authorities in

India are not accepting any Let-

ter of Credit (L/C) for importing

coal from Meghalaya below the

In a letter to the Chairman of

rate of 42 US dollars per tonne.

the National Board of Revenue

(NBR), the president of the as-

sociation said they have signed

agreement with the exporters in

Meghalaya to import their coal

at 20 to 30 dollars per tonne.

He said, the Customs in

Bangladesh should not allow

entry of coal imported under

L/C at the rate of above 30

dollars per tonne and urged the

NBR chief to take steps in this

on the coal import situation.

When contacted yesterday.

Meanwhile, the Coal/Coke

quality of minerals like coal.

protecting the environment. He,

An official of the Department

He also stressed taking of

"This is totally vague - and

commodity is accurate."

sulphur content in it.

High-level sulphur in coal coal from Meghalaya contains sulphur above the permissible

pany, an analytical consulting and technical chemist of Calcutta performed the test.

The findings of the Mineral Resources Directorate of Meghalaya also confirms presence of sulphur at high percentage in the coal available

A publication of the Directorate says, the coal found in the Garo Hills in western Meghalaya contains sulphur from two to four per cent while the coal from Bapung in Jayntia Hills area has 3.2 to eight per cent sulphur content. The coal extracted at Langrin of Khasi Hills contains sulphur that varies from 3.02 to 4.2 per cent. The large-scale import of Meghalaya's coal started in 1989 when the trade was liberalised for the private sector while the import under the public sector was stopped.

According to sources over five lack tonnes of coal were brought into Bangladesh during fiscal 1992-93. Of these, four lakh tonnes were from Meghalaya while the rest from Rani-

ganj and Indonesia. Two lakh tonnes of Meghalaya coal were imported legally by private sector traders through land-route and the other two lakh tonnes were smuggled into the country, said the sources involved in coal business. All most equal quantities of coal from Meghalaya were imported each year since

The officials of the Bangladesh Coal/Coke Importers Association said that during the fiscal 1993-94, the country will need 10 lakh tonnes of coal if wood is not

used as fuel in the brickfields. "However, if burning of wood in the brickfields continues, then at least five lakh tonnes of coal will be required to be imported," said S M Anwar Hos-

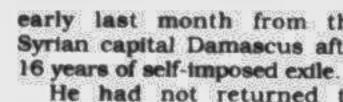
sain, president of the associa-The importers prefer to bring coal from Meghalaya since it

has good demand due to cheaper price, he said. The Meghalaya coal sells at Tk 1500 per tonne while other

superior quality coal cost about Tk 3000. Hossain also agreed that the

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

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He had not returned to Pakistan since his father, ex-Premier Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, was toppled in a military coup in

He has been accused of masterminding an underground group, 'Al-Zulfikar', set up after his father was hanged in 1979 on charges of conspiring in a political murder. Bombings in several Pakistani cities have

"I am not happy with what

Commitment to SAPTA renewed

The SAARC Council of Ministers beginning a two-day meeting here yesterday affirmed its commitment to implementing the SAPTA by 1995 to create a liberal trade atmosphere in the region, reports UNB.

All member countries renewed their total commitment to the SAPTA at the working session of the meeting which also reached unanimity on all other issues and action programmes to make the sevennation forum more effective, a meeting source said.

The South Asian Preferential Trade Arrangement was adopted at the seventh SAARC Summit held in Dhaka last

Poverty alleviation, another key issue of the forum dominated the proceedings of the session with the deliberation covering a number of proposed action plans and ways to arrange funds.

Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman, who is the current chairperson of the Council of Ministers, chaired the session which discussed the 22-point agenda to be approved by the meeting today. The date for the eighth

SAARC summit is yet to be decided, the source said, adding "India which will host the summit will let us know the date in appropriate time."

Foreign Ministers of the member countries led the delegations of their respective countries at the meeting which lasted for two hours yesterday.

Kashmir

From page 1 Col 5

sibilities of the parliamentarians of the developing countries, the challenge being faced by them in the changed global order. growing expectation of people from the MPs, and the challenge of religious and regional differences.

Being an Opposition MP has become very difficult now-adays, Shudhangshu Shekhar Halder MP of the the Awami League said while talking on the dilemma of the public representatives, particularly those in the Opposition.

Pramond Mahajan of India agreed and said the legislative activities suffer when the MPs are desired by the people to act more like an agent than a law maker.

"How can you work when you are asked to work like an agent - to get gas connection, to get telephone lines for the people," he said.

Matia Chowdhury MP of the Awami League said the Opposition MPs were expected to work miracles.

Sahana Pradhan MP of Nepal pointed out that in the least developed countries where basic amenities of the people are seldom fulfilled, the expectation of the people from the legislators go high.

Makhdum Shahabuddin of Pakistan in his comment pointed out human rights violations in Jammu and Kashmir, and Bosnia and called for an immediate international intervention to start a democratic process.

The mention of Jammu and Kashmir ignited a prolonged lively and at times acrimonious debate between the Indian and the Pakistan delegates to the conference.

On the session on Free and Fair Election, Barrister Syed Ishtiaque Ahmed gave a background of the recent political changes and democratic elections in the region.

Fali S Nariman of the International Commission of Jurists. while saying free and fair polls were essential for democracy, pointed out that they do not guarantee good governance. Barrister Mainul Hosein,

Chairman of the Board of Editors of the Daily Ittefaq and the New Nation, spoke on the role of the media in maintaining an essential link between the political candidates and the people who

The conference meets again

vote. today.

SAARC must have courage

From page 1 Col 5

tion was given institutional base including a permanent Secretariat. A considerable short term activities encouraged interaction at all levels. These also paved the way for the people-to-people contact. Communication and information gaps were narrowed."

Partial view of the SAARC Council of Ministers' meeting at the International Conference Centre in the city yesterday.

The Prime Minister put forward a proposal for holding a meeting of South Asian Finance Ministers to review the experiences of the open market econ-

Khaleda Zia urged the Council of Ministers to ensure implementation of the many decisions that emerged from the Seventh Summit.

She pointed out that the centre-piece of the Seventh Summit was the consensus on poverty alleviation and referred to the three goals recommended by the Independent Commission in its report.

On SAPTA she expressed the hope that negotiations on a product by product basis will be fruitful. She underlined the need for equitable sharing of the benefits of trade expansion among the member states.

The Prime Minister and SAARC Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia was flanked on the dais by Foreign Minister Mestafizur Rahman and the outgoing SAARC Secretary General IH Zaki.

The Conference Centre was tastefully decorated with the flags of the member states, and also flowers and designs.

The inaugural session was attended by all the visiting Foreign Ministers and also addressed by them. Ministers, a number of MPs from the treasury and opposition benches diplomats, editors and journalists were present at the inaugural session.

Foreign Minister Mostafizur Rahman, the current chairman of the SAARC Council of Ministers, also delivered his speech as host Foreign Minister.

Tribute to Zia

Shri Lankan Foreign Minister AC Shahul Hameed in his vote of thanks on the Prime Minister's speech paid a touching tribute to late President Ziaur Rahman in envisaging the setting up of SAARC.

* Hameed said he was privileged to be associated with SAARC from its formative stage and on several occasions came close to the late President.

He said that he had the opportunity of opening the first Foreign Secretaries Conference in Colombo in 1981. "Had Zia not died, the Association could have opened in 1982 instead of 1995", he said.

He recalled the memory of meeting the late President two nights before his tragic assassination and said: "During our two hours meeting, the lights in the residence went out thrice. There was no stand by generator and President called his aide for a candle which he lit him-

The Shri Lankan Minister said he was impressed by Zia's simple and austere life and his deep feeling for the poor.

Shahul looking at Prime Minister Khaleda Zia said. "Destiny has thrust upon you to complete the unfulfilled goals, and one of that is the progress on the SAARC."

Bangladesh FM

UNB adds: Welcoming the guests, Mostafizur Rahman, the current chairman of the SAARC Council of Ministers, said "The post cold war era has confronted the member nations with many new challenges. Whole regions and entire continents are getting together and forming trading blocks. They are raising walls of commercial and non-commercial tariff against outside partners and products."

He pointed to two aspects relevant to poverty alleviation which need to be considered. The first — the critical nexus between the success of each country's programmes and the external factors affecting growth. The second - follow-up action once national pro-poor plans have been prepared.

Mostafiz referred to the proposal of Prime Minister Begum Zia of an advisory mechanism for following up national propoor plans.

The Foreign Minister em phasised the need for implementation of the Integrated Programme of Action (IPA) which he said is the central to the entire process of SAARC ac-

He said the activities must go on schedule, and participation must be at appropriate levels. Decisions must be acted upon promptly, he added.

Indian FM

In his remarks at the inaugural session. Indian External Affair Minister Dinesh Singh expressed concern at the growing terrorism and violence causing economic difficulties in many countries.

"Many of our countries are suffering from economic difficulties because of violence ... we must stop terrorism", he said and called for the SAARC to take firm stand against terrorism "so that we can have peace"

India itself is suffering from severe communal violence triggered by the demolition of historic Babri Mosque by Hindu zealots. There is also violence in Kashmir.

Singh further said, "We must maintain unity ... SAARC has given us a great opportunity in South Asia" which should be freed from "the danger of violence and fundamentalism"

The Indian Foreign Minister advocated for early implementation of SAPTA (South Asian Preferential Trade Arrangement) the foundation of which was laid at the last SAARC summit in Dhaka.

Pakistan FM

Speaking at the inaugural session, Pakistani Foreign Minister Sardar Aseff Ahmad Ali laid emphasis on economic cooperation among the member countries.

"Now that we have embarked on the second round of SAARC cooperation, it is vital that cooperation in the economic and trade sectors should be given due priority."

"As regional economic cooperation assumes greater importance in the emerging world order, we must address ourselves to establishing economic linkages and targets for the benefit of our people," Sardar Aseff added.

He said the emerging cooperation between SAARC and Japan and the prospects of interaction with EEC, ASEAN and ADB are welcomed developments which need to be expanded further.

The Pakistani Minister termed SAPTA as an important step in the promotion of trade within the region. "We must proceed, step by step, in achieving the objectives set forth in the agreement", he added.

Sharing concerns expressed by the Indian Foreign Minister on growing terrorism and violence, Sardar Aseff said "the process of generating violence must be removed".

Maldives FM

Foreign Minister of Maldives Fathulla Jameel said political and economic realities of today demand that SAARC devote to the principal task of development of the region.

"It is time for us move beyond simply conflict prevention and direct our resources in more positive directions in consolidating and strengthening our cooperation", Jameel said. Jameel who comes from the

tiny island state of Maldives with a population of about 2 lakh said "no country, however, small or far away, can today be immune from the effects of events that occur in the international arena, be it political or economic".

Bhutan FM

The Foreign Minister of Bhutan Lyonpo Dawatsering said economic cooperation supported by trade liberalisation is the vital link in achieving the main objective of SAARC-provide a better quality of life for

- Star photo

the people. He said SAARC has been constrained in its efforts towards more meaningful regional cooperation because of its inherent limitations in generating adequate resources from within the region.

"We are aware that several international organisations and developed countries have shown an interest to cooperate with our Association. It is important for us to continue to respond positively to such overtures so as to create mutually beneficial relationships", Dawa Tsering added.

Nepal FM

The State Minister in charge of foreign affairs of Nepal, Mahesh Acharya said poverty remained the biggest challenge to South Asia. Follow up actions on eradication of poverty demand consistent support and devotion.

Pledging total and sincere commitments to the SAARC, he said Nepal shall continue to do its utmost to make the organisation blossom into a vibrant and effective regional association. He said, "the crucial areas of cooperation need to be consolidated and enhanced. We must preserve to make our association truly meaningful and contributory to the socio-economic advancement of our "people"

Shri Lanka FM

Foreign Minister of Shri Lanka A C Shahul Hameed in his statement called for removing the mistrust among the member countries that stood on way for a meaningful coopera

"We must eradicate the clouds of doubt hovering on us... we must shun historical differences" to live upto the expectation of the people and achieving a better quality of life for them.

Hameed strongly advocated trade liberalisation among the member countries. He said his country will extend fullest cooperation in making SAPTA operational by the end of 1995.

JCD JU unit leader held

By JU Correspondent SAVAR, Dec 4: Police today arrested Sahidul Islam Litu. Vice President of the Jativatabadi Chhatra Dal, Jahan-

girnagar University Unit in the

afternoon. Litu, a final year student of the Government and Politics Department of the University is one of the 21 students accused in the violent incident on the campus on July 29 this year.

Lawyer killed

From Page 1 Col 8

Later, a clash here between the Jamaat activists and Awami League supporters left 30 injured, four seriously. The seriously injured were admitted to Sadar Hospital.

Officials and witnesses said the Jamaat activists gheraoed the TNO office demanding his removal and assaulted him.

They disconnected its tele-

phone lines at one stage and also allegedly beat the TNO. The body was sent to Chakoria for burial after postmortem at the Sadar Hospital

here. Enamul Haq, a Jamaat MP elected from Chakoria, however, said Belaluddin was killed in police firing during a "peaceful" procession of Jamaatis.

Police arrested 19 Jamaat men, including a Madrasha Principal, Maulana Nuruddoza. Lawyers brought out a

protest procession when the body of their colleague reached the district Bar. Awami League and Chhatra League also brought out pro-

cession condemning the killing of the lawyer. District Jamaat activists also brought out procession in the town. They attacked the council meeting of the district Jatiyatabadi Juba Dal being held at

the Public Library Hall here.

The Midnight File

China to extend credit to Pakistan for defence purchase

ISLAMABAD, Dec 4: China will extend credit to Pakistan for defence purchases under an agreement the two sides signed today, a Pakistani government statement said. It did not specify the amount of the credit or the type of the weapons Pakistan will buy, but said the accord would "further promote mutual cooperation and strengthen the bonds of friendship between the armed forces of the two countries," reports Reuter.

Fresh violence in Sarajevo

SARAJEVO, Dec 4: Tension was high in the Bosnian capital today after fresh violence following the breakdown of the latest peace talks in Geneva, a UN official said. UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) Commander Idesbald Van Biesebroeck said the southern City of Mostar was also tense, but much of the rest of Bosnia-Herzegovina was relatively calm, reports AFP.

Dinesh, Assef talk Kashmir

The Foreign Ministers of India and Pakistan, now in Dhaka, yesterday discussed the problem in Kashmir where more than 7,000 people were killed in their fight for independence during the last two years, re-

"Let us hope so", Indian Foreign Minister Dinesh Singh told reporters who wanted to know the prospect of early solution to the Kashmir problem. Singh and Pakistan Foreign

ports UNB.

Minister Sardar Assef Ahmad Ali had bilateral talks at their hotel in the evening. The Indian Foreign Minister said he had talks, happily, with

his Pakistani counterpart. This is the first meeting at the Foreign Minister level between Pakistan and India since Benazir Bhutto came to power in Pakistan through elections in October.

Democracy Day programmes By Staff Correspondent

The major political parties have drawn up elaborate programmes to mark the third anniversary of the downfall of the Ershad regime tomorrow.

The programmes include processions, public rally and discussions On this day in 1990 former President H M Ershad stepped

down in the face of a mass up-

surge and handed over power to a caretaker government. The political parties have been observing the day since then as Democracy Day. The ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) will hold a meeting at Ganatantra Square

son and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia is expected to address the rally. The opposition Awami League will also organise a meeting on the occasion at the Bangabandhu Avenue on Mon-

near Gulistan. Party chairper-

day. Party chief Sheikh Hasina will address the rally. A number of smaller political parties have also planned rallies and processions to observe the

Suhrawardy From Page 1 Col 8 Sheikh Hasina issued messages calling upon all concerned to show respect to the late leader by putting democracy on a firm footing through a

concerted effort. President Biswas in his message called for taking a vow by the government and the Opposition to work unitedly for giving democracy an institutional shape. Suhrawardy is our source of inspiration in building a democratic social

system," the message said. Prime Minister Khaleda Zia said the best way to show respect to Suhrawardy was to spread politics of tolerance and democratic values and participate in the nation-building activities unitedly.

In her message, the Opposition Leader Sheikh Hasina said. We can pay respect to the great leader only by devoting ourselves to the struggle for establishing democracy and rule of law'.

Awami League's programmes of the day include hoisting black flag and keeping the party flag half-mast at the central and all branch offices across the country at 6 am, placing wreaths, offering fateha and munajat at Suhrawardy's mazar at 8 am and holding a discussion at the AL Central Office at 4 in the afternoon.

Shaheed Suhrawardy Smriti Sangsad will place wreaths and organise a Quran khwani at the Mazar of the great leader at 8 in the morning. It will hold a discussion at the National Museum auditorium at 4 pm. Shaheed Suhrawardy Jatiya

Smriti Parishad and Bangladesh Jatiya Baktritya Gobeshwana Kendra will jointly place wreaths at the mazar and hold milad mahfil there at 8:30 am and jointly arrange a discussion at the mazar premises at 9 am.

Jatiya Party has decided to hold a discussion on Suhrawardy at the party's acting chief Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury's Gulshan residence at 3 pm today.

Bangladesh Janata Dal's discussion meeting will take place at 5:30 pm at the party's Asad Gate central office. Party leaders will also place wreaths at Suhrawardy's mazar in the morning.

Golam Azam protests Clinton-Rushdie

meet

Jamaat-e-Islami leader Golam Azam yesterday protested the recent meeting between the US President Bill Clinton and writer Salman Rushdie, saying that Bill Clinton had hurt the sentiment of the world Muslims reports UNB.

In a statement, Azam said Clinton had produced a lame excuse in giving an explanation about his discussion with Rushdie with the argument of freedom of speech.

The Jamaat chief said blasphemy laws are in force in almost all western countries including the US and according to those laws undermining the Creator, religion and religious books is a punishable offence. Rushdie had resorted blasphemy against the holy Quran and Hazrat Muhammad (SM).

Azam added Taiwan

From Page 1 Col 3 not be established at the desired level, he added

Describing the investment opportunities in Bangladesh for the foreign investors as brighter than before, Waziullah said the present industrial policy which is considered as the most liberal in the region, has created an environment providing a stable base for privatisation moves taken by the government. The policy changes providing for a growing role for the private sector have been logically been extended to foreign private in-

vestments, he pointed out. Inviting the Taiwanese entrepreneurs to invest in Bangladesh, the DCCI President said that the petro-chemical complexes, fertilizer, textiles, leather processing, canning and preservation of deep sea fish, fruit processing and canning can be the potential areas for joint ventures and other forms of

investment and collaboration. Among others, the DCCI vice president Jamal Haider, former DCCI president M Yunus, Akbar Ali MP and other directors and

AL: Modern army

were present on the occasion.

From Page 1 Col 7 Awami League. It is the Awami League which always stood for the cause of Bangalee army officers and jawans during the

days of Pakistan, she said.

The then Pakistani regimes did not want to recruit Bangalees in armed forces on the pretext that Bangalee boys are short and coward, Hasina said But Bangabandhu, in his historic six-point, had raised the demand for the recruitment of soldiers from Banglaees and formation of a separate army for

Bangabandhu took steps to build up a modern and disciplined armed forces in the country. In this context, she recalled the efforts made by Bangabandhu for raising a new modern army equipped with sophisticated weapons. She alleged that after 1975

Hasina said that after the

independence of Bangladesh,

a planned propaganda was being dished out among the Army about the Awami League and said had the Awami League never wanted army, why the sons of Bangabandhu joined it.

forces, Hasina claimed that not a single soldier was killed during the Bangabandhu's gov-Those who joined AL include Lt Col (Rtd) Bahar, Capt (Rtd) Kabir, Ambia Sikdar, widow of Flight Sgt. Daliluddin, Subedar

On criticism that the Awami

League did nothing for armed

Capt (Hon) MA Karim, Warrant Officer (Rtd) Ismail Bhuiyan, Based Bhuiyan, Subedar Mujib, SLS Patwari and Subedar Iskandar. 4 arrested

Majir Ali, Capt (Hon) MA Haq.

from DU Hall By DU Correspondent

A special squad of the Detective Branch (DB) police during an hour-long raid in the Jagannath Hall of the Dhaka University early yesterday, arrested four youngmen including two outsiders.

Among the arrested persons Hasanuzzaman alias Rupon is a final year M. Com. student of the Department of Marketing. Niloy Bhadra is a student of Diploma in Education while the two others Shailendra Nath Biswas, 27, and Bijon Kanti Biswas, 30, are outsiders.