

Protect independence, Samad Azad asks FF's

Awami League leader Abdus Samad Azad yesterday asked the freedom fighters to resist the anti-liberation forces to protect the national independence and sovereignty, reports UNB.

The defeated forces of 1971 are active to destroy the achievement of the War of Independence," he told a grand rally of Central Command Council of the Muktiyoddha Sangsad at Shapla Square, Motijheel in the afternoon.

The Awami League President member accused the government of patronising the Jamaat-Shibir forces and demanded implementation of the 4-point accord between the government and the opposition including the trial of Golam Azam.

Demanding repeal of the Indemnity Ordinance, he said, "two contradictory laws cannot exist in a country."

Addressing the meeting, freedom fighter Abdul Kader Siddiqui urged the freedom fighters to get prepared to eliminate the anti-liberation elements.

He regretted that the freedom fighters were now being oppressed while the defeated forces of 1971 were well established in the society.

Referring to the assassination of Sheikh Mujib, he said the government of Bangladesh might have done some wrongs, but the freedom fighters should have protested

the killing of the independence leader.

Kader Siddiqui lamented that "some of us even feel ashamed to chant Joy Bangla, the slogan which inspired us throughout the Liberation War" and called for sinking petty differences to restore the spirit of the War of Independence.

Gano Forum leader Dr Kamal Hossain said the killers of 1971 and 1975 were now united and urged the people to fight out the Jamaat-Shibir clique and their associates politically.

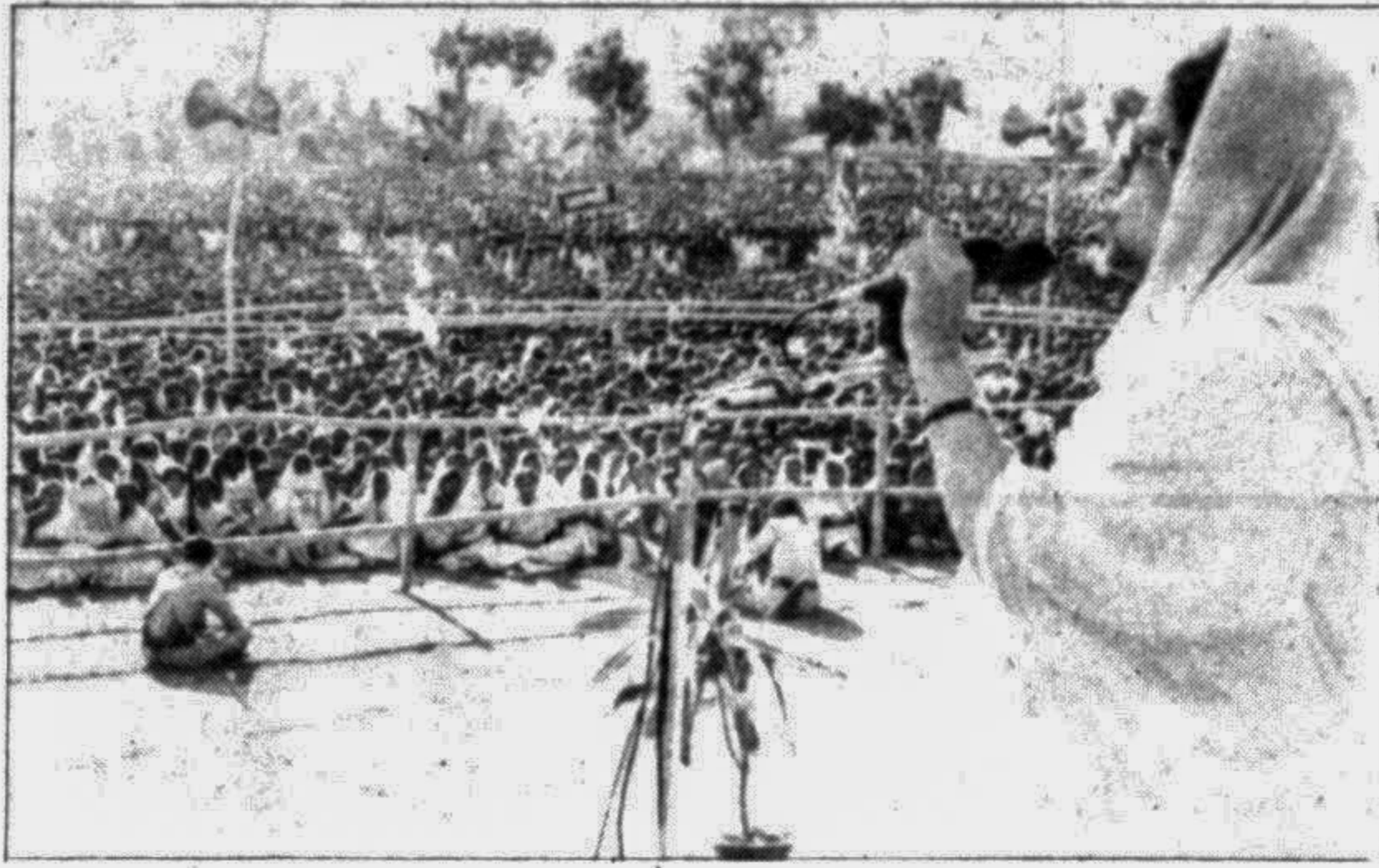
The conference in a declaration demanded execution of the verdict of Gano-Adalat against Golam Azam and inclusion of the history of the War of Independence in the curriculum of school, college and university.

It called upon the parliament members to make a provision in the Constitution recognising the freedom fighters as "Pride Force."

The declaration also called for implementing the joint declaration of the three alliances.

Presided over by Ahad Chowdhury, the conference was also addressed by Commander of Sector-8 Lt. Col (ret'd) Abu Osman Chowdhury, Kazi Aref Ahmed, Mohammad Afzal, Ismail Hossain Bengal, Hambe Rabbi and Monirul Huq Moni.

The conference was followed by a cultural function.



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia addressing a public meeting at the Kazipur thana ground in Sirajganj yesterday. — PID photo

Five burnt alive in Khulna

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Dec 9: Five members of a family including four children were charred to death in a fire that engulfed their hut at Khalishpur in the early hours of today.

The fire, said to have originated from a mosquito coil roasted the five in their sleep. Five other inmates of the family also received burn injuries in the incident.

Those who died in the fire are Rezia 35, Shammi 10, Shoma 6, Hafiz 4 and Hasib 2. Aziz 42, Anis 28, Tahura 3, Arzu 3 and Zahid a 3-month old baby received burn injuries.

Resist vested quarters

From Page 1 Col 8

Begum Zia said during the autocratic regime farmers had to face immense difficulties and they were almost destroyed. The BNP government has given priority to the improvement of the lot of the farming community and as a result the nation had reaped bumper crops during the last seasons, she said. Without naming the Awami League, Begum Zia criticised the party for launching a movement to save the farmers now and said it had never spoken in favour of the country's farmers during the autocratic period.

The Prime Minister said, "We will make our programmes successful in the sectors of education, women's development, mass literacy and industrialisation."

Dwelling on the local problems, Begum Zia said her government would construct groynes and dams in the area to protect it from river erosion, which is an acute problem in Sirajganj district.

Begum Zia said her government would take up measures to amend the existing laws with regard to land affected by river erosion.

The Prime Minister assured the local people of providing extensive electrification in the area under the rural electrification programme.

The public meetings were

addressed, among others, by LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdus Salam Talukdar, State Minister for Land Kabir Hossain, State Minister for Establishment Aminul Huq, State Minister for Social Welfare Fazlur Rahman and local members of Parliament.

Chhatra Dal leader, Rabiul Hasan, whose right leg was chopped off by rival student front members in November last year, also spoke on the occasion. He called upon all to unite against the elements who patronise terrorism in the area and strengthen the hands of the present democratic government.

The young man came to the meeting on an artificial leg with the help of his friends.

Earlier, the Prime Minister, on her arrival in the district, visited a semi-formal primary school and talked to its students.

Begum Zia also visited a widow named Shahara Khatun who set up a poultry farm on her own initiative. The Prime Minister advised her to develop it further and instructed the local officials to extend necessary cooperation to her.

She also offered Fateha at the grave of Shaheed Naziruddin Jehad at Ullapara. Jehad, a student of Ullapara Government College and JCD president of the college unit, was gunned down in Dhaka by the hired goons of Ershad on October 10, 1990.

Seminar on narcotics control Laundering of drug money threat to economies

By Staff Correspondent

Speakers at the concluding ceremony of a seminar on Narcotics Control underlined regional cooperation to curtail laundering of drug money which they identified as a threat to the economies of the countries.

The fortnight long seminar, organised by the French Embassy in collaboration with the Department of Narcotics Control, was attended by 23 government officials from Home Ministry, Bangladesh Rifles, Customs and Excise, and the VAT Collectorate and the department concerned.

Two experts from the French Narcotics Bureau conducted the seminar addressing the narcotics and psychotropic substances, techniques of illicit drug detection and identification, search and surveillance, treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts.

The French Ambassador to Bangladesh J. Michel Lacombe attended the closing session as the special guest with the Director General of Narcotics Control Syed Marghub Murshed was the special guest.

In his speech, the French Ambassador pointed out that the French government has installed International Department for Technical Police Cooperation (IDTPC) for the first time in Asia to help formation of law enforcing agencies in the democratically elected countries.

The IDTPC was established in the French Embassy in Dhaka only in April last which was instrumental behind the seminar.

The Ambassador hoped that the trained men would apply their knowledge in their professional sphere to combat drug abuse and its trafficking.

Special guest on the occasion, the DG of the Narcotics Control remarked that the seminar would strengthen the French-Bangladesh relations which he termed age old and friendly.

The DG sought concerted efforts of the local and non local agencies to combat the menacing effects of drugs.

The wrapping up session was also addressed by the Director of CESTI Dr Rifat Rashid, Chief of SCTIP in Bangladesh J. M. Capet, Richard Martinez.

Later, certificates were distributed among the trainees.

Diarrhoea claims 20 in Bogra

From Staff Correspondent

BOGRA, Dec 9: Diarrhoea claimed at least 20 lives and affected 2,000 others in six thanas of the district during the last week, officials said here today (Thursday), reports UNB.

The water borne disease had broken out in an epidemic form in Dhunat, Dupchanchia, Shibganj, Kahaloo, Gabtoli and Sariakandi thanas, the officials added.

Confirming the death, the District Civil Surgeon said that steps are being taken to halt further spread of the disease.

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Human rights

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deep-rooted awareness of human rights, and fundamental freedoms, born of the experiences accompanying the birth of the nation.

This was again demonstrated in their struggle and heroic sacrifices for the restoration of democracy by removing a deeply entrenched autocratic regime," the Prime Minister added.

Begum Zia expressed her satisfaction over the Vienna Declaration adopted in June this year at the end of the World Conference on Human Rights.

Meanwhile, several socio-cultural organisations have planned elaborate programmes to mark the 45th World Human Rights Day.

At the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC), in the capital, a symposium will be held by the UN Association of Bangladesh with National Professor Dr M Innaas Ali in the chair.

Prof Salahuddin Ahmed, Dr Muzaffar Ahmed, Prof Neelima Ibrahim, Dr Abdullah Al-Muti Sharfuddin and Advocate Syed Ahmed will take part in the symposium.

Amnesty International, Bangladesh will hold a discussion on 'Political Murder and Abduction - Violation of Human Rights' at the National Press Club auditorium this afternoon.

Proshika will stage a street drama and bring out a rally from the National Museum gate.

The Shammilito Viswa Manabdhikar Dibash Ujjapan Parishad' 1993 will bring out a rally from the Shaheed Minar in the morning.

The Bangladesh Society for the Enforcement of Human Rights (BSEHR) will hold a national seminar in the afternoon at the National Museum with former Chief Justice Kemaluddin Hossain in the chair.

The Information Minister, Barrister Nazmul Huda, will be present on the occasion as chief guest. Deputy leader of the Opposition in Parliament Abdus Samad Azad, president of the Gano Forum Dr Kamal Hossain, Editor of the Daily Star, Mahfuz Anam, and the recently released Falu Mia, who remained behind bars for 21 years without trial, will attend the seminar as special guests.

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Sino-British talks on HK fails

From Page 1 Col 4

BEIJING, Dec 9: The 17th round of the Sino-British talks on the arrangements for the 1994-1995 elections in Hong Kong failed at last to reach any agreement due to the obstacles raised by the British side, reports Xinhua.

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Jamuna bridge

From Page 1 Col 4

fore, during and after appraisal of the project by the World Bank.

The Japanese, although not at the government level, fielded a fact-finding mission simultaneously with a joint ADB-World Bank appraisal mission last September. The fielding of yet another Mission and the questions that it had asked could be indicative of Japan's intention of dissociating herself from the manner in which other co-financiers are processing the project.

With support from the World Bank the government has already called and evaluated bids for the various components of the projects. Japanese firms will not get contracts of any significant value if the contracts are awarded on the basis of this bidding exercise conducted under the World Bank's advice.

The recently completed negotiation between Bangladesh and the World Bank will continue to remain in a limbo. Without the Japanese the financing package is not in place and without the financing package the World Bank Board cannot be requested to approve the Bank's 200 million dollar credit. And, if there is no official approval of this credit by mid-January, the government will not be able to make contract awards before expiry of bid validity. There is very little hope now that this deadline will be met.

Hasina

From Page 1 Col 7

government has betrayed with its own promises made during the last parliamentary election and also ignored the Joint Declaration of the three alliances.

Radio and television, run by the taxes of the common people, are being used by the ruling party for its political purposes, the Awami League chief said. "The state-owned media has been made into a personal property of the BNP."

Hasina demanded scrapping of the Indemnity Ordinance "to restore rule of law and justice", granting autonomy to radio and television and release of her party leaders and workers arrested under the Anti-Terrorism Law.

Earlier, Hasina came to Khulna from Tungipara this morning. On her way to Khulna, the Awami League President addressed wayside meetings at Monglarhat, Fakirhat and Rupsa. She laid the foundation stone of a girls' high school at Rupsa.

Hasina will address a public meeting at Khalishpur tomorrow (Friday) afternoon.

SSC exam forms submission date extended

From Page 1 Col 7

Authorities have refixed the last date for submission of forms for Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examination 1994 on January 8 instead of December 30, reports UNB.

The last date for submission of forms with late fee of Tk 40 for each examinee has also been refixed on January 22 instead of January 15.

Rokeya remembered

By Staff Correspondent

A colourful procession was brought out from the Rokeya Hall of the Dhaka University to mark the 60th death anniversary of Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain.

The procession was led by Vice Chancellor Prof Emajuddin Ahmed.

Organised by the Sammlita Ujjapan Committee and conducted by its convener Prof Mohammad Harun-ur-Rashid, Director General of the Bangla Academy, it ended at the Bangla Academy premises where a rally was held.

The rally was addressed by Emajuddin Ahmed, Harunur Rashid, Prof Wakil Ahmed and General Secretary of the Bangladesh Mahila Parishad Ayesha Khanam. At noon a three-day exhibition on Begum Rokeya was inaugurated.

A discussion meeting was held at the academy *batamul* on the contributions of Begum Rokeya to the advancement of women in this part of the world.

Presided by Prof Mohammad Moniruzzaman, the discussions were participated by Prof Ahmed Kabir, Prof Jahan Ara, Prof Mahmuda Islam, Begum Asma Abbasi, Nasrin Jahan and Shahnaz Munni.

Another discussion meeting on 'Begum Rokeya and Women's Movement' will be held today at 4 pm at the Bangla Academy premises.

UNB adds: The government is planning to introduce a Begum Rokeya award for women for their significant contribution in women's development.

State Minister for Women's Affairs Sarwari Rahman dis-

closed this during a discussion meeting organised on the occasion of the Begum Rokeya Day at the Planning and Development Academy in Dhaka yesterday.

She said launching of a women's development project at Palraband in Rangpur district, the birthplace of Begum Rokeya, is also under consideration.

Organised by the Women's Affairs Ministry, the discussion was also addressed by Prof Suraiya Hakim, Zubaida Gulshan Ara, Mahmuda Islam, Dr Jahanara Begum, Meherunnesa Islam, Dr Khaleda Salauddin, Saima Shahid Chowdhury and Provost of the Rokeya Hall of the Dhaka University Z N Tahmid.

Selima Rahman, MP presented a key-note paper while Secretary of the Women's Affairs Ministry Muhammad Enamul Huq presided over the meeting.

State Minister for Cultural Affairs Prof Jahanara-Begum said, a 'Rokeya Complex' will be set up at village Palraband in Rangpur, the birthplace of Begum Rokeya.

The State Minister disclosed this while inaugurating the two-day 'Begum Rokeya Day' programmes in Rangpur yesterday morning.

Discussion meetings, cultural functions, essay and children's painting competition, rallies and milad mahfils have been arranged to mark the day.

The State Minister said, a public library will be set up and cultural activities would be held at the proposed complex.



A silent procession was brought out in the city in observance of Begum Rokeya Day - the birth and death anniversaries of the pioneering champion for women's education - yesterday. — Star photo

Mahathir assures Oli of increasing trade volume

Malaysia will encourage its companies to participate in a bigger way for the development of Bangladesh, reports UNB.

Malaysian Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohammad told this to Communications Minister Oli Ahmed on Wednesday when they met at the resort city of Lankawi. The Bangladesh minister had called on the Malaysian leader at his camp office.

Oli is now on a four-day official visit to Malaysia, attending the International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition.

According to a message received here yesterday, the Malaysian PM expressed interest in increasing the volume of bilateral trade between the two countries and assured all possible cooperation in this regard.

Dr Mahathir, referring to his meeting with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia during the last UN General Assembly in New York and Commonwealth Summit in Cyprus, expressed satisfaction over the growing bilateral relations.

Prokrichi

From Page 1 Col 7

the Krishibeed Institution of the agriculturists.

There are 20,000 engineers in the country of whom 10,000 are registered with the IEB.

The total number of agriculturists is 12,000 of which 8,000 belong to the Krishibeed Institution.

According to the BMA, there are 20,000 doctors in the country, half of them BMA members.

As many as 8,300 doctors are employed by the government, BMA officials said.

Explaining the objectives of their agitation, Secretary General of the Action Council, MA Hena said the struggle did not aim at "paralysing the administration." The aim, he said, was to register the frustration of the country's professionals.

He said, draft resignation letter would be submitted by the professionals to the Prokrichi after signing.

Dr Majed said they expected that the Jatiya Sangsad during its next session would pass the bills relating to the separation of the judiciary from the administration and the Zilla Parishad.

The Rules of Business, which he said were essential for institutionalising democracy, were yet to be formulated, he added.

The leaders of the professionals called upon the government and the Election Commission to exclude members of the BCS (Administration) cadre from election duties because, they alleged, the administrative officials were largely responsible for rigging.

The Prokrichi leaders also called for arranging the Victory Day functions in the districts with the public representatives, taking part as the chief guest in place of the Deputy Commissioners.

Prokrichi central leaders Dr Jamilur Reza Chowdhury, Dr Gul Hossain, Engineer MAK Azad, Engineer Ruhul Matin, Dr Jahid Iqbal, Engineer Akhter Hossain, Monirul Islam, Engineer Nurul Huda and Dr Mushtaq Hossain were also present at the press conference.

The Midnight File

Gorbachev to vote for new constitution

LONDON, Dec 9: Former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev said on Wednesday he would vote in favour of a new Russian constitution proposed by his arch rival Boris Yeltsin. Gorbachev told a news conference in London, "I will vote for the constitution, on the understanding that this is a kind of public opinion survey and it is for parliament to complete the work." Russians vote on President Yeltsin's constitution and a new parliament on Sunday, reports Reuter.

Coup bid in Mali

BAMAKO, Mali, Dec 9: Mali's democratic government foiled a coup and assassination plot by officers loyal to the ousted military dictator, a government minister said Thursday. It was ominous development in the West African country considered a showcase for Africa's struggling democracy movement. Communications Minister Cheickna Kamissoko said loyal troops arrested five officers who planned to stage the coup on Dec 8. All had contacts with detained Lt Col Oumar Diabio, former aide-camp to the ousted military dictator Gen Moussa Traore, he said, reports AP.

Clinton-Assad summit in Geneva next month

DAMASCUS, Dec 9: The US and Syrian Presidents will hold a Geneva summit next month and Middle East peace talks are to resume by February, US Secretary of State Warren Christopher announced here today, reports AFP.

President Bill Clinton and Hafez Al-Assad have agreed to meet in Geneva in mid-January, he said after talks with the Syrian leader.

The bilateral Arab-Israeli negotiations would re-open in Washington in late January or early February after a break of more than four months, he said.

"President Clinton has met the other heads of government involved in the peace process over the last year, he told a joint press conference with Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq Al-Shara.

Such discussions at the highest level are important to our role as full partner and active intermediary in the Arab-Israeli peace process.

Clinton viewed the meeting as an opportunity to discuss the requirements for reaching a peace agreement between Israel and Syria on the basis of UN resolutions 242 and 338, which call for a land-for-peace settlement.

The summit will help to put in place a vital cornerstone in our efforts to build a comprehensive, just and lasting peace for all the people of the region, Christopher said.

Another report adds: PLO leader Yasser Arafat today signed a cooperation accord with the head of UNESCO for the world body to bid to set up a museum in East Jerusalem to safeguard Palestinian cultural heritage.

Under the terms of the accord, a feasibility study for the project will be carried out in the immediate future, the accord also provides for the establishment of a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) centre in East Jerusalem.

Hajj

From Page 1 Col 8

government will soon formulate this year's Hajj policy, the minister said adding he visited Saudi Arabia on December 1 to sign an accord on Hajj with the Saudi government.

The draft of the Hajj policy would be discussed at a Cabinet meeting for approval, he said.

A six-member committee, headed by the Khatib of Lalbagh Shahi Mosque, Maolana Aminul Islam, had recently made contracts with the owners of 69 houses in Makkah which could accommodate nearly 6,000 pilgrims from Bangladesh.

The Committee chief, Maolana Aminul Islam and members - Dr Mostafizur Rahman of Dhaka University's Arabic Department and Dr Joardar Abdur Rashid, Joint Secretary of the Religious Affairs Ministry also spoke on the occasion.

Replying to a question, Keramat Ali said, the government was sincerely working to extend the best possible facilities to those who would perform the coming Hajj under the government arrangement. There would be no arrangement for carrying the pilgrims by ship, he told another questioner.

Addressing the press conference, Maolana Aminul Islam said, the houses contracted for the pilgrims, were within 800 metres of the Ka'aba Sharif and rents were quite reasonable. Until Wednesday, he said, the house rent committee received the documents of 44, out of 69 houses, for which advances were paid during the committee's visit to Makkah. The representatives of the Saudi government were party to the agreement signed in this regard, he said.

Dr Mostafizur Rahman said the authorities would realise rent from the pilgrims on the basis of choice of their houses.

Murtaza's men

From Page 1 Col 3

Ms Bhutto also opposed Zia's dictatorial rule, but her government has declined to drop the charges against her brother.

In a separate development Thursday evening, scores of wooden shacks in a Karachi squatter settlement were destroyed by fire, leaving two residents dead and hundreds homeless, officials said.

It was not immediately clear what caused the fire. The huge squatter community is made up of immigrants from Bangladesh, many of them living illegally in Pakistan. Pakistani residents in the area have long complained that the squatter settlement should be removed.

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