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BNP may not attend FBCCI-arranged meet

Star Report

The ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) is unlikely to attend any meeting with the Opposition tomorrow at the office of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI). BNP sources hinted yesterday.

"We are not ruining business by calling hartals frequently. The business community should tell them (opposition parties) not to go for frequent hartals," a senior minister and BNP leader told The Daily Star.

He also said "We are aware of the problems of the business community and appealing to the Opposition to shun the type of agitation which hampers the economic activities."

The minister, who attended the meeting of the Cabinet sub-committee on special affairs last night, said "The FBCCI issue was not even discussed by the party or at the meeting."

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia chaired the meeting at her Tejgaon office. It was attended by Communications Minister Oli Ahmed, LGRD Minister Abdus Salam Talukder, Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman, Irrigation Minister M Majid ul Huq and foreign Minister Mostafizur Rahman.

The meeting was adjourned till today.

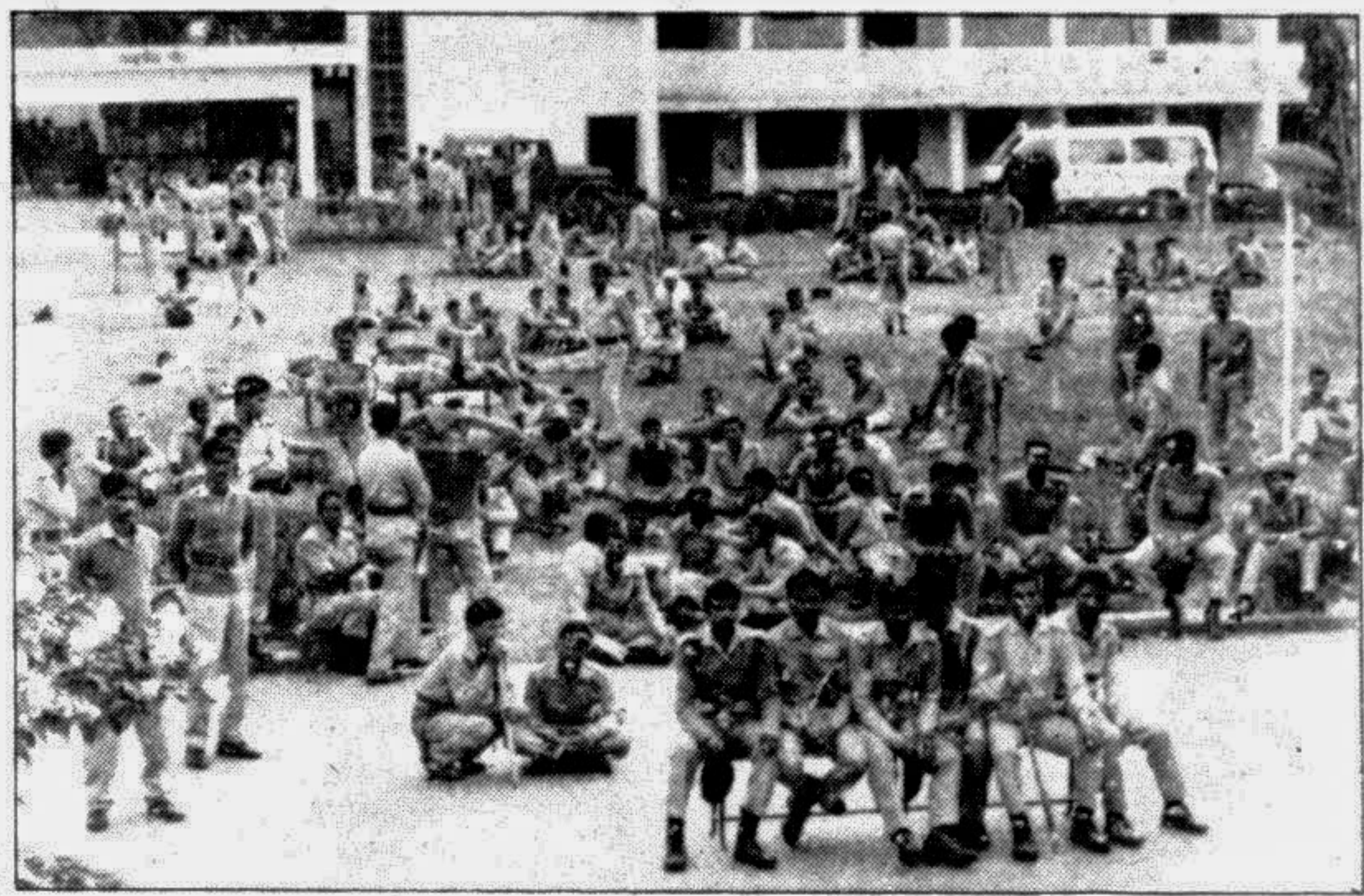
Meeting sources said the Cabinet sub committee discussed the latest situation in Chittagong Hill Tracts.

The Prime Minister held a separate meeting with high officials of the Home Ministry regarding the Ansars issue, the sources said.

The officials were scheduled to visit the Ansars Academy for negotiation following the meeting with the Prime Minister.

When contacted over telephone, BNP Secretary General Abdus Salam Talukder said they did not yet take any decision on attending a meeting called by the FBCCI. He declined to say whether or not they would attend the meeting.

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Ansars constables seen lounging in front of their Headquarters at Khilgaon in the city yesterday afternoon. — Star photo

BMA polls: Majed, Shahid still leading

By Staff Correspondent

Prof M A Majed, presidential candidate, and Dr Qazi Shahidul Alam, candidate for the post of secretary general, were leading in the preliminary results of the 25th election of the Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA) held on December 1.

Results from different polling centres across the country were still pouring in the BMA election result centre till midnight last night. According to unofficial results from 55 out of the 67 centres received by the BMA till writing of this report at 11 pm, incumbent president Prof M A Majed secured 3185 votes while Prof T A Chowdhury bagged 2232 votes. Dr Qazi Shahidul Alam, running for the post of secretary general, received 1850 votes.

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Rockets hit Bosnian presidency bldg

SARAJEVO, Dec 2: Three anti-tank rockets hit the Bosnian presidency building in Sarajevo minutes before UN envoy Yasushi Akashi and peacekeeping commander General Sir Michael Rose arrived for talks today, report Reuter, AP.

There were no casualties but one missile hit the office of parliament president Miro Zalovic, a Serb.

Information of the incident was given by a UN peacekeeping official.

The UN has blamed the Bosnian Serb army besieging Sarajevo for recent attacks on the presidency building.

Akashi, on a mission to end detention of hundreds of peacekeepers and win freedom of movement for UN convoys, hoped to have more success with the Serbs than his boss, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

Boutros-Ghali was rebuffed trying to meet with the Bosnian Serbs on Wednesday, and afterwards said intemperance by the warring sides in Bosnia might lead to the end of the UN mission.

Akashi arrived this morning in Sarajevo for meetings with Bosnian government officials, and was to continue on to the Bosnian Serb headquarters at Pale later in the day. He left the presidency briefly and the missiles hit the building just before he returned for meetings.

On Thursday, Serbs fired two anti-tank missiles at the Interior Ministry, wounding four people.

Akashi's talks with the Serbs would follow a meeting Thursday between Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and the UN commander for Bosnia, Lt Gen Sir Michael Rose.

A UN source said Karadzic promised to try to help, but added that such promises often are empty.

Spokesman Thant Myint-U said Akashi wanted to discuss fighting around the government enclave of Bihac with Karadzic, as well as an end to restrictions on the movement of UN troops.

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FFs clash in city : 7 injured, 3 arrested

By Staff Correspondent

At least seven disabled freedom fighters were injured in a clash between two groups at Muktijoddha Kallan Trust office at Shialbari under Pallabi thana in the city at about 7:00 am yesterday.

The injured freedom fighters are — Idris Ali, 45, Abdulah, 45, Saifuddin, 45, Wazed, 24, Abdul Malek, 45, Hemayet Uddin, 56, and Mohammad Solayman, 45. They were given first aid at a hospital.

Sources said the freedom fighters clashed over the rehabilitation of the disabled freedom fighters. Police arrested three freedom fighters — Solayman, Wazed and Hemayet.

Another report says, one person was injured when a group of extortionists exploded bombs in Chankharpu area yesterday evening.

The victim, Salim, received bomb splinter injuries and was admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Salim alleged that a group of toll collectors demanded money from his brother Mo-

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Int'l Day of Disabled today

The International Day of the Disabled will be observed in the country as elsewhere in the world today with a call for ensuring their rights and equal participation in the society, reports UNB.

President Abdur Rahman Biswas in a message on the eve of the day underscored the need for involving the disabled in the mainstream of national development.

"We are pledge-bound to make it easy for the disabled to enjoy the fruits of development," he said, adding that the disabled people are part and parcel of family and the society.

He urged the voluntary organisations to extend their whole-hearted support alongside the government efforts to ensure a better future for the disabled.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in another message stressed the need for taking a vow to make them self-reliant through united efforts of all.

She urged the affluent persons to come forward in aid of the disabled and the development.

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Ansars continue to agitate

By Farid Ahmed

Ansars sepoys agitating for increased pay and facilities who took control of their headquarters and barracks continued their protests for the second day yesterday.

The trouble broke out at the Shaifpur Ansars Academy in Gazipur district around 11 in the morning Thursday spread to other districts.

Several hundred Ansars personnel who claimed themselves to be from Comilla, Mymensingh, Noakhali, Netrakona, Tangail and other areas took the others at Shaifpur and Dhaka.

The disgruntled Ansars men were seen guarding their headquarters in the city and the Shaifpur Academy brandishing bamboo clubs yesterday.

At both the places, they said they had deposited their arms in the armouries which were under their control.

Now some 14680 Ansars sepoys are working in 37 battalions across the country. Twenty-four battalions are in hill areas while the others are in the plain land.

The Ansars reportedly went on the agitation to realise their seven-point demand which included regularisation of their jobs with a basic salary of Tk 1050, festival bonus, ration and medicare facilities, removal of those who joined the Ansars force after retirement from the army as junior commissioned officers.

An Ansars sepoys now draws Tk 45 a day as remuneration and five taka more for Eid days, according to the sepoys.

Some of them told this correspondent in the city and at Shaifpur that they would not return to work until an assurance from the Prime Minister was received.

At Shaifpur, sepoys claimed that they had got support from 42 officers now staying in the academy compound. They

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Nafis Sadik in city

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) will substantially increase its assistance programme to the countries of SAARC region including Bangladesh with 20 per cent enhancement of national government's contributions to the organisation from next year.

UNFPA executive Director Dr Nafis Sadik told this to BSS on her arrival on a three-day official visit to Dhaka at Zia International Airport here last night.

Dr Sadik said, "I am happy that 'Safe Motherhood' seminar as a follow up of Cairo conference has been organised in Bangladesh." She arrived at the invitation of Bangladesh government to address the seminar on Safe Motherhood.

The UNFPA Executive Director had words of praise for Bangladesh performance in family planning.

Dr Sadik was received at the airport by Additional Secretary in charge of Health and Family Welfare Ministry Fazlur Rahman, UNDP Resident Representative Ms Elmi Watanabe and UNFPA Country Director SK Alok.

During her stay here, Dr Sadik will call on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman and Health and Family Welfare Minister Chowdhury Kamal Hossain Yusuf.

NEWS BRIEFS

- Seminar on "Safe Mother" today**
A two-day national seminar on "Safe Motherhood" begins in the city today. Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia will inaugurate the seminar at the International Conference Centre (ICC) at 10:30 am. Executive Director of UN Population Fund Dr Nafis Sadik will be the special guest at the inaugural function of the seminar organised by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, reports UNB.
- Workshop on monetary cooperation today**
By Staff Correspondent
A two-day workshop on "Payments and Monetary Cooperation in the South Asian Region" begins in the capital today. Organised jointly by the Centre for Policy Dialogue and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, the workshop will be inaugurated by Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman. Some 16 participants from host country Bangladesh, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka are taking part in the workshop to be held at the Sheraton Hotel.
- Young girl burnt to death**
By Staff Correspondent
A 15-year-old girl was burned to death in a fire at a slum at Shialbari area under Pallabi Police Station yesterday morning. The victim, Begum, daughter of one Ashraf Ali was sleeping when the fire originated from their kitchen gutted several houses. Police and local people extinguished the blaze. Police sources said goods worth about Tk ten thousand were destroyed.
- Housewife beaten to death**
SIRAJGANJ, Dec 2: A young housewife of Char Goja village in Ullapara thana died today of injuries allegedly sustained from beating by her husband and in-laws for dowry. Police and medical sources said Hafiza Khatun, 26, wife of Abdur Rashid of Char Goja, was admitted to the Sirajganj General Hospital in critical condition on Thursday night. She died at 9 am today, reports UNB.

Yusufganj most unsuitable for satellite town, study says

By Nazmul Ashraf

The location for Rajuk's satellite town project at Yusufganj has been considered most unsuitable among the five locations where 'large scale dispersed population growth' is being promoted under the Dhaka Metropolitan Development Planning (DMDP).

An evaluation report of the DMDP has put Yusufganj at the bottom of a list of five locations around the capital — Yusufganj, Kaliganj, Savar, Joydevpur and Dhamsona — on the basis of nine criteria.

According to the report, Yusufganj has scored the least, —4, followed by (from the bottom) Kaliganj, —3, Savar, +4, Joydevpur, +4 and Dhamsona, +6.

The first criterion deals with the consistency of the current trends of development while the second, third and the fourth criteria are concerned with land value. The fifth and the sixth are related with the existence of a base for development while the last three are linked with the existing urban economic base, transport links to Dhaka and beyond and ease of infrastructure facilities such as water, gas and electricity which would affect the chances of successful urban growth.

The evaluation firmly divides the three locations of Dhamsona, Joydevpur and Savar from the eastern locations of Kaliganj and Yusufganj. The latter two score on land value criteria but have little to recommend them economically, said the report adding their development would also be contrary to the current trends.

Dhamsona, which compared with Joydevpur and Savar, scored the highest since it is a flood-free zone but has less valuable agricultural land. On economic criteria and concurrence with trend, both Dhamsona and Savar scored the highest, said the report.

The evaluation report in the Structure Plan of the DMDP has been prepared recently to make a recommendation based on a consistent application of the same criteria to each location, though the judgement on each criterion is subjective. No weighing has been given to the criteria, though some are certainly more important than others, sources concerned pointed out.

The DMDP is a government project financed by the UNDP. The satellite town at Yusufganj, officially named 'Purbachal Model Town', is being implemented by Rajuk. Meanwhile, the project has hit a snag because of resistance to acquisition of lands, earmarked for the project, by a section of the land owners.

Adhikary confident of winning vote of confidence

KATHMANDU, Dec 2: Nepal's minority government is confident of winning the vote of confidence when Parliament meets in two weeks, the prime minister said Friday.

The new Communist government is required under the Constitution to win the vote because it did not have the required majority in the 205-member House of Representatives.

"I have talked to all the leaders of other political parties," Prime Minister Manmohan Adhikary said. "And they have assured us that they will cooperate." Adhikary needs at least 103 votes.

The main opposition Nepali Congress (NC) also said it will ensure that the government does not fall immediately.

AFP adds: The NC today unanimously elected Sher Bahadur Deuba as its parliamentary leader after being toppled from power in polls two weeks ago, state-run radio announced.

Seven other NC members of Parliament initially contested the position, including former Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala and NC President Krishna Prasad Bhattarai, but all

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New mills to recycle waste papers likely

By Sharier Khan

Two private firms of Bangladesh and Germany will jointly set up an export-oriented 'multiple paper mills' using waste papers in Chudanga.

The Kamola-Yousuf Paper Mills Ltd will produce radio bond, special, writing, graphic, screen, carbon, duplex and craft papers and newsprint. Managing Director of the Mills M Sanowar Hossain told The Daily Star yesterday.

The Board of Investment (BOI) provided a licence for the Tk 33 crore paper mill project on November 14. An agreement between Phoenix Group, Germany and Kamola-Yousuf Ltd, Bangladesh, was signed on November 7. The share of equity between the two companies is 50:50.

The mills, to be set up in Munshiganj area under Alamdaha thana of Chudanga district, will produce 85 tons of paper per day or 25,000 tons annually worth Tk 90 crore, according to the project profile.

"Our production cost will be much lower than that of the other mills in the country because the raw materials we will be using would be much cheaper," Sanowar said. While other paper mills have to invest huge amount of resources for collection of raw materials — bamboo and trees — and have to set up large industrial units to process the pulp from those trees, this mill will utilise a much cheaper raw material — old papers — and requires a simpler processing unit to produce the pulp, he pointed out.

The Kamola-Yousuf mills would use both local and imported waste papers. The imported waste papers would cost Tk 6,750 per ton, according to the project profile.

The mills would require 120 tons of waste paper to produce 100 tons of paper.

Construction of the mills will begin next month, Sanowar said.

Attack on Pak minister's house: 3 killed

KARACHI, Dec 2: Unidentified gunmen opened fire Friday night outside the house of the country's labour minister killing three workers, police said, reports AP.

The minister, Akbar Lasi, was not at home at the time of the attack on his private house in the troubled port city of Karachi.

Lasi's guard, his driver and another man believed to be working for the minister were killed when the gunmen drove up in a car and opened fire with automatic weapons. Police said they didn't know the motive for the attack or who was responsible.

Political and ethnic feuds in Karachi have led to almost daily gunbattles recently, and Friday's shooting was the second attack this week aimed at Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's ruling Pakistan People's Party.

Gunmen entered a PPP office in Karachi on Tuesday and opened fire, killing four people.

Police have blamed many of the politically motivated attacks on the Mohajir Qaumi Movement, a powerful opposition group.



Bangladeshi writer Taslima Nasreen (L) chats with French President Francois Mitterrand Thursday in Paris. The French government granted Nasreen a human rights award on November 30. — AFP photo

FDL-AP conference in Seoul ends Release of Suu Kyi demanded

From Chapal Bashar

SEOUL, Dec 2: The Forum of Democratic Leaders in Asia and the Pacific (FDL-AP), which ended its two-day conference here this evening, demanded immediate and unconditional release of Myanmar's opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi and other political prisoners.

In a resolution, the Forum called for peaceful and full restoration of democracy in Myanmar.

The Forum also set up an ad hoc commission to work "creatively and non-violently" with the United Nations, governments of the ASEAN countries, other interested parties and the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC).

Myanmar's ruling military junta, to fulfil the will of the people of Myanmar including the ethnic minorities.

The Forum transformed into a permanent body today, will offer its good offices to assist and contribute to the dialogue that would result in the restoration of democracy in Myanmar.

The Forum resolution said the people of Myanmar clearly expressed their will in the 1990 elections by giving an overwhelming support to the opposition National League for Democracy led by Aung San Suu Kyi.

"Despite its defeat in the 1990 electoral exercise, Burma's (Myanmar's) ruling military junta refused to hand-over power and continued to impose its rule in the country. The Forum said adding its resolution on Burma is in line with its objectives of promoting democracy in the Asia Pacific region."

In another resolution, also adopted today, the Forum said that it would pursue its objectives by adhering to the three principles — non-interference in other nations' internal affairs and promoting its goal through dialogue, debate and legal procedures; rejecting all acts of violence and seeking democratisation through peaceful means only; and supporting all efforts of Asian

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10 injured in N'ganj clash

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Dec 2: At least ten persons were injured when two groups of muslims clashed at Akhra area at Deobhog at about 2:00 am today.

Among the injured two received bullet wounds and were sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH). They are Bilal, 25, and Nasir, 20.

Sources told that the clash occurred between the two rival groups led by Zakir and Masud.

Police arrested Sattar and Ripon from the spot.

The other injured persons were released after first aid from various hospitals and clinics. A case was filed with Narayanganj Police Station.