

## Inside Today

### Article

**Adjustment and Reform: When Succeed, When Fail?**

Column: Beneath the Surface  
by Abdul Bayes

### Page 4

### Focus

**Today's Focus Page** contains articles on Indian general elections  
**Page 5**

### International

**Arafat demands effective UN role in peace process**

**US Senate approves bill to clamp down on illegal immigration**  
**Page 8**

### Business

**Govt inefficiency affects entire economy: WB**  
**Share burden equally to help the poor, ADB chief urges West, rich Asian countries**  
**Pages 6, 7**

### Metropolitan

### Dhaka Day by Day



**Life on the Information Superhighway**  
**Page 3**

## NEWS BRIEFS

### Hasina condolees

### Hajis' deaths

Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed her profound shock at the deaths of 13 Hajis in Saudi Arabia and at the death of Lt Colonel Masaddeq Ali in a road accident in Dhaka. In a message of condolence she conveyed her deep sympathy to the bereaved members of those families and prayed for the salvation of the departed souls, reports BSS.

### Mizan in Calcutta for treatment

Jatiya Party acting chairman Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury is now undergoing treatment at the Birla Hospital in Calcutta, India. Mizan Chowdhury left Dhaka on May 1 for Calcutta for treatment. A medical board has been formed for his treatment. The JP acting chairman is expected to return home on May 6, reports BSS.

### Khandker Mahbub Hossain joins JP

Chairman of the executive council of Bangladesh Bar Council and an eminent lawyer Khandker Mahbub Hossain yesterday joined the Jatiya Party. He joined the party at its Banani office in the city when he called on JP's Secretary General Anwar Hossain Manju, a party press release said last night, reports BSS.

### Lightning kills 2

**From Staff Correspondent**  
BARISAL, May 3: Two fishermen were killed by lightning during a storm at Doulatkhan thana under Bhola district here this afternoon. The victims, Monirul Islam, 24 and Belal Hossain, 27, were struck by lightning when they were fishing in the river Meghna, adjacent to Doulatkhan.

### 3 Khulna JCD leaders held

**From Our Correspondent**  
KHULNA, May 3: Three leaders of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) have been arrested from different parts of the city this morning.

The arrested leaders are Acting general secretary of city unit Hafizur Rahman, former general secretary of the city unit Arif Irtiaz Khan Tuhrin and Habibur Rahman, president of Daulatpur day-night college unit.

1435 forms submitted to AL, 1000 to BNP

## Interview for party tickets from today

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League and BNP today begin interviewing party nomination seekers for the seventh parliamentary elections.

Jatiya Party will start the interview on May 6. A total of 1,435 nomination forms were submitted to the Awami League office by intending candidates till last night, the deadline, party Joint Secretary Abdul Jalil told The Daily Star. Intending candidates had collected 2,738 nomination forms.

Talking to The Daily Star, BNP office secretary Nazrul Islam said some 1700 nomination forms were sold till last night of which some 1000

were submitted by intending candidates.

The Awami League Parliamentary Board headed by party chief Sheikh Hasina is scheduled to start interviewing the nomination seekers from 9 am today at the party's Bangabandhu Avenue central office in the city.

Interviews of the intending candidates from Rajshahi, Khulna and Barisal divisions will be held on the first day today while those from Chittagong, Sylhet and Dhaka divisions will start from the same time tomorrow, said a party press release last night.

AL general secretary Zillur Rahman, who is also the secre-

tary of the 11-member parliamentary board, has requested all concerned to remain present for the interviews.

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) has formed a 13-member nomination board headed by party chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia to nominate 300 party candidates for the seventh parliamentary elections.

The board comprising members of the BNP standing committee will interview the nomination aspirants from 9 pm today at the party's election office at Kakrail. Interviews of the intending candidates will start with those

See Page 12 Col 8



AL General Secretary Zillur Rahman addressing party workers after opening the party's election office at Road No 12 in Dhanmondi yesterday.

## Ten more join Awami League

By Staff Correspondent

Ten persons including a municipality chairman, trade union leaders and retired servicemen joined Awami League yesterday.

The new entrants are: Savar Pourashava Chairman Ashraful Khan Jnu, former member of CFB presidium and president of Trade Union Centre (TUC) Md Nurul Islam, former member of the CFB central committee, secretary of TUC and president of Tannery Workers Union Abul Kalam Azad, secretary of TUC and Kohinoor Companies Ltd Workers Union president Jinal Abedin, secretary of TUC Mesbahuddin Chowdhury, TUC member and a former leader of CFB Pradip Das Barister Altafur Rahman (Bng), retired Rahman Bng (Bng) Abu Baker and Group Captain (ret'd) Md Akkas.

According to party sources Jatiya Party leader and former city mayor Abul Hasanat and former army chief Lt Gen Atiqur Rahman are also likely to join the party.

Of the newcomers, four persons met AL president Sheikh Hasina at her Dhan

See Page 12 Col 7

## AL prepares to kick off polls campaign

By Reaz Ahmed

Awami League is ready to launch an all-out campaign for the seventh parliamentary elections after finalisation of the party nominations and declaration of its polls manifesto this week, according to party sources.

The Awami League Parliamentary Board headed by party president Sheikh Hasina will start interviewing the nomination seekers from today at the party's central office at Bangabandhu Avenue. The party earlier extended the time limit for collection of application forms by the intending candidates till 6 pm yesterday.

Sheikh Hasina, who returned home on May 1 after performing Hajj, is now passing busy days consulting campaign strategy, party nominations and other issues with senior party colleagues, the sources said.

To build up a vigorous election campaign, Awami League is learnt to have initiated a video documentary, projecting the party's role in achieving

the country's independence. Copies of this video tape would be sent to party units all over the country. Besides, audio cassettes and various other publications have already been sent to party units for campaign.

It was learnt that Awami League was designing its strategies to beg those seats where the party candidates performed very well but lost to either BNP or JP candidates with narrow margins in the 1991 polls.

Senior party leaders put their heads together over the last few days to analyse the party's position on region basis in the 1991 parliamentary elections, the sources said.

The source told this correspondent that there was strong possibility of Sheikh Hasina contesting the polls from at least two constituencies — one from Tungipara Kotailpara (Gopalganj 3) and the other from Pirganj (Rangpur-6) where she lost to Jatiya Party chairman H M

See Page 12 Col 7

## '58 countries virtually have no free press'

NEW YORK, May 3: More than half the people on earth live in democratic societies, but less than a fourth live in countries with a free press, according to a survey released Thursday, reports AP.

"Freedom of the press is a cornerstone of any vibrant democracy," said Adrian Karanymycki, president of Freedom House, a New York-based group that monitors political rights and civil liberties.

Freedom House surveyed the press in 187 countries, 117 of which are democracies. It found that in 58 nations, there is virtually no press freedom and the government maintains a high level of control over the news media, including physical threats against journalists.

"As the right to vote is increasingly recognized the world over, it is critical that the right to seek, receive and impart information through

See Page 12 Col 4

## 7 eminent personalities join BNP

BNP chairperson and former prime minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday called upon the people to vote for the BNP to turn Bangladesh into an economic emerging tiger side by side protecting sovereignty, flourishing democracy and improving the lot of the common man, reports BSS.

The BNP chairperson was welcoming the new comers into her party at the BNP Kakrail election office in the city yesterday afternoon. Former ministers Mahbubur Rahman and Mansur Ali, former state minister Nazimuddin Al Azad, Bangladesh Teachers Association president Professor Asadul Hoq, Prokichi secretary general Abu Hena, former member of provincial assembly Advocate Altaf Hossain and Dr Salauddin Babar of Savar yesterday joined the BNP.

Begum Zia called upon all

See Page 12 Col 1

## Forge unity of pro-independence, non-communal forces: GF

By Staff Correspondent

Gono Forum yesterday called for forging a national unity of the pro-independence, non-communal forces committed to democracy and development.

The call came from a meeting of the party's standing committee, which has chaired by its acting president Ziaul Haq, according to a party press release.

The meeting noted that massive use of black money was the main hindrance to creating a congenial atmosphere for a free and fair election.

In a resolution, the meeting said that the electoral programme should be formulated to meet the challenges of the 21st century and of 'democracy and development'.

The ensuing election bears great importance for achieving economic emancipation, building a terrorism-free civil society and materializing the hopes and aspirations of the people, it said.

Since its inception, Gono Forum has been demanding

See Page 12 Col 8

## Jamaat's polls manifesto today

By Staff Correspondent

Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh will release its election manifesto through a press conference tomorrow. Amir of Jamaat Golaam Azam will release the manifesto at the Al-Falah auditorium and will also address the press conference.

Meanwhile, the Jamaat announced yesterday that it will hold another rally at the city's Manik Miah Avenue on June 8 to wrap up its election campaign.

## 2 BCP activists shot dead in Satkhira

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, May 3: Two members of outlawed Biplobi Communist Party were shot dead by rival groups at Atarai village under Tala Thana on Thursday night.

Police sources said Shorab Hossain, 40, and Abdul Jabbar, 35, died on the spot when an armed group fired on them while they were chatting standing on the road side.

The bodies were handed over to their relatives after post-mortem examinations at Satkhira General Hospital. A case has been filed with Tala Thana. None was arrested in this regard.

## Unplanned shrimp farms, catching of fries Fish resources depleting in Sundarbans

By Sharier Khan back from Khulna

Unplanned growth of shrimp farms and catching of fries in the greater Sundarbans, criss-crossed by innumerable rivers and canals, have caused depletion of fish resources by at least 70 per cent in the area in last one decade, according to officials and local people.

According to the Forest Department officials in the Sundarbans, some small rivers have dried up partially while some others have narrowed down in the last 10 years. "One 200 feet rivulet has narrowed down to mere 10 feet," an official said.

In many areas, people have blocked canals or diverted streams obstructing normal flow of water. This has caused

rapid sedimentation, he said. Some 120 species of fishes are found in the rivers and canals of the Sundarbans, world's largest mangrove forest covering an area of 5704 sq km.

According to a Forest Department report, fishermen catch over 3.4 crore shrimp fries each year and sell those to the hatcheries.

This correspondent, during his recent visit to the Sundarbans saw thousands of people including children catching shrimp fries with ultra fine nets. They also catch fries of other fishes, throw those away damaging the fish population.

The report notes that since those people get financial incentive, it is not possible to

stop them from setting traps with such nets.

"If the catching of shrimp fries continues, all the coastal rivers will be empty of all species of fish," it pointed out.

"There used to be an easy catch in these rivers a decade ago," a villager of Chandpai, 60 km off Khulna said. "But now, the availability of fishes has declined by at least 80 to 90 per cent."

Shrimp farms in the greater Khulna area account for more than 80 per cent of the country's total 99,919 hectares under its cultivation. According to the Export Promotion Bureau, the country exported 57.93 million pounds of shrimp worth US dollars

See Page 12 Col 6

## SAARC states agree to combat terrorism

NEW DELHI, May 3: Seven South Asian countries, setting aside mutual suspicions between India and Pakistan, ended two days of talks today by calling for deeper cooperation to combat terrorism in the region, officials said, reports Reuter.

Officials from the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries — India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives — nominated one official from each country to play a coordinating role under SAARC's terrorism information exchange arrangements, an Indian Home (Interior) Ministry official said.

The officers are of a fairly high level so that they will have the ability to immediately collect and analyse any data they need," he said. "They can get in touch with each other as frequently as is necessary."

The appointments were a further step in SAARC's intelligence sharing system, which has developed since a regional convention on terrorism was signed in 1987.

To crack down on the increasing ability of alleged terrorists to acquire the latest weaponry, delegates called for closer monitoring of weapons, including manufacturing plants, supply routes, storage facilities and sales, the official said.

The officials reviewed regional statistics on terrorist incidents and related deaths since they met a year ago. They discussed areas of mutual co-operation and assistance and agreed to continue sharing information and intelligence, he said.

Their recommendations will be put to SAARC's council of ministers for approval, he

See Page 12 Col 7

## Tremor kills 14 in Inner Mongolia

BEIJING, May 3: The death toll from an earthquake that jolted China's inner Mongolia region today has risen to at least 14, officials said by telephone, reports Reuter.

The earthquake, measuring 6.4 on the Richter Scale, hit inner Mongolia's Guyang county at 11.32 am (0332 GMT) today, officials said.

"As far as we know at the moment, 14 people have been killed by the earthquake," said an official of the seismological bureau in Baotou City, 50 km south of the earthquake's epicentre.

He said he was unable to confirm a report by China's official Xinhua news agency that 33 people had been seriously injured by the tremor, which destroyed dozens of houses.

Officials earlier said nearly 100 people had been hurt. The exact situation is still not clear, the official said.

Dozens of old, one-story houses collapsed near the epicentre, said an official at the bureau who identified himself only by his surname

Tan, according to AP. He said aftershocks were still hitting the area, with the largest measuring 3.3 magnitude.

Baotou, a city of more than 1.3 million people, is a major railway artery and commercial center along the Yellow River. It also is a key industrial city, with major iron and steel, cement and textile factories.

The 11:32 am (03:32 GMT) earthquake was felt in much of northern China, including Beijing, where high-rise buildings swayed perceptibly.

"Chairs and lights were shaking," said Wu Xiuzhi, an official in the Inner Mongolian provincial capital Hohhot's government offices. She said no casualties had been reported in Hohhot, about 150 kilometers east of the quake's epicentre.

A seismologist predicted that large aftershocks of up to magnitude five could hit the area, the official Xinhua News Agency reported.

It was the third major tremor to strike the country

See Page 12 Col 8

## Tories suffer major defeat in local council polls

LONDON, May 3: Prime Minister John Major's ruling Conservatives were dealt a blow by votes losing more than 500 seats to the buoyant opposition Labour Party, but avoided total collapse in town hall elections across England, reports Reuter.

Pollsters forecast that the Conservatives would end up with 28 per cent of Thursday's vote compared to 43 per cent for Labour in the last major test at the polls before the next general election that must be called within a year.

With only a few hundred of the seats to be counted, the Conservatives had lost 554 of the roughly 1,000 seats they were defending. Labour won 451 and the centrist Liberal Democrats gained 142.

But senior Conservatives were defiant, pointing to a three per cent rise in their support since last year when a disastrous local election result put Major's future on the line, and a three per cent drop in Labour's support.

"The idea that this has got anything to do with the general election, at all is just to split in the face of reality, said Deputy Prime Minister Michael Heseltine.

But Labour leader Tony Blair hailed his party's 17 per cent lead over the ruling party as "spectacularly good results."



Labour leader Tony Blair

If you look at these results they're pretty spectacularly bad for them (the Conservatives) on any basis. Blair told a television interviewer. Labour results were particularly strong in Conservative strongholds, he said.

But he warned party workers not to ease up ahead of the general election.

"We are not in the slightest bit complacent...the general election is not won until it is finally won, Blair said. Votes were electing local authorities in England, but the ballot was widely seen as a judgement on the national policies of the Conservatives in power since 1979.

## 4 more BNP men held Rail links with Mymensingh yet to be restored

KISHOREGANJ, May 3: Train services on Dhaka-Bhairab-Mymensingh route were disrupted for the second day today as supporters of BNP reportedly uprooted rail tracks in Kotiadi thana demanding the release of a former MP, reports UNB.

Three local BNP leaders, including former MP Maj Reza Akhteruzzaman, were arrested on Wednesday night after BNP activists staged agitation protesting the detention of a Jubadai leader.

Railway sources said about 200 feet of rail tracks were uprooted near Gochihata rail station. Kotiadi police arrested four people for trying to obstruct the repair work.

The train communication is expected to be restored to-morrow (Saturday).

Meanwhile, police arrested four BNP men today. They are: district JCD convenor Waliullah Rabbani, district BNP Organising Secretary Jahangir Alam Molla, and Jubadai leaders Raihan and Mintu Helal.

JCD and Jubadai activists brought out processions in the town demanding their immediate release and transfer of the OC of Kotiadi thana.

## Bus plunge kills 2 in N'ganj

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, May 3: Two people were killed and 35 others injured in a bus accident on Madangan-Narasindig road at Uttar Lakkhan Khola, Madanpur under Bandar thana of the district this morning.

The accident occurred when the Sylhet-bound bus fell into a roadside ditch at around 10:30 am, according to witnesses.

The bus was on its way to the mazar of Shahjalal in Sylhet from Madangan.

The dead were identified as Taherunnissa, 65, and Akteruzzaman, 55.

Of the injured, five were admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital in critical condition. They are Rahim, 25, Hashem, 45, Siddique, 50, Billal, 25 and Shipli, 22.

Nine others were admitted to Narayanganj Hospital. They are: Zakir, 10, Ayesha, 38, Fatema, 50, Meherunnissa, 40, Sakhrina, 12, Kamruzzaman, 20, Hira, 36, Al-Amin, 15 and Siraj, 28.

The driver of the bus fled away immediately. The bodies were sent to the Narayanganj Hospital morgue for autopsy.

## Mysterious fire engulfs rebel party HQs in Kashmir

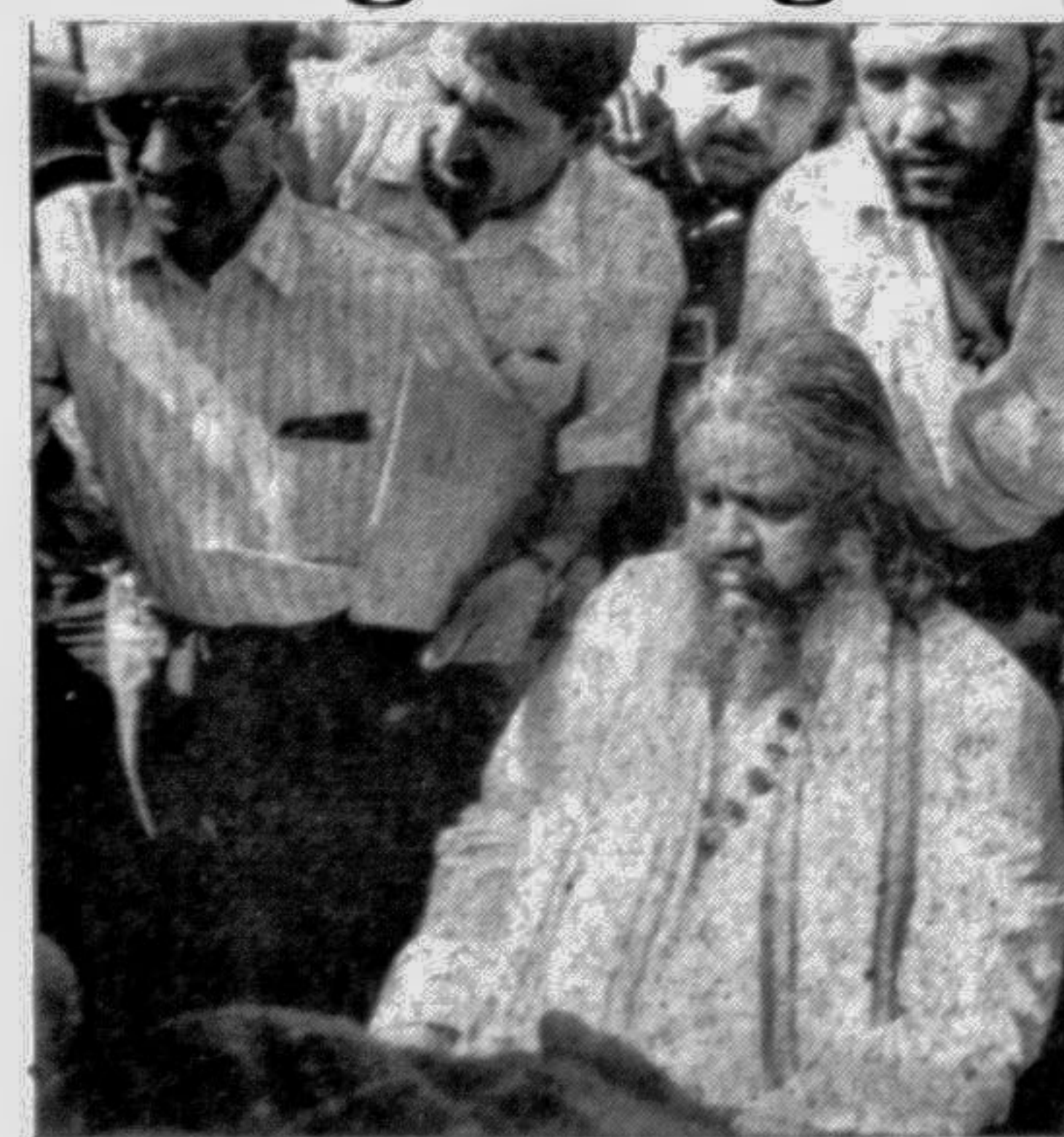
SRINAGAR, May 3: A large fire broke out at the headquarters of a powerful forum of Muslim separatists and political organisations here on Thursday, police said, reports AP.

The fire engulfed the three-storeyed office of the All Party Hurriyat (freedom) Conference (APHC) in Srinagar's posh Raghugh residential district late Thursday, the police said.

"We are investigating the mysterious fire," a police spokesman said in this state summer capital and added that there were no reports of casualties.

The anti-Indian APHC was scheduled to hold a meeting Thursday on the upcoming elections in Kashmir in its headquarters but postponed the talks for a day, party sources said.

The APHC, an umbrella forum of 30 Muslim separatist and regional political parties, opposes India's plans to conduct elections to Kashmir's six parliamentary constituencies later this month.



Controversial Hindu guru Chandraswami is surrounded by Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) men upon his arrival in a wheelchair at New Delhi Airport yesterday.

— AFP photo