## Clinton's lawyers dub Starr report as 'hit-and-run smear campaign'

WASHINGTON, Sept 13: President Bill Clinton's attorneys on Saturday dismissed a sexually explicit report outlin-ing 11 impeachable counts against their client as a "hitand-run smear campaign." reports AFP.

One day after the report was published worldwide, Clinton's legal teamstruck back hard, attacking its contents as "pornographic" and "salacious" and drafted with no other goal than to humiliate the president.

The Clinton legal team's response amounted to a more detailed version of a preliminary defence released Friday just before independent counsel Kenneth Starr's report was released on the Internet, accusing Clinton of impeachable offenses including perjury, destruction of justice and witness tampering. The Starr report highlights graphic details of Clinton's sex-

ual affair with Monica Lewinsky, who was a 21-year-old White House intern when their relationship began in 1995. The lurid details of the re-

port "are simply part of a hitand-run smear campaign," the White House reply asserts.

The White House rebuttal attacked the report as "salacious allegations" obsessed with sex but laying no grounds for impeachment.

"The president did not commit perjury. He did not obstruct justice, he did not tamper with witnesses. And he did not abuse

the power of the office of the presidency," Clinton's lawyers wrote in a 42-page rebuttal.

It criticised Starr and his re-

port on the conclusion of an eight-month investigation into the White House scandal, noting that sex was mentioned more than 500 times "in the most graphic, salacious and ratuitous manner.

"We have sought in this initial response to begin the process of rebutting (Starr's) charges against the president charges legal experts have said would not even be brought against a private citizen."

Starr has been investigating allegations of wrongdoing on a number of issues since 1994 and Clinton's lawyers said: "It is plain that sex is precisely what this four and a half year investigation has bailed down to."

"The referral is so loaded with irrelevant and unnecessary graphic and salacious allegations that only one conclusion is possible. Its principal purpose is to damage the presi-

In its conclusion, the report admitted that the relationship Clinton had with Lewinsky and his efforts to keep it "private" were wrong.

"But such acts do not even approach the constitutional test of impeachment - treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors.

Pundits and pollsters have said throughout the Lewinsky probe that if all Starr comes up with is proof of an adulterious affair, then Clinton will survive to serve out his term until January 2001.

As Congress weighs impeachment proceedings, Clinton's lawyers hope to turn the public's disgust with the whole episode against Starr for revealing the details of the affair. In Lewinsky's graphic testimony, she talks of performing oral sex on the president in his private White House study and bathroom and playing sex games with a cigar.

Leaks from the eight-month investigation may have prepared the public for some of the gritty details. An early CNN/Gallup poll showed Clinton's ratings on the rise, with 63 per cent rejecting impeach-

## Report no ground for impeachment: Al Gore

WASHINGTON, Sept 13: US Vice President Al Gore on Saturday said that President Bill Clinton had done "wrong" but does not deserve to be ousted from office, reports AFP.

In a statement, Gore said Clinton has accepted responsibility for his actions, admitted wrongdoing and sought forgiveness for misleading the public about his liaison with former White House intern Monica Lewinsky.

"He has addressed the issues he needs to address," Gore said. Unlike the president's attorneys. Gore declined to attack independent counsel Kenneth Starr's motives or Starr's blistering, sexually graphic report that was released to the public on Friday.

"While the president's lawyers are dealing with the details and technical issue that are in the report, let me just say that I do not believe that this report serves as the basis for overturning the judgement of the American people in 1992 and again in 1996 that Bill Clinton should be their presi-

dent," Gore said. "For almost six years now I have worked along side this president as he has led us toward unprecedented prosperity and towards solutions for the problems that we need to address in America," the Vice President continued. We have made tremendous

progress under his leadership, he is doing a tremendous job as president.

# Comparison of accusations against Clinton & his rebuttals

WASHINGTON, Sept 13: The following is a point-by-point comparison of the accusations against President Bill Clinton and his rebuttal of them, reports AFP.

The accusations are contained in a report by independent counsel Kenneth Starr unveiled on Friday. The rebuttals are contained in a document published on Saturday by Clinton's layers at the White House.

Accusation: The Starr report asserted that Clinton committed perjury when, in sworn tes-timony for the Paula Jones sexual harassment case on January 17, he denied having had "sexual relations" with Monica Lewinsky.

Rebuttal: The charge of perjury demands that the alleged false statements were made "knowingly" and that they were of direct relevance to the case at hand at the time. Starr's report demonstrated neither. In addition, Clinton's Testimony was based on a narrow definition of "sexual relations" that had been spelled out by the judge in the Jones Case and it was "reasonable" to conclude that oral sex did not fall within that def-

Accusation: Clinton committed perjury on August 17 when he lied under oath on the same matter before the Grand Jury investigating his

relationship with Lewinsky. Rebuttal: Same argument as above. The rebuttal asserted

that the terms "sexual affair" and "sexual relationship" are "Inherently ambiguous and, when used without definition. cannot possibly amount to perjury." The rebuttal cities legal experts and journalists who agree with these conclusions.

Accusation: Clinton committed perjury when he stated in his testimony for the Jones case that he could not recall being alone with Lewinsky and was uncertain about gifts they had exchanged.

Rebuttal: The Starr report misrepresented Clinton's words due to failure by questioners to follow-up on "incomplete or unresponsive answers." Read as a whole, Clinton acknowledged having been alone with Lewinsky and acknowledged having exchanged gifts with her.

Accusation: Clinton committed perjury in his testimony on January 17 regarding the possibility that Lewinsky could be called as a witness in the Jones investigation.

Rebuttal: Clinton admitted to having made joking references to the possibility that Lewinsky and "many women" could be called to testify in the Jones investigation. He was not, however, certain of how, precisely, he had discussed the matter with her. His answers to the questions posed to him were "literally accurate."

Accusation: Clinton obstructed justice when he tried to hide gifts and an intimate note

that were evidence of his relationship with Lewinsky.

Rebuttal: First, Clinton's responses to suggestions Lewinsky said she made to him about hiding the gifts were either noncommittal or non-existent and therefore do not constitute obstruction of justice. Second, Clinton's personal secretary, Betty Currie, also testified that it was Lewinsky who asked her to retrieve and hide the evidence - Clinton played no part in the

Accusation: Clinton obstructed justice by working out a cover story with Lewinsky to hide their relationship and suggesting she give evidence in a sworn (written) affidavit rather than verbal testimony.

Rebuttal: "Use of 'cover stories' to conceal such a relationship... is not unusual and is not an obstruction of justice." In addition, providing evidence in a sworn affidavit is perfectly legal and Lewinsky said that Clinton had denied an opportunity to review the affidavit.

Accusation: Clinton sought to obstruct justice by helping Lewinsky find a new job in New York to keep her happy, quiet and far removed from investi-

Rebuttal: Nothing in the Starr report supports a conclusion that Clinton obstructed justice. In addition, there is nothing wrong or illegal about Clinton offering assistance to Lewinsky in a search for em-

Accusation: Clinton lied about his talks with a close friend, Washington lawyer Vernon Jordan, concerning Lewinsky's involvement in the Jones

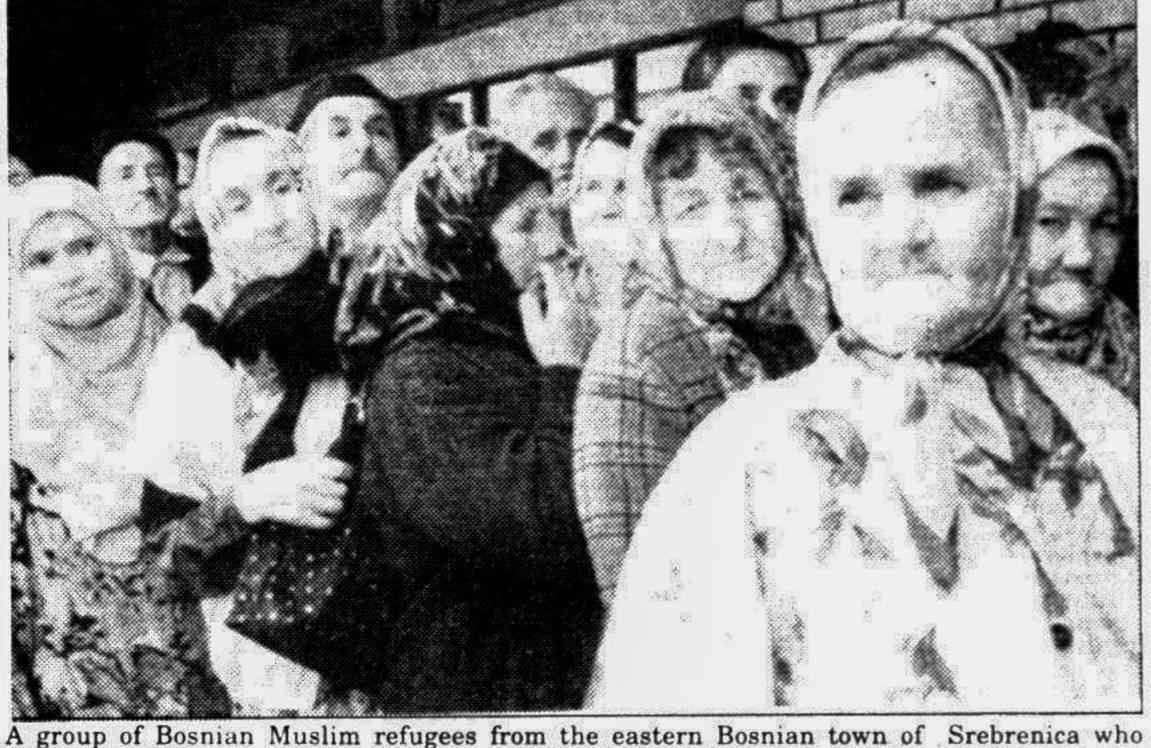
case. Rebuttal: Currie was not a witness in any proceedings when Clinton spoke to her. The charge is "a transparent attempt to draw the most negative

conduct" by Clinton. Accusation: Clinton sought to obstruct justice by refusing to testify for seven months and by lying to his top aides, knowing they would repeat his story to

investigators. Rebuttal: These charges are a gross distortion." Shortly after the Lewinsky scandal broke last January, Clinton publicly denied having had sexual relations with her. He told his aides the same thing.

Accusation: Clinton abused his constitutional authority by lying to the public and congress last January about the nature of his relationship with Lewinsky: By promising to cooperate fully with investigators, by relusing to testify, by claiming

executive privilege: (etc). Rebuttal: This accusation is not supported. The crimes committed by the late US president Richard Nixon constitute abuse of power. "Merely to describe that conduct makes clear how different it is from that of President Clinton."



lost their husbands and sons when the Bosnian Serbs overran the town in July 1995, wait to vote in Sarajevo on Saturday. Bosnia's second national election since the end of the war is considered crucial for the future of the 1995 Dayton peace plan that halted the 3 and a half years of fighting. About 2.75 million citizens are registered to vote for their -AP/UNB photo new leadership.

People worried about impact on their states

### Starr's report dominates press across Asia, Europe

TOKYO, Sept 13: Across Asia and Europe people are wondering why the US President's extramarital sex life should be made so public, and whether the crisis in Washington might affect their own countries, reports

"A president naked in front of the world," read the frontpage headline in South Korea's Hankook Ilbo newspaper on Sunday.

The paper devoted five pages to US President Bill Clinton's problems, including many of the lurid descriptions of his sexual encounters with former White House intern Monica Lewinsky from Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr's report on his investigation.

Tokyo's English-language papers for a second day kept the scandal on the front page, while Japanese language papers moved latest developments to inside pages.

Front pages of the Chineselanguage Oriental Daily News

and Apple Daily showed altered images of the president and Monica Lewinsky in compromising poses.

Interest remained high in Europe too, with newspapers carrying lengthy excerpts from the Starr reports and many sto-

The US president "must retain his ability to govern," German Chancellor Helmut Kohl was quoted as telling the Bild am Sonntag newspaper. "It is of utmost importance that the only world power can fully take on its tasks. Asia, Africa. India - everywhere there are problems.

In an editorial titled "Hell is American," the French centreleft daily Le Monde, which ran a 16-page supplement, called the Starr investigation a "new Mc-Carthyism," referring to Senator Joe McCarthy who led a bitter campaign in the 1950s to expose public figures suspected of having communist sympathies.

Fresh war games along Afghan border to be held

## 'Iran has right to take action to ensure peace, security'

TEHRAN, Sept 13: Iran's top security body said the country had the right to take "every appropriate action" to ensure peace and security as tension rose between the Islamic Republic and Afghanistan's Taliban militia, reports Reuters.

The National Security Council met on Saturday after confirmation that nine Iranian diplomats had been killed by Taliban forces, Iran announced fresh war games along the border and the Taliban pounded an Iranian-backed faction in the last Afghan city outside the Islamic militia's control.

President Mohammad Khatami chaired the meeting of the council, Irans highest policy-making body for security affairs.

A council official quoted by state run IRNA news agency said, Iran is consistently entitled to every appropriate action. and that the country would proceed with arrangements for establishing peace and security in the region.

"The council commissioned all relevant authorities in Iran to consider every possible channel for protection Iran's national interests and maintaining regional peace and security and to adopt appropriate measures for ensuring those purposes," IRNA said.

The Sunni Muslim Taliban militia on Saturday resumed its offensive against Bamiyan, attacking a Shi'ite faction defending the city, the Pakistan-based Afghan Islamic Press (AIP) re-

AIP quoted militia sources as saying the attack on Bamiyan was suspended overnight and resumed on Saturday morning with Taliban fighters only about five km

A spokesman for Iranian-

Hun Sen supporters gather to show off force

backed Shi'ite Muslim Hazb-i-Wahdat told AIP the city was not under threat and its fighters were defending on all fronts. Iran announced its war

games amid fears that the Is-

lamic Republic, which already has 70,000 troops on Afghanistan's border, might intervene in Bamiyan against the Taliban fighters.

Iran said it planned to beef up its forces on the border in a confrontation with the Taliban over the diplomats killed in Afghanistan by the militia's forces. Iran started three days of national mourning for the diplomats on Saturday.

The Taliban has said the group was killed by its fighters without orders from their commanders. Iran said more then 200,000 of its troops backed by the air force would soon hold the manoeuvers along the border.

# BUILFILY

China detains a journalist: Chinese authorities have detained, for unspecified reasons, a journalist and co-author of a best-selling book calling for political reform, sources said yesterday, Reuters reports from Beijing. Security agents took Shi Binhai, 36, an editor and commen-

home on September 5, said sources close to the journalist. Catholic priest shot dead in Colombia: A prize-winning journalist and a Roman Catholic priest shot dead, while saying mass, were among the latest victims of seemingly uncontrolled violence across Colombia, authorities said

tator of the China Economic Times, away from his Beijing

on Saturday, Reuters reports from Bogota. Police said the priest, Alcides Jimenes, was celebrating mass late Friday in Puerto Caicedo, a town in Colombia's jungle-covered southwest Putumayo province, when two assassins burst into his church and riddled him with 14 gunshot wounds.

CNN correspondent Holliman dead: Cable News Network correspondent John Holliman, 49, known for his reporting on space stories and the 1991 air raids in Baghdad during the Gulf War, died on Saturday in an auto accident, CNN said, Reuters reports from Washington. A network statement said the accident occurred near his

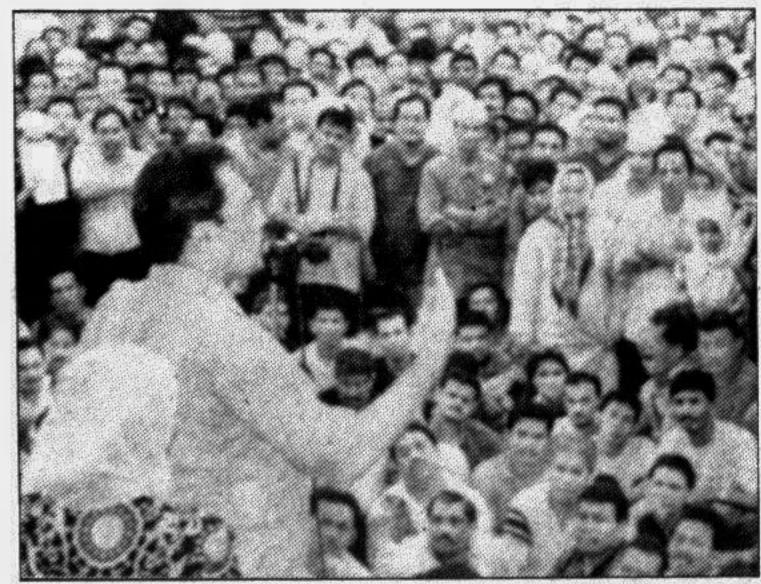
home in suburban Atlanta. It contained no further details.

Kidnapped nun released in Somalia: Italian nun Maria Angela Feurra, kidnapped in the Somali capital Mogadishu by 12 gunmen, has been released after three days in captivity, Italian sources said on Saturday, AFP reports from

The sources said that it was still not clear whether Somali police had stormed the house where she had been detained, or whether the gunmen had surrendered.

Peacemaker dies in Guatemala: Richardo Ramirez, a rebel leader turned national peacemaker, died on Friday of heart failure, fellow ex-guerillas said on Saturday, Reuters reports from Guatemala City.

Ramirez, who was also known as Commander Rolando Moran and was one of the four top leaders of Guatemala's former rebel armies, was 67.



Deposed Malaysian deputy prime minister Anwar Ibrahim speaks to a crowd of around 10,000 people from the porch of his childhood home in Penang province on Saturday. This was Anwar's first stop on a schedule which will take him around Malaysia to explain his ideas about government reform directly to the people.

-AP/UNB photo

#### Violence leaves 10 dead in Kashmir

NEW DELHI, Sept 13: Ten people including an Indian soldier and a provincial politician, were killed in separatist violence in the Indian state of Kashmir, domestic agencies said on Saturday, reports AFP.

Muslim militants raked the house of Ghulam Mohammad Darin, a member of the state's ruling National Conference Party, with Automatic weapons fire overnight Friday in Bramullah district, the Press Trust of India said.

Darin died later in Hospital, a police spokesman said. Militants also shot dead seven people in different parts of the state, while an Indian soldier was killed in a gunbattle with militants in Kupwara district, bordering Pakistan, the

United News of India said. A police official told the news agency that a woman was killed when an explosive device went off near her house.

#### Thousands of Israelis demand Netanyahu's resignation

TEL AVIV, Sept 13: Some 40,000 Israelis gathered for a massive demonstration in Tel Aviv's Yitzhak Rabin Square on Saturday to demand the resignation of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, reports AFP.

Cries of "Netanyahu go home" punctuated the rally, which was held on the fifth anniversary of the historic handshake on the White House lawn between Rabin, the late prime minister, and Pales-

tinian leader Yasser Arafat. Le Rabin, widow of the for-mer Israeli leader assassinated in 1995 by Jewish extremists, took part in the demonstration.

#### Senior Iranian official survives assassination attempt

TEHRAN, Sept 13: A senior Iranian official in charge of a multibillion dollar foundation survived an assassination attempt on Sunday, the state-run Islamic Republic News Agency reported, says AP.

Mohsen Rafiqdoust, who heads the Bonyad Mostazafan and Janbazan, a foundation devoted to helping the poor and veterans of the 1980-88 war with Iraq, was "in satisfactory condition" after the attack, the agency said.

#### 100 Palestinians hurt by gunfire

## Israel must accept US peace plan in full: Arafat

NABLUS, West Bank, Sept 13: Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat insisted on Saturday that Israel must accept a US peace plan in full, during talks with US envoy Dennis Ross that were overshadowed by bloody West Bank clashes, reports AFP.

Arafat met Ross for two hours and again demanded that Israel withdraw from a further 13 per cent of the West Bank in compliance with the US proposals chief Palestinian nego-

tiator Saeb Erakat said. "We hope that Ross will be able to get total agreement from Israel on the points of the American initiative," Erakat

Journalists after the meeting the second between Ross and Arafat since the US envoy arrived on Wednesday. The United States is calling

for Israel to hand over 13 per cent more of the West Bank to Palestinian self-rule authority in return for tougher action by Arafat against militant groups carrying out anti-Israeli at-

tacks. Meanwhile, more than 100 Palestinians were hurt by Israeli gunfire during violent protests on Saturday against the killing by Israeli troops of two Hamas leaders, Palestinian sources said.

Some 300 militants from the Islamic resistance movement (Hamas) also scuffled with Palestinian police in Gaza City as tempers flared over the slaying T'.ursday by Israeli troops of two heads of the Hamas military wing on the West Bank, Adel and Imad Awadallah.

Most of the casualties in the clashes with Israeli troops family lives.

stones at Israeli soldiers guarding a Jewish settlement next to El-Bireh, drawing heavy volleys of fire with rubber coated bullets, witnesses said. Ninety-four protesters were

coated bullets in the head or chest, said Izzat Ayyub an official with the Palestinian Red Crescent Society in Ramallah. Twenty-two of those were taken to hospital and the rest were treated on the spot for

light injuries and released,

Ayyub told AFP. Thirteen other Palestinians were reported wounded, all lightly in clashes near an Israeli Army checkpoint on the southern edge of Ramallah and in the West Bank cites of Bethlehem and Hebron.

came in El-Bireh, outside Ramallah, where the Awadallah Around 200 youths threw

wounded at the site, four of them seriously by rubberout about 200 strong Sunday afternoon from the US Embassy

> 3,000 after marching up and down the city. Nervous-looking riot police armed with rifles and clubs let them pass. Buddhist monks, several of whom have been beaten wounded by police in the past week, sprinkled the marchers with water

"The support for real democ-

Opposition braves clampdown

to stage march in Cambodia PHNOM, PENH, Sept 13: racy in Cambodia is growing and growing," said Un Kim

Thousands of protesters calling for the ouster of strongman Hun Sen braved a heavy clampdown Sunday and marched through the capital to cheers from Phnom Penh's citizens, who threw them food and honked car horns in support, reports AP. The enthusiastic response

contrasted with indifference

and muttered insults given a

larger crowd of Hun Sen sup-

porters, nearly all of them car-

rying clubs, iron bars and other weapons, who paraded through the city earlier in an intimidating show of strength. Opposition supporters, attacked by police and mobs of armed supporters of Hun Sen's Cambodian People's Party in the week-long crackdown, set

and opposition leader Prince

Norodom Ranariddh's house.

Their numbers swelled to and blessed them.

Huot, 27, an English teacher. "During the CPP demonstrations, you saw no support from the people. Look at them now.

United States, the father of democracy." Earlier, scattered violence broke out as the pro-government group poured through the city. Many had been trucked in over the past few days from Hun Sen strongholds around Phnom

But we need support from the

About 8,000 of them spent Saturday night in the city's main sports stadium, where the opposition had hoped to stage a mass peaceful rally Sunday but called it off over fears of blood-

Violence broke out on Sunday as thousands of government supporters marched in a show of strength aimed at intimidating opposition protesters calling for the ouster of strongman Hun Sen. After battling vastly out-

numbered opposition backers

for the past two days, the pro-

Hun Sen crowd spent Saturday

night in the city's main sports

stadium, where the opposition

had hoped to stage a mass

peaceful rally on Sunday but called it off over fears of blood-Hun Sen's supporters, many of them trucked in from sur-

rounding areas, said they would occupy the grounds until September 24 to keep the opposition out in the run-up to the first meeting of .: " newly elected National Assembly. The government has banned opposition rallies from the

capital's streets but allows its own backers to roam freely with clubs and other weapons under police protection. Several pro-government demonstrators on Sunday wrecked a cigarette stall after

failing to catch some opposition backers they saw jeering "They say they are demonstrating for peace and democracy, but they dare violent," said Mran Nget, 30 the owner.

"Now my goods are destroyed. Who is going to pay for this?"
About 250 opposition protesters gathered near the US Embassy and home of opposition leader Prince Norodom Ranariddh. The Hun Sen crowd passed within two blocks, but unlike previous days made

immediate move to atta

## S Asia makes little progress in women's empowerment

KATHMANDU, Sept 13: Three years after hundreds of women leaders and activists from across the world drew up the landmark Beijing Declaration to bring about gender eq-uity. South Asia seems to have made little progress on women's empowerment and upliftment, reports IANS.

Women's rights activists in South Asia, who attended two meetings here, concluded that much remains to be done by the region's nations to move towards a more equitable society in terms of gender. Ministers, senior government officials and representatives of non-governmental organisa-tions from Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Pakistan and the Maldives came together for the meetings organised by the United Nations Development Fund for Women

(UNIFEM) to take stock of ef-

forts towards the implemen-

tation of the goals set in the Beijing Declaration.

While Meeting South Asia was a regional follow-up to the Beijing event, Gender Mainstreaming in South Asia took stock of the status of women in the region in separate fields -- politics, society and economy. The former stressed that the spirit of the U.N.-backed Beijing Declaration had not been realised in practise in South Asia and the latter rec-

ommended a joint strategy.

Looking Strategy for South Asia drawn here identified lack of political will to bring about gender equality; low women's participation in higher levels of governance, political leadership and civil service; and lack of proper mainstreaming of gender consideration across sectors as the shortfalls in almost all South Asian countries.



Hamas group on Saturday. The Hamas demonstration, organised to call for the release of political prisoners being held in Palestinian jails, was declared illegal and forcefully -AP/UNB photo broken up.