

## International

## NATO launches fresh attack on Kosovo

## Protesters besiege US mission in Beijing

BELGRADE, May 9: Despite criticism over its mistaken attack on the Chinese Embassy, NATO launched new attacks on military barracks, communications links and a strategic area of southwestern Kosovo where ethnic Albanian rebels are battling Serb forces, reports AP.

The Western alliance vowed Saturday the bombing would continue until Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic accepts an international plan to end the Kosovo crisis.

Leaders from non-NATO countries condemned the deadly embassy attack, and demonstrators in Beijing retaliated by throwing chunks of concrete and smashing cars at the US Embassy. Late Saturday night, protesters broke into the US consulate in Chengdu, a southwestern city, ransacking the building and setting it on fire.

Yugoslav media said three Chinese were killed in the bombing, lowering an earlier report of four dead. Serbian television said a military attache from the embassy was

fighting for his life.

On Sunday, a group of Chinese officials led by senior Foreign Ministry official Wang Guozhang arrived in Belgrade to investigate the attack.

Late Saturday, NATO missiles struck in Kosovo's Decani region, the state-run Tanjug news agency said.

The Kosovo Liberation Army has reported it is trying to open a corridor in that area to smuggle fighters, weapons and other supplies from nearby Albania to relieve pressure on KLA units running out of ammunition.

The private Beta news agency said NATO jets struck the Yugoslav army barracks in the center of Kragujevac, 100 kilometres (60 miles) south of Belgrade. Beta said 20 people were injured, one seriously.

NATO jets blasted a railway station Saturday near Kraljevo in central Serbia and fired two missiles at the main highway between Belgrade and Nis, Yugoslav media reported.

Witnesses said a NATO missile struck a bridge Saturday in downtown Nis, a central Ser-

bian city where cluster bombs killed 15 and wounded 60 the day before. The bridge over the Nisava river was heavily damaged but did not collapse.

Nis Mayor Zoran Zivkovic said windows at the Greek consulate were shattered and the roof damaged, according to Beta.

NATO jets fired up to 10 missiles at targets near Gnjilane in northern Kosovo, Tanjug said.

Also reported that NATO jets attacked a television relay station on Mount Rudnik, 70 kilometres (45 miles) south of Belgrade, and knocked two private television stations off the air in the region.

NATO missiles also struck a communications tower on Mt Kosmaj early Sunday, some 20 kilometres (15 miles) south of Belgrade, knocking at least two television broadcasters off the air, Tanjug reported.

Another attack by several missiles was reported on an agricultural complex near Kovacica, a mostly ethnic Slovak community 15 kilometres (nine miles) north of Belgrade, Ser-

bian television reported extensive damage.

Two missiles also destroyed the post office in Uzice, 125 kilometres (80 miles) southwest of Belgrade, damaging a nearby theater, library, health clinic and cutting telephone links to the rest of the country, Tanjug reported.

Another report adds from Beijing: Thousands of angry demonstrators besieged the US Embassy in Beijing Sunday for a second day of rock-throwing demonstrations against NATO's bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Yugoslavia.

In Chengdu, a city in western China, demonstrators burned a US consulate on Saturday. The consul's residence was badly damaged by fire and windows were broken, but no Americans were injured, US Embassy spokesman Tom Cooney said Sunday.

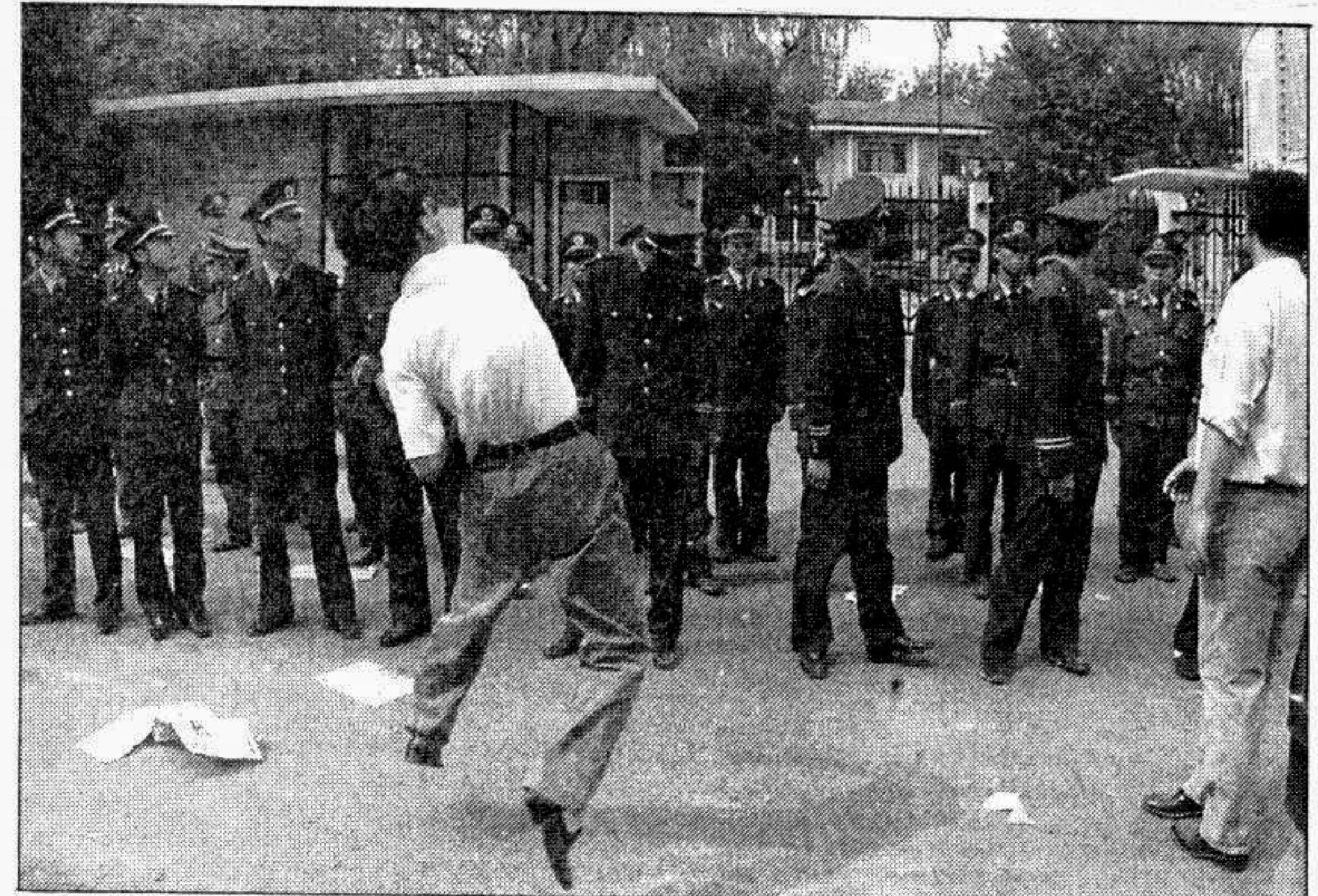
NATO dispersed the protesters in Chengdu with tear gas, and the small number of staff members and their families were moved to another part of the city, the spokesman said.

In Beijing, thousands of demonstrators marched in a all-day procession past the gates of the US Embassy compound. Many hurled chunks of pavement and burning wads of newspaper at the buildings inside and shouted, "Down with the United States."

Large weekend protests against the US and NATO also were held in the cities of Shanghai, Guangzhou, Xi'an, Nanjing and Changsha.

US officials protested to the Chinese government and appealed for better security around the embassy, spokesman Cooney said adding: "If we don't get more security the situation could slip out of control."

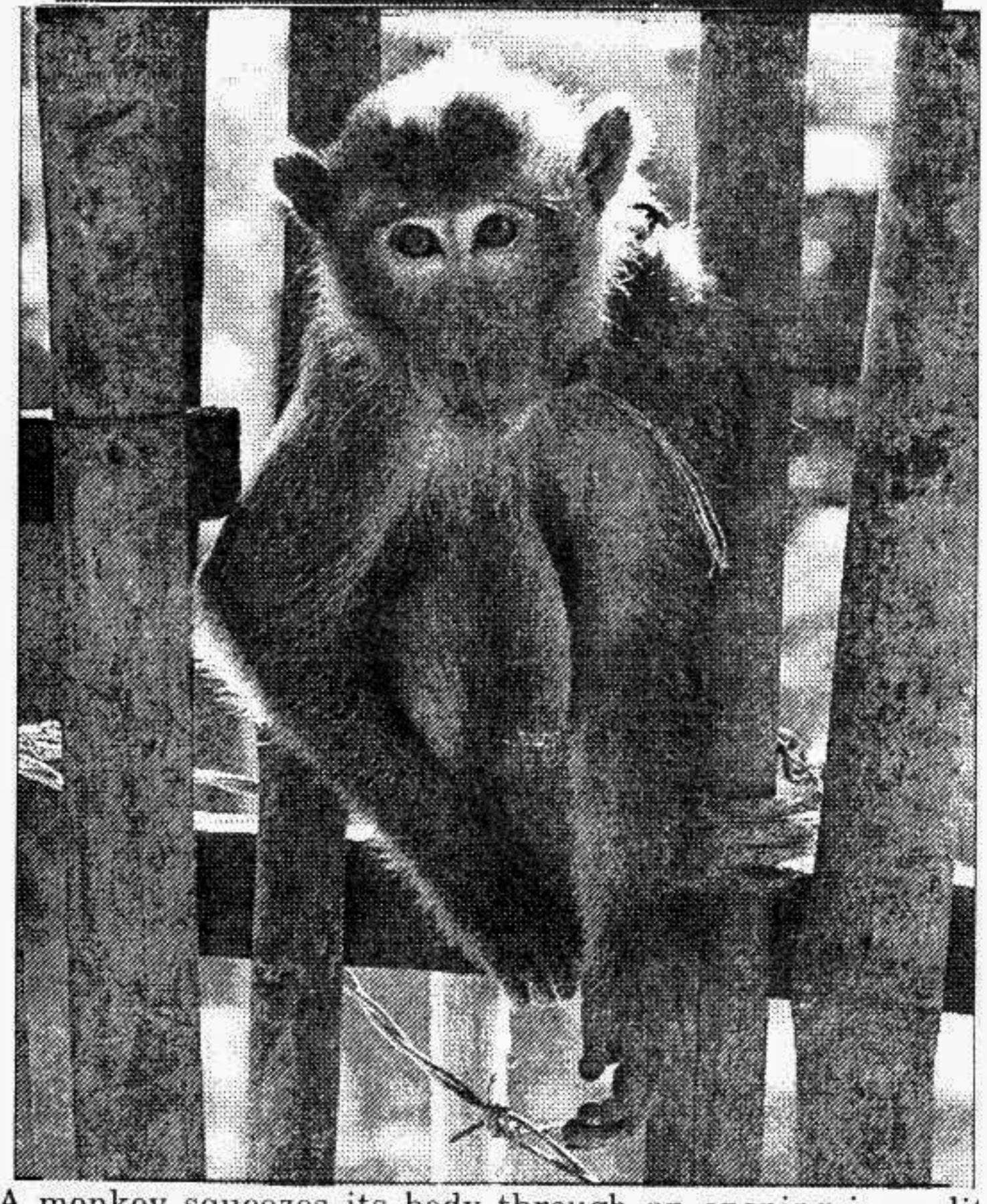
The communist government generally bans protests for fear they will escalate into unrest. But officials apparently felt that stopping people from publicly expressing outrage over the embassy bombing could further inflame them and possibly turn emotions against the government.



A Chinese businessman takes his rage out at the US by throwing rocks at the US Ambassador's compound while police watch in Beijing on Sunday, as protests continue for the second day. US Ambassador James Sasser, under siege from an estimated 20,000 protesters, expressed sorrow at the "tragic mistake" of an NATO's bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade.

— AFP photo

## BRIEFLY



A monkey squeezes its body through an opening in a slit fence in Chroy Changva village east of Phnom Penh on Sunday. Although held in captivity as a pet this monkey is one of the lucky ones as Cambodians eat monkey brains as a delicacy with many ending up on the dinner plate in restaurants.

— AFP photo

## Upcoming polls in India

### Congress may support CPI (M) at nat'l level to fight BJP

CALCUTTA, May 9: AICC General Secretary Ghulam Nabi Azad yesterday did not rule out the possibility of taking the support of the CPI (M) at the national level to fight the BJP, but refused to say if Congress would have any post-poll alliance with the Marxists, reports PTI.

"It is too early to say. We are sure to get majority on our own," Azad told a press conference here.

Stating that CPI (M) continued to be his party's main opponent in West Bengal, he said "when it comes to fighting communal monster like BJP, Congress may cooperate with the Marxists on certain issues," Azad told a press conference here.

Announcing that stability would be the main plank of the Congress for the coming Lok Sabha election, he said that his party would not have any alliance at the national level. There might be some adjustments at the state level as was done in the past, but discussion for such adjustments has not yet been initiated.

BJP, Azad said, has accepted the defeat much before the election as it was going to the polls with 18 allies. BJP had pre-poll alliance with AIADMK in the last election but Jayalalitha had withdrawn support. So where was the guarantee that no

other ally would withdraw in future, he asked.

Describing the charge that Congress was responsible for the fall of the Vajpayee government as "totally false", Azad said that the government collapsed due to its inner contradictions.

The entire Opposition, he said, was united when the BJP-led government refused to order JPC on Bhagwat issue and discuss in parliament the corrupt-

**Sonia Gandhi's 'nationalistic credentials' under cloud**

BANGALORE, May 9: Civil Aviation Minister Ananthkumar yesterday said the dual citizenship of India and Italy allegedly held by Congress President Sonia Gandhi had raised questions about her "nationalistic credentials," reports PTI.

Speaking at a special meeting of the Karnataka unit BJP here, he asked the party workers to "educate" the people about the "foreign origin" of Sonia Gandhi and the Bofors issues.

Ananthkumar said the BJP was in favour of simultaneous elections to both Lok Sabha and the state assembly.

On the possibility of Priyanka Gandhi contesting the coming poll, he said that no decision in this regard was taken although there was strong demand in the party.

### Ecevit looks for coalition partners

ANKARA, May 9: Turkish Prime Minister-designate Bulent Ecevit Saturday held his first round of talks with other political party leaders on the formation of a new coalition government, reports Xinhua.

This is the first time Ecevit held talks with the political party leaders in parliament since he was assigned by President Suleyman Demirel on May 3 to form the 57th government.

Ecevit, who is also leader of Democratic Left Party (DSP), said that the common expectation is that the new coalition should include DSP and the right-wing Nationalist Movement Party (MHP).

He added that MHP leader Devlet Bahceli shared the same view.

It is reported that Ecevit said to Bahceli that "according to the results of the polls, the DSP and the MHP have the responsibility to form the new government."

Observers said that the outcome of the just-concluded talks showed that the DSP, MHP and central-right Motherland Party (ANAP) will most probably form the coalition.

The DSP won 21.17 per cent of the votes in the April 18 parliamentary elections and got 136 seats, becoming the first largest party in the 550-member legislature.

Ecevit, who is expected to begin his second round of talks with party leaders on May 12, said that the election for new parliament Speaker will come soon.

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