Chowdhury said the meeting lasting

nearly two hours discussed funnel-

ing of additional funds for complet-

ing the ongoing schemes in different

He said the meeting noted with

satisfaction that 80 per cent of some

1299 projects have already got

Chowdhury said the rate of

implementation of ADP projects

during this fiscal year is good with

already 30 per cent of project funds

with quick implementation of

projects, including those on rural

roads, electricity, school enrolment

and women empowerment," he told

disaster, growth rate of nearly 6 per

Finance Minister SAMS Kibria

State Minister or Planning Dr

Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir and five

members of the Commission were

cent is quite encouraging.

present in the meeting.

He said despite severe natural

"The Prime Minister was happy

government approval.

spent by December.

newsmen.

Symposium: Department of Women's Studies of Dhaka University in cooperation with Southern Illinois University, Carliondale, USA has organised a symposium on 'Empowerment of Women Through Democratic Process.' Senator Paul Simon, USA, will present the key-note speech. Venue: CIRDAP auditorium. Time: 9 am to 5 pm.

Dry weather likely

Dry weather is likely to prevail over the country during next $12\,\mathrm{hours}$ till 6pm today, reports UNB.

Moderate to thick fog may occur over northern to central part of the country, said Met Office adding that fall in night temperature is expected over Sylhet division and northern Chittagong division for another 12 hours. Little change in night temperature is expected over the country, it said. Mild cold wave may continue over northern and central parts and at

places over southern part of the country. The country's highest temperature 26.5 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Cox's Bazar and the lowest 6.8 degree at Srimangal.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:28 pm and the sun rises on Tuesday

Maximum and minimum temperatures and humidity recorded in some

major cities and towns yest	erday were:			
City/Town	Temperature		Humidity in	
	in Celsius		percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	22.6	10.7	91	59
Chittagong	24.5	10.4	78	69
Rajshahi	22.5	09.4	81	74
Khulna	23.5	09.4	89	71
Barisal	22.7	08.4	100	85
Sylhet	23.9	10.2	80	64
Cox's Bazar	26.5	12.7	70	56

BNP iterates demand

Bangladeshis to become

voters, she said the opposition need

not go to parliament for this pur-

The letter also blamed the gov

ernment for multiplying its repres-

sion on the opposition activists by

implicating them in cases under the

holding the opposition back from

for his lack of initiative to protect the

opposition MPs from government

Khaleda thanked the Speaker for his letter and conveyed her EID and

Shamsul Alam handed over Khaleda's letter to Najibur Rahman,

The Speaker declined to com-

ment on the opposition leader's letter but said he was poring over it.

Akheir Munajat

in Parliament Khaleda Zia and a

number of ministers are likely to

take part in the Munajat.

The mass communication department of the government is

install loud speakers up to Cherag

Ali Market on the north and Azampur on the south to relay the

concluding religious sermons and

also take part in the Munajat, seat-

ing on the roofs of houses and other

A total of 38,76 foreign devotees from 65 countries joined the Ijtema

yesterday morning and the

Many of the devotees from abroad

delivered religious sermons and

participated in group discussions.

Separate group discussions were held yesterday for school teachers,

 $students, religious \, leaders \, and \, other \,$

ings of Islam and how those could be spread to all corners of the world.

Many of them also got their names

enlisted for participation in various

programmes for this.

Meanwhile, Police have taken a

number of steps to ensure smooth

traffic in the area. Vehicles will not

be allowed to ply between Tongi bridge and Joydevepur crossing for

pickpockets were arrested from the

Cracker blasts

Dewanhat and Lovelane areas.

Chess and counter chess between

took place in these areas.

xploding crackers.

office was thin.

port sources said.

olice and hartal supporters also

Police said that three cases under

SA were recorded with

Doublemooring, Kotwali and Panchlaish thanas in connection

with explosion of crackers in the

people from Chawkbazar area for

rallies and processions at different

parts of the city during hartal hours

while ruling party supporters organ-

ised anti-hartal rallies and proces-

sions at New Market crossing,

shaws stayed off the roads. Shops

and markets were closed and atten-

dance in government and private

Chittagong port remained sus-

ing inside the jetties was as usual

trial belts of Patenga, Sitakundu,

Mills and factories at the indus-

oended though loading and unload-

Delivery of goods to and from

All kinds of vehicles except rick-

Lalkhan Bazar and Muradpur.

Police last night arrested four

However, APAC supporters held

Tongi thana sources said 25

a certain period of time.

Ijtema venue.

They discussed the basic teach-

buildings at Tongi and Uttara.

process continued till last night

Á large number of women will

From page 1 Hasina, Leader of the Opposition

S to the Speaker, at 11.35 a.m.

APS to the opposition leader

attending the parliament.

New Year's greetings to him.

ublic Safety Act. Such acts are

She also criticised the Speaker

From page 1 revised in March 1998 provided for withdrawal of 'political cases' against MPs and other opposition men, BTV's impartial coverage of the parliamentary proceedings, neutrality of the Speaker and proportionate representation of parties in the parliamentary standing

In his latest letter, the Speaker sought BNP's cooperation for passing the 14th constitution amendment bill seeking retention of women's reserved seats in parliament and making arrangement for the Bangladeshi expatriates to get enrolled as voters.

The opposition leader felt that there was no need for the opposition to be in parliament for the two purposes. Because, she argued, the existing provision for the reserved seats can be retained if the government resigns immediately and the next parliament is elected before April (when the provision for reserved seats expires).

She also shared the women organisation's view that the existing provision did not ensure proper representation of the women folks in parliament. A change in the mode of election of the women MPs and an increase in their number are

JS body From page 1

The committee was also informed that 56 soldiers died while discharging their responsibilities in peace keeping missions abroad.

The committee decided to pay several visits to the UN peacekeeping missions to see the condition of Bangladeshi troops.

The meeting also decided that the entire committee would visit Korea from where a naval frigate is being procured and East Timor to see Bangladeshi troops there. The tentative time for the visits is second

or third week of February. The committee expressed its satisfaction over the appointment of the Chief of Staff, saying the recent appointment was made for bringing professionalism in the armed forces.

The four-hour meeting was marked by heated debate between an opposition lawmaker and a ministry official. Meeting sources said expelled BNP lawmaker Akhteruzzaman blasted the official as he did not provide information asked by him. The Chair finally settled the matter.

Among others, committee members Faruk Khan of ruling Awami League, Rezaul Karim of BNP and Golam Mohammad Qader of Jatiya Party attended yesterday's meeting. High military officials were also

Probe textbook

From page 12 ing and distribution of textbooks for the current academic year.

They also staged a noisy sit-in demonstration in front of the NCTB building at Motijheel to protest widespread corruption in awarding the printing job of several crores of textbooks to three concerns of Beximco Group Free Press, Shuktara and Pustaka by ignoring

750 experienced printers. Students, leaders and activists of Bangladesh Chhatra Federation (BCF) attended the sit-in demonstration. Later, they brought out a slogans against the NCTB and the

procession in the city chanting Education Ministry. Meanwhile, country's leading intellectuals yesterday expressed

concern over the non-availability of the textbooks despite the fact that the new academic year is already on. Many schools in the capital Dhaka as well as elsewhere in the country have started taking class

Students and guardians are

flocking to bookshops for old editions of the textbook to begin study. "We have to buy two sets of book in a single academic year," one

with old books despite changes in

Kalurghat and Nasirabad suffered roduction loss due to thin attenstudent complained. He said the dance of labourers, sources added. government should take action Paramilitary BDR and additional against the persons responsible for police force mostly in riot gear were the textbook trouble. deployed at important points of the city to foil any attempt of violence.

Megawati in Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 7: Indonesian Vice President Megawati Sukarnoputri arrived in Malaysia today for her first official visit since being chosen as her country's No. 2 leaders, reports AP.

Megawati's three-day trip, meant to boost bilateral ties, is at the invitation of Malaysia's Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

Foreign Minister Syed Hamid Albar greeted Megawati upon her arrival from Bangladesh at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport. This was Megawati's last stop on a three-nation tour that started in Saudi Arabia.

BSS adds: Megawati left Dhaka this morning for Kuala Lumpur at the end of her three-day official visit to Bangladesh.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina accorded a hearty send off to Megawati at the airport. Senior members of the cabinet including Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad, Local Government Minister Zillur Rahman, and Agriculture Minister Begum Matia Chowdhury, high civil and military officials were present to see off the Indonesian

Gias Kamal manhandled

By Staff Correspondent Unidentified youths allegedly manhandled senior journalist Gias Kamal Chowdhury at Eskaton in

Witnesses said about five youths intercepted Chowdhury at Eskaton near Ramna police station at about 2pm and manhandled him. He was walking on the road at the time.

the city vesterday.

The youths, allegedly belonging to the ruling party-backed Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), also chased the journalists, the witnesses added.

Ramna police, however, expressed their ignorance about the

Citizens' rally demanding arrest of Moulana Amini tomorrow

A citizens' rally will be held on the Central Shahid Minar premises at 2:30 pm on Tuesday demanding arrest and punishment of Maulana Fazlul Haq Amini and his associates for threatening two Judges of the High Court, reports UNB.

National Professor Kabir Chowdhury will preside over the rally to be attended by intellectuals, lawyers, teachers, journalists, artistes, NGO activists, women leaders and freedom fighters.

Maulana Amini and some other fundamentalist leaders threatened the judges branding them as "Murtad" for declaring all types of "fatwa" illegal.

Schoolgirl abducted in Manikganj

MANIKGANJ, Jan 7: A group of youngsters abducted a 16-year-old schoolgirl from village Burundi of upazila yesterday, reports UNB.

On complain from her father, police today arrested Rawshan Ali of the same village, but the girl could not be rescued till this evening.

Police said father of the victim filed a case against six persons including women for the abduction They were trying to rescue the girl and arrest the accused.

9 held for killing Dumuria Jubo League leader, 6 policemen closed From Staff Correspon-

KHULNA, Jan 7: Six officers including SI Emdad of Dumuria thana were closed to police lines today following murder of Jubo League leader and UP chairman Kabirul Islam.

They are sub inspectors Rafiqul Islam, Shahadat Ali, Mohammad Mostafa and Emdad Ali, ASIs Lutfar Rahman and Abdul Malek. Police today arrested nine people

<u>Illegal immigrants</u> Malaysia detains 58 on first day of crackdown

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 7: Malayblitz against illegal foreign workers, arresting 58 people on the first day of the operation, reports said today.

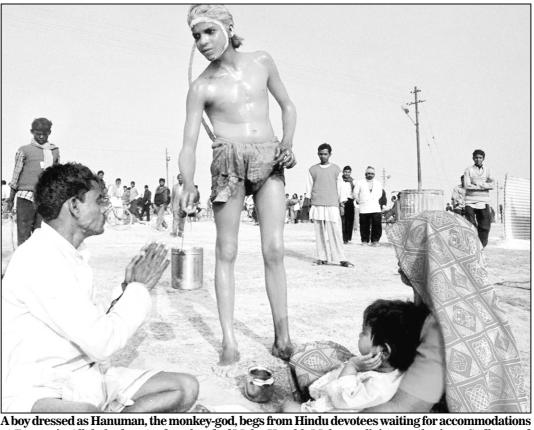
The detainees included 13 Malaysian employers and foreigners including 40 Indian nationals, three Bangladeshis and two Indonesians all in their 20s, the AFP quoting Sunday Star newspaper said.

Immigration enforcement director Nasir Ahmad was quoted as saying an estimated 5,000 Malaysians were hiring foreign labour without permit.

He said the department would

step up surveillance and conduct raids targeted at the construction and services sectors. The detainees would be housed in eight deportation camps in the country which can hold some 15,000 people, he said.

"Last year, the immigration department repatriated 97,281 people, mostly Indonesians, and this year we are targeting 100,000 for deportation," he added



at Prayag in Allahabad yesterday ahead of Maha Kumbh Mela, a religious gathering. Sadhus and pilgrims have begun gathering on the banks of the Ganges river for the 42-day-long religious pilgrimage, world's greatest gathering of mass humanity.

Zhao opposed crackdown on Tiananmen protesters

BEIJING, Jan 7: The former Secretary General of the Comunist Party of China (CPC), Zhao Ziyang, pleaded in vain against using force to crackdown on demonstrators in Tiananmen Square on June 4, 1989, according to a document published today by a Hong Kongbased human rights organisation, reports AFP.

The Information Centre on Human Rights and Democracy published a "self criticism" speech made by Zhao to the Central Committee of the CPC on June 22, 1989, in which he defended his policy of appeasing the students. "During this whole period my

guiding idea was to try to dampen

the crisis by solving the contradictions and persuade the great majority of the demonstrators to calm down," Zhao said. "I was extremely worried that forceful measures, especially the use of weapons to solve the problem,

would only lead to bleeding and a worsening of the situation among the vast majority of the population." Zhao recalled in his speech that he had wanted to solve the crisis

"along the lines of democracy and legality through reason, a cool head, restraint and order." However Zhao's stance resulted

in his removal from power when martial law was proclaimed on May

From page 1

of Parliamentary Standing Commit-

tees. She said BNP was only refrain-

ing from attending sessions as the

Chair did not allow its MPs to have a

House. But a congenial atmosphere

for us to speak there must be cre-

ated in the first place." Khaleda said

the government is inviting the

opposition to join parliament in one

hand and destroying the required

From page 1 room was reserved by the Indone-

sian Embassy for yesterday morn-

ing's press conference and the

booking was cancelled only an hour

before the scheduled time, 8 am.

Notice for the press conference was

removed from the hotel's display

Annoyed reporters sent messages

to officials accompanying the Visit-

ing Vice President wanting to know

about the fate of the press confer-

ence but no response was received

till two minutes before Megawati

Indonesian Foreign Minister Dr

Alwi Shihab suddenly appeared and

without giving any reason for can-

cellation of the news conference

said that the visit was useful and

board at around 7:30 am.

left the hotel.

Megawati's press confce

atmosphere on the other.

"We're willing to return to the

20 by party hardliners led by patriarch Deng Xiaoping and Prime Minister Li Peng.

Two weeks later the crackdown by the army resulted in what human rights group say were the deaths of about 1,300 people who had been demonstrating since mid April in Tiananmen Square. In his "self criticism" speech Zhao

explained his objections had been rejected by Deng Xiaoping: "A storm is unavoidable, the sooner it comes the better," Zhao quoted Deng as After that Central Committee meeting Zhao was offically removed

from the helm of the CPC and replaced by Jiang Zemin, the current Chinese president. Now aged 80, Zhao has been living under house arrest since then, denied all contact with the outside world. The Information Centre said the text of Zhao's speech had been secretly smuggled out of China and

its contents corroborated other

documents that first came to light

on Friday in the United States, due to be published in the next issue of the journal "Foreign Affairs." Those documents show that Zhao had been accused by Deng of having encouraged the demonstrators, and reveal the fierce power struggle fought out among the top

Khaleda tells editors

where black laws were passed

to ensure free and fair election.

She asked how could she go to the

The opposition leader said her

Khaleda alleged that head of the

last caretaker government was not

neutral and the 1996 election was

not at all free and fair. But, she

added, BNP conceded defeat for the

He also said that their President

Abdur Rahman Wahid is likley to

visit Bangladesh and Prime Minister

Sheikh Hasina may also visit Indo-

nesia again. He reiterated that

Indonesia would support Bangla-

desh for the holding of NAM Sum-

conference, he evaded a direct reply

Asked about the scheduled press

It was 8:40 am and most of the

newsmen who had come were

loitering in the lobby of the hotel or

had left. As the foreign minister was

speaking, the Vice President pro-

ceeded to the waiting limousine

bound for the airport. Then without

finishing what he was saying, he also

mit in Dhaka.

and said. "I am here."

sake of continuation of the demo-

party would raise the demand for

recasting the Election Commission

who are going to decide on my fate" Zhao said that he had never supported "illegal" demonstrations and had always called on the students to look for other means to make themselves understood "The students' slogans were to

In his defence to "the comrades

support the constitution, develop democracy and fight against corruption. This is similar to the basic concepts of the party and we had no reason to reject those demands," Zhao told the Central Committee He went on to say that on May 17

he had offered to resign at a meeting at Deng's home after being "violently" accused by Li Peng of responsibility for the deterioration of the situation because he refused to support the use of force to suppress the demonstrators. Zhao however said he was con-

vinced by President Yang Shangkun not to resign.

Two days later, with tears in his eves and in what turned out to be his last public appearance, Zhao visited the hunger-striking protesting students in Tiananmen Square.

liament and was attending meetings parliament that had been made her confidence that her party along ineffective by the ruling party and with its allies would win the next

> To a question about the JCD's new central committee with nonstudents at the helm, she said, "It is not necessary to form a committee only with students. There may be persons in the committee who have completed their studies. Moreover, the new committee is not permanent and it can be changed any

She asked for exclusion of 'fake' voters from the new electoral roll for ensuring a free and fair election. BNP Secretary-General Abdul

Mannan Bhuiyan alleged that the AL was conspiring to rig the upcoming polls by resorting to repression, using fake voters, illegal arms and black money. "We will definitely press the caretaker government to resolve the problems," he added.

BNP leaders M Saifur Rahman, M Morshed Khan, Nazmul Huda, MK Anwar and others were also present on the occasion. The Daily Star Editor Mahfuz Anam, Holiday Editor AZM Enayetullah Khan, Independent Editor Mahbubul Alam, Ittefaq Acting Editor Rahat Khan, Financial Express Chief Editor Reazuddin Ahmed and Editor Moazzem Hossain, Manabjamin Editor Matiur Rahman Chowdhury were present among

Rally for communal harmony in Nepal

Sixth FYP to be

commissioned

in 2002-03

sectors.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina

yesterday asked the Planning Com-

mission to start preparatory work on the Sixth Five-year Plan incorporat-

ing her government's policy for

socioeconomic development in the

present perspectives of

The sixth five-year plan will be

commissioned in 2002-2003 on

expiry of the current Fifth Five-Year

Plan the performance of which was

Commission meeting at her office,

the Prime Minister asked the minis-

tries concerned to take practical

steps for quicker implementation of

development projects aimed at

improving socioeconomic status of

Hasina, who is chairperson of the

Planning Commission, took stock of

the performance of five economic

sectors and asked for prioritising

implementation of projects relating

Briefing newsmen, Planning Secretary Dr Toufiq-e-Elahi

common people

to poverty alleviation.

Presiding over the Planning

reviewed in a meeting yesterday.

globalisation, reports UNB.

KATHMANDU, Jan 7: Hundreds of students, civil servants, politicians and professionals rallied in the Nepalese capital of Kathmandu today calling for unity, development, communal harmony and peace, reports AFP.

The rally was led by the Federation of the Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI).

The participants, wearing blue sashes saying "Peace, Development and Solidarity", paraded through the streets to urge an easing of tensions following recent riots in which five people were killed and hundreds of others injured in the capital and elsewhere.

The Nepal Communist Party-United Marxist-Leninist (NCP) last week held a similar rally in the capital calling for a restoration of peace between the country's ethnic

Communal violence erupted in Nepal against ethnic Indians late last month after Indian film actor Hrithik Roshan allegedly made inflammatory remarks against Nepal and the Nepalese people in a television interview. Roshan denied making the comments. However, angry left-wing Nepalese students went on the rampage attacking Indian nationals and their property.

BAF jet crash

ter. He hailed from Targaon village in Kapasia in Gazipur district. He was commissioned in the Bangladesh Air Force in the GD(P) Branch

Hundreds of people who saw the aircraft burst into flames in the air tried to rush to the crash site. But they were barred from getting anywhere near the site.

They then gathered near a mosque at Baunia on the northwestern side of the airport, trying to have a look at the crash site.

When asked, ISPR officials did not say how many lives and aircraft were lost so far in training missions. Aviation sources said there have aircraft since 1975, in which 55 people were killed. Another Chinese built FT-7, which can be used a multi-role

involving both military and civil

fighter, crashed in October 6, 1998over Madhupur forest in Tangail, killing Flt. Lt. Hasan. It was on a training mission. F-7 jets are the mainstay of air

defence of the BAF. It also inducted in its fleet eight Mig-29 fighterbombers from Russia last year. Two of those are training aircraft.

The BAF has a plan to acquire more Mig-29 aircraft, the sources

so far been 13 major accidents

Faridpur Bar to boycott magistrate's courts from today

FARIDPUR, Jan 7: The District Bar Association today decided to boycott all the magistrate's courts here for an indefinite period from tomorrow following rejection of a bail petition of an APP and local Awami League leader, reports UNB. It was decided unanimously at an

emergency meeting of the bar association held with its president Adv Syed Nurul Islam in the chair. First class magistrate Ahsanul

Haq rejected a bail petition of Adv Shamsul Haq Bhola Master, an Assistant Public Prosecutor and district AL leader and chairman of Charmadhabdia UP in the Sadar upazila. One Mamtaj Begum filed a case against Bhola Master.

ence.

Quake shakes southern India NEW DELHI, Jan 7 : A child was

eported killed and two people njured today when an earthquake shook the southern Indian states of Tamil Nadu and Kerala, the Press Trust of India reported, says AFP. The child was crushed to death

when a wall collapsed on him in Tamil Nadu's Kadayam town when the temblor measuring 4.8 on the Richter Scale shook the coastal region early Sunday morning, it said.

Ticket touts From page 1

reached the cinema hall area, eight unidentified miscreants started shouting calling them brother of mugger Manik. They started beating Sajal and Rana suspecting them as Sajal's brother Badal Hossain

filed a case accusing eight people but none was arrested till filing of this report last night.

Fatwa

From page 12 ber judge Justice Mainur Reza Chowdhury for hearing. Earlier on January 1, a division

bench comprising Justice Mohammad Golam Rabbani and Justice Nazmun Ara Sultana passed a historic judgement forbidding all sorts of Fatwa, including verbal one. The court in its judgement pro-nounced that no individual has legal authority to pronounce any Fatwa

Transports From page 12

export-import activities.
"We're not calling a strike but our drivers will not be able to run the transports from January 10 because of insecurity," said Ramesh. He said loading and unloading of

oods at Kamalapur container lepot, garments factories and other industries situated in Dhaka would be impossible because of the daytime ban on movement of trucks in the city.

Ramesh said that there was only one authorised terminal in the country for 50,000 trucks.

Other leaders of the four associations including Md Rustam Ali Khan, MR Ratan, Abu Taher, Christopher Gomez and Ledu Mia were also present at the press confer-

Turkey From page 12

travel abroad.

The recent clampdown on illegal immigrants comes in the wake of a tragic sea accident in which a Georgian-registered cargo ship, loaded with an estimated 80 stowaways trying to reach Europe, sank off Turkey's Mediterranean coast after running into a coral reef.

Thirty-two people were rescued after the disaster on Monday, and a Bangladeshi man was pulled alive from the sea on Tuesday.

But Turkish divers have so far

recovered only nine bodies and several mutilated body parts. Turkey is a major transit route for

Asians and Africans trying to reach western Europe overland or by boat.

Six die

the Ijtema venue.

Janaja of five of them was held at the Ijtema venue and janaja of one at Morkun graveyard. Adam Ali mentioned that many of those who come to the Ijtema are

elderly people. A number of them, though ailing, come with the belief that if they die here, they would get divine blessing and their soul would Meanwhile, sources at the 50bed Tongi Hospital said 123 people

from the Ijtema venue came to the hospital for treatment since the congregation began on Saturday. Of them, 74 were given first aid and 43 were admitted. Six of them were referred to

Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) and specialised hospitals



A 24-member students delegation of the Depauw University of the USA led by Prof. Terri Bonebright called on Dhaka University Vice-Chancellor Prof. A . K. Azad Chowdhury at the