

## **KARACHI: Press club under siege**

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By Our Staff Reporter

KARACHI, Nov 5: Police laid a four-hour siege to the Karachi Press Club, and arrested nine people, including five journalists, who were protesting against the government attempt to prevent the publication of a supplement by the Awam newspaper.

Those arrested were journalists Mohammad Mohsin, Shariq Ahmed, Nazeer Khan, Fazal-ur-Rahman and Asghar Shah, nationalist leader Hasil Bizenjo and National Workers Party Secretary-General Yousuf Mastikhan for agitating against the government action. Police also arrested labor leaders Farid Awan and Liaquat Sahi before they joined the protest at the KPC.

Earlier, the journalists community held a hurriedly-called protest meeting on the KPC lawn against the government plan to stop the supplement's publication. The protest was later joined in by civil society members, political leaders and social figures.

Nationalist leader Mir Hasil Khan Bizenjo and Muhammad Ali Shah, chairman of the Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum, condemned the government action against the media.

"The unity of people belonging to different walks of life is the need of the hour," said Mr Bizenjo in his brief speech. "We have to stand together to struggle against the newly-imposed martial law."

The 30-minute meeting decided to hold a protest demonstration outside the press club building, where the heavy contingent of police and Rangers disrupted the assembly of the journalists and civil society members. Scuffles between the two sides led to a baton-charge by police on the protesters. The police later surrounded the Karachi Press Club took charge of both the entrance and exit gates of the building at 3pm.

Earlier, the police arrested more than 200 activists of different political parties, including the Jamaat-i-Islami and the Pakistan People's Party, in different parts of the city in a move to prevent anti-government protests.

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\* From Dawn:

<http://www.dawn.com/2007/11/06/local3.htm>