Pak army chief tells press

For God's sake, don't drag

army into politics

ISLAMABAD, Dec 20: The

head of the Pakistan Army

General Asif Nawaz today dis-

missed any suggestion of the

army returning to power say-

ing the military no longer wanted to be involved in poli-

In comments published to-day in the local press, the day

after an unprecedented con-

frontation between President

Ghulam Ishaq Khan and op-

position leader Benazir Bhutto,

Asif promised the democratic

process would continue in

have already been held in the

country and there will be many

more elections in the future.

Asked about a possible re-

turn to martial law following

clashes Thursday outside par-

liament between Bhutto sup-

porters and police which left

75 injured, Asif said : "for

god's sake, don't drag the

Pakistan for more than half of

the 44 years since indepen-

dence from Britain and are

still often seen as the country's

Inter-Services Intelligence

(ISI) or any similar organisa

tion had been given the task

to investigate an alleged rape

Astf also denied that the

The army has ruled

army into politics again."

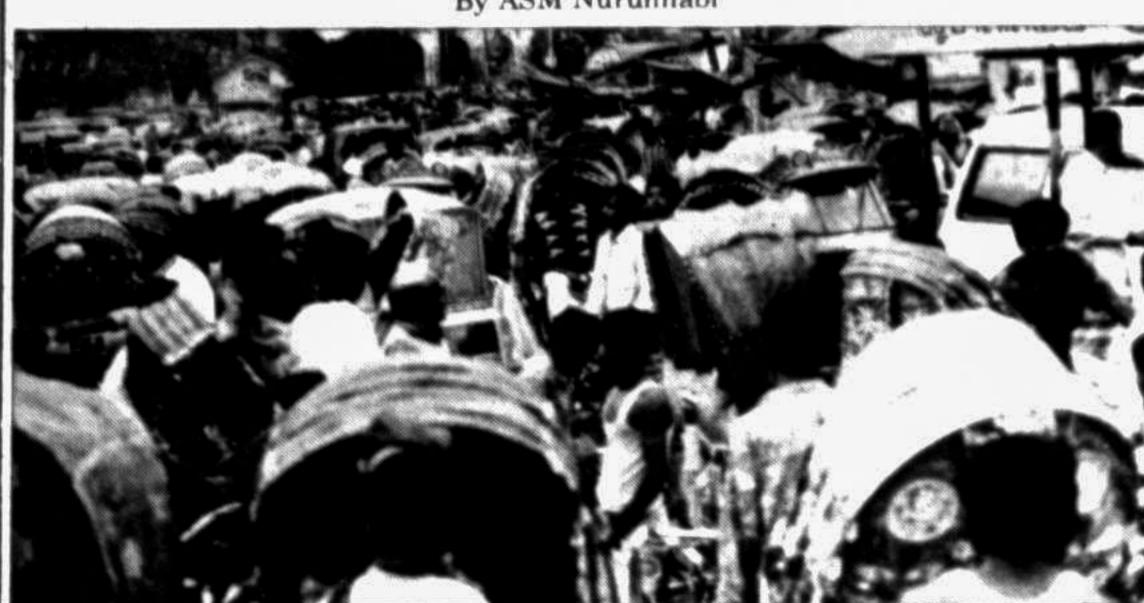
political arbitrators.

"Three general elections

tics, reports AFP.

Traffic tangles and garbage trucks

By ASM Nurunnabi



This city's public transport system at present is a shambles. Over the years, instead of Area. our noticing any improvement in this sector we have been observing gradual deterioration afflicting its multidimensional

One particular aspect which is a constant eye sore is the constant traffic jams at important cross-roads. There are, of course, many factors causing them, the principal among them being the slow moving cycle rickshaws, but to a careful observer, it seems that jams at those places can be eased substantially if the public buses, in particular, stop their practice of loading and offloading their passengers at their will at any spot near the cross-roads.

There are specific bus stands with zebra crossings for pedestrians, quite away from the busy road junctions. Yet it has been observed that the public buses in many cases do not stop at these bus stands, but prefer the crowded spots very near the road junctions, thereby adding to the risks of avoidable road accidents, and to the intensification of traffic

Some specific instances may be cited of this hazardous practice. Although there is a bus stand near the Sishu Park well away from the busy crossroads opposite the PG Hospital, the public buses have made it a practice of stopping near the gate of the Diabetic Hospital, where there is a heavy congestion of pedestrian and vehicular traffic. You will meet the same scenes at the Topkhama Road crossing across North-South Road, the road crossings at Nilkhet-Mirpur Road near the New trucks at peak traffic hours in

Market and also near Road No. 2 of Dhanmandi Residential

It is felt that if the traffic police are firm in dealing with these irregularities and compel the public buses to use the specific bus stands provided for them, the problem of traffic tams at busy cross-roads may be substantially cased.

It is also observed that the

vehicular traffic in the city is often reluctant to follow traffic lights at road junctions. The rickshaws are, in most cases, the worst offenders in this respect. We are often presented with a picture of free-for-all at such points. The worst sufferers in this situation are the pedestrians who want to cross the road from one side to another. There appears to be no. or little respect for zebra crossings which are encroached upon often with impunity by the vehicles.

It is also observed when a green signal at a road junction is about to change into red. some of the late coming vehicles in their attempt to beat the red signal, hasten their movement at break-neck speed, thereby adding considerably to the risk of accidents in possible cross traffic.

The traffic police, in the interest of smooth movement of vehicular traffic and convenience of pedestrians wanting move across, should be firm with those who violate traffic lights and encroach upon zebra

There is one particular irritating phenomenon which may turn the pit of your stomach. I refer to the obnoxious movements of municipal garbage the morning through the city's road network. This is unthinkable in any modern city, which

Dhaka is steadily growing into. The City Corporation authority may kindly look into this nauscating long-standing practice and ensure that the work of collection and carrying of garbage from different points in the city is taken up and completed during small hours of the morning, as is the practice in many modern ci-

The need for more public toilcts in also being increasingly felt in this rapidly expanding metropolis. There are, of course, some public toilets at isolated spots, but these hardly seem to meet the total needs. It, therefore, seems urgent that the municipal authorities should give their thought to the setting up of public toilets at more key points as a priority project even on the principle of "pay as you use" basis.

Another distressing aspect of our city life is to view the abominable disfiguration of the city's walls and buildings with various slogans and graffiti painted on them. Attempts are made from time to time to cover them up, but those writings on the walls never cease to re-appear. From the sociological point of view, this may by the reflection of a propensity of a class of people low in standards of education,

civic sense and public decency. Since this has become a constant eye-sore to the city dwellers, it is felt that the municipal authorities should think of ways of tackling the situation with suitable rules and regulations.

No headway in govt-SKOP talks

From Page 1 Col. 4 and Textile Workers and **Employees Federation Thurs**

The government was ready to include representatives from the SKOP in the proposed wage commission which would submit its report within three months of its formation.

The government, however, agreed to let the SKOP leaders know about the minimum wage figure to be fixed within next two months.

Although the SKOP leaders unanimously showed an uncompromising attitude in the yesterday's meeting with the Labour and Manpower Minister, they differed substantially on the question of the proposed work stoppage in the changed situation.

SKOP has already announced a 48-hour countrywide work stoppage from tomorrow 6 am to press its 5point charter of demands. Some important compo-

From Page 1 Col. 7

of personally heading an inter-

national committee to aid the

citizens of the former Soviet

details. Gorbachev's office said

possibility that Gorbachev

could take part in anything

from an international organi-

zation such as the United

Nations to some kind of pri-

facing severe food shortages as

winter comes on, the United

States on Friday sent its first

shipment of humanitarian aid

under a programme to dis-

tribute food supplies left over

from the Gulf War. A US mili-

tary transport plane left Italy

for St Petersburg carrying

150,000 pounds (68,000 kilo-

grams) of bulk foods and mili-

With the splintering union

it had no information.

vate group.

The reports gave few other

The comments raised the

nents of the SKOP maintained that it should go ahead with the work stoppage programme in case the government did not completely concede the

Samajtantrik Sramik Front. backed by Bangladesher Samajtantrik Dal (BSD), the labour front of Hasanul Hog Inu's JSD and the Trade Union Federation hold this opinion. Some components, how-

ever, argued that as the workers of jute and textile sectors had already withdrawn their road-and-railway barricade programme scheduled to begin at the same time, the SKOP should also go for signing an agreement with the government on the basis of the already agreed points. This faction felt that the SKOP programme would not be a complete success.

It apprehended non-cooperation from the workers of jute and textile sectors since their support would be regarded by the government as a breach of contract under the last agreements.

According to sources, among others, CPB-backed Trade Union Centre (TUC) held this opinion.

The rest of the SKOP components felt that in the given situation the SKOP should rather defer the work stoppage by two weeks and the talks with the government should be continued on the major issues as well as on the rest 75 which called for bilat-

eral discussions. According to the sources, the last option is likely to be accepted by the entire SKOP and it may announce the next

course of action today evening. The SKOP, however, in a statement issued to the press yesterday said that its 48-hour work stoppage programme remained unchanged as the government and SKOP could not reach consensus on the

one of Bhutto's close friends, saying it was 'a civil

Political tension has been mounting in Pakistan since the alleged assault on Farhana Veena Hayat, the daughter of a retired politician, at her home in Karachi by unidentifled armed men on November

the President's son-in-law, Irfanullah Marwat, of instigating the alleged assault. Marwat an advisor on Home Affairs to the Sindh provincial Chief Minister, has described the charge as baseless.

Inside parliament Thursday opposition MPs refused to take their scats during an annual address by Ishaq Khan, striking their desks and sustaining a notsy chorus of "go, go", "no, no' and 'fascist, fascist' for 35 minutes that made his

It was the first face-to-face confrontation between Bhutto, who heads the opposition Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Ishaq Khan, who sacked her as Prime Minister in August 1990 for alleged mis-

Winter session

From Page 1 Col. 7 with an inaugural address by President Abdur Rahman Biswas. The address which is expected to reflect the policies of the government in different sectors will be discussed at length in the House.

A number of ordinances including the Local Government (Upazila Parishad and Upazila Administration Reorganization) (repeal) Ordinance, 1991 will be placed before the House in the inaugural sitting.

Meanwhile, five pending bills on remunerations, privileges, and allowances of the President, the Prime Minister, and the Members of Parliament; now under scrutiny of a select committee may be taken up for disposal during the session.

Work of the select committee on the five bills have, however, not progressed much so far because only a few meetings have been held.

The Standing Committee on Rules of Procedure is working on proposals to amend the Rules of Procedure of the House to make it more effective in keeping with the switch over from presidential to parliamentary system. The Government under the amended constitution is accountable to the parliament, and so the rules need to be reshaped accordingly. Some old rules may be deleted and new ones inserted through the proposed amendment, sources say.

The Parliament is expected to witness heated debate, over the Indemnity Repeal Bill introduced by Mohammad Nasim, Chief Whip of the opposition; and the progress of work of the parliamentary committee on campus vio-

The Indemnity Repeal Bill is under the scrutiny of a parliamentary special committee. So far three meetings of the committee have been held.

Awami League leader Mohammad Nasim has criticised the government for not convening meeting of the committee. He has also threatened not to cooperate with the government and refrain from participation in the deliberations of the committee on

campus violence if a decision on the Indemnity Repeal Bill is not taken.

A Government source told the Daily Star on condition of anonymity that they have not obstructed the introduction of the Indemnity Repeal Bill. But how the government can call the Indemnity Ordinance of 1975 illegal. Only the court can give such a verdict. They would rather like the AL leaders to take up the matter in the court in the form of a writ petition.

Awami League leaders maintain that filing a writ petition could only be their second option. The government should first give a reply to their request to pass the Indemnity Repeal Bill that protects those who were responsible for the killings of August 15, 1975.

Train derailed near Feni

FENI, Dec 20: Train services between the port city of Chittagong and rest of the country resumed tonight after 9 hours of disruption, railway sources here said, reports

The rail communication remained suspended since 12.30 pm today following derailment of two boggies of Chittagong-bound Mahanagar Express near Sharishadi station here.

The train services resumed at 9-30 pm after the two boggies were removed from the track by railway cranes.

Railway authorities said none was hurt by the accident in which the last two boggies of the train just slipped off the line and came to a jolting halt. A relief train from

Chittagong arrived at the spot 'at about 2 pm and cut off the derailed boggies enabling the rest of the train to reach its destination.

The cause of the accident was yet to be ascertained. But, railway sources apprehended that" the mishap might have occurred because "buckling"-displacement of the track due to heat.

Shamir sees 'good sign'in talks

gotiations.

PARIS, Dec 20: Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak'Shamir expressed satisfaction Friday that all parties in the Middle East peace talks wanted to continue them and said the issue of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories was open to negotiation.

"We must continue," Shamir said in an interview with the French television channel Antenne 2. "After this first encounter (of Arab and Israeli negotiating teams in Washington), everyone decided to continue them. It's a good

He said the settlements "are a part of the territorial problem.

"We will negotiate on everything," he said. "And when we have fixed the borders, there won't be any dispute about settlements any more."

Referring to US President Bush's expressions of disappointment at the lack of progress, Shamir said: The Americans perhaps are accustomed to seeing immediate re-

In the Middle East, he said,

Reuter said President Bush expressed disappointment on Thursday with the lack of progress in the Middle East talks but said the United States would continue to act as an "honest broker" in the ne-

"you must have patience."

The United States had problems with some positions taken by both Israel and the Arab nations participating in the talks, Bush said. But he added: "We can't wave a wand and dictate."

Chinese team due today

A six-member Chinese friendship trade delegation arrives here today on a weeklong visit to explore possibilities for setting up joint venture industries and increasing bilateral trade, reports UNB.

The team will particularly discuss the possibilities of joint venture in sewing machine manufacturing industry, small scale cement factory and finished leather projects.



Shah Alam

Leper turns fake

By Staff Correspondent Police Friday arrested a beggar who was in disguise of a

leper to deceive passers-by. The police action came following a news item published in a local daily yesterday.

Shah Alam, 21, used to keep himself wrapped with sacks as a leper on the Farmgate over bridge.

Teigaon police interrogated him and had him examined at PG Hospital and found him in sound health.

A case was registered with Teigaon police in this connec-

Operation

From Page 1 Col. 8 Dhaka on Thursday.

Laparoscopic cholecysteetomy surgery was first per formed by Dr Philipe Mouret and his colleagues in France in 1987. Within the next twelve months this unique less invasive procedure was eagerly embraced by many surgeons throughout Europe, North America, Japan and other areas of the world because of the significant benefits in overall patient care.



Sarwat Khanom, the patient. -Star photo

Dr Sarder Abdun Naycem said that they have performed over 100 laparoscopic operations at the Tokyo University Medical Centre since 1990. A total of over 1000 such operations have been already performed in 50 institution throughout Japan, he added.

BIRDEM is likely to buy the equipment, costing between Taka 15 to 25 lakh, said Prof Motior Rahman.

Prof AK Azad Khan, Director, Research and Development of BIRDEM, said the laparoscopic operation process will be introduced in Bangladesh very soon. Trial operation on goats will be conducted initially starting on May next year.

Steel workers call off strike

Steel and Engineering Corporation Employees and Workers Federation have decided to call off their planned 48-hour strike scheduled to begin Sunday, reports UNB.

The decision was taken after fruitful discussions with the authorities Friday, a press release of the federation said.

Minister for Labour an Manpower Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan assured the federation leaders that demands of the union, which was pressing for their 12-point demand, would

be solved soon. The minister informed the union leaders that the government has in principle agreed to form national wage and production commission for the workers of the public sector industries, pay an advance of Tk 1500 subject to adjustment after implementation of wage commission report and bring constructive changes in the existing labour

surer, general secretary and

The corresponding con-

tenders from the 'White' panel

are Prof Dr SMA Facz of Soil

Science, Dr Jaheda Ahmed of

History, Prof Dr Md Shamsul

Huq of IBA, Prof Dr Sayced-ur-

Rahman of Bengali and Dr

Sayed Rashidul Hasan of

Marketing.

joint secretary respectively.

polling centres.

DUTA From Page 1 Col. 8 president, vice-president trea-

> Hossain (Ind), and Hafiz Rashid Talukdar (Ind).

The Midnight File

Tribesmen vow to avenge assault on Benazir friend

FATEH JANG(Pakistan), Dec 20: A tribal council here today called for the death of the alleged raptsts of Farhana Hayat the daughter of a veteran Pakistani politician and a friend of opposition leader Benazir Bhutto. More than 1,000 people of the Khattar Tribe of retired politician Sardar Shaukat Hayat attended the council. Chanting slogans against President Ghulam Ishaq Khan and his son-in-law, Irlanullah Marwat, they vowed to trace and bring to book the perpetrators of the alleged rape, reports AFP.

Bilateral approach is the best, says Sharif

NEW DELIII, Dec 20: Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Shartf has said a bilateral approach to solve the difference between India and Pakistan was the "best approach" instead of "going through a third channel". "I am very keen to normalise Pakistan's relationship with India, in fact improve them ... if we can talk directly to each other, face to face, it really helps a lot to solve the problems, and I have done that," Sharif said in an interview to the Independent Television News, a British TV channel. The interview was telecast today, reports PTI.

US lifts ban on high-tech sale to China

LOS ANGELES, Dec 20: The United States has decided to lift a ban on the sale of American Satellite parts and highspeed computers to China, a newspaper reported Friday. China made the lifting of the ban a condition of its willingness to abide by an international agreement that restricts the export of missiles, the Los Angeles Times reported. The move also is aimed at easing the tense relations between Washington and Beijing that developed after China's bloody 1989 crackdown on pro-democracy demonstrators in Beijing's Tlananmen Square, the paper said, reports AP-

Mandela, de Klerk close to agreement

JOHANNESBURG, Dec 20: The first session of South Africa's democracy talks ended optimistically today after the African National Congress (ANC) edged closer to accept ing the White government's commitment to a non-racial constitution, reports Reuter.

ANC President Nelson Mandela, the first speaker at the historic conference attended by 19 political movements, said the process towards adopting a postapartheid constitution was unstoppable.

"After (these talks) the situation in our country will be ir reversible... one thing is certain, the process towards real democracy is unstoppable," said Mandela, speaking in the Afrikans language of the White establishment

Mandela's speech is the strongest acknowledgement to date he now accepts President FW de Klerk's pledge that his government sees the move to reform as irreversible.

Delegations representing the White government, tribal leaders and anti-apartheid movements have gathered at a Johannesburg conference centre in a bid to agree a peaceful way to extend political power from the White

AAPSO meet demands Suu Kyi's release

By Staff Correspondent

The four-day consultative conference of SAARC country national committees of Afro-Asia People's Solidarity Organisation (AAPSO) concluded in the capita on Friday.

The key feature of the concluding days was sending two separate messages to the Burmese government and opposition leader Aung San Suu In the message to Myanmer

government the AAPSO strongly deplored the unwarranted and illegal restriction imposed upon Madam Aung San Suu Kyi. "It is a gross violation of the

fundamental human rights and international norms that she is not even allowed to meet her husband and children," the message said.

The message also said it is more deplorable that she was prevented from receiving the Nobel Peace Price in person.

The participants of the conference demand withdrawal of all restrictions imposed on her and that the Myanmer government allow her the rightful place in her country according to the wishes of the people, the message added.

In the message to Suu Kyi, the participants felicitated the detained leader on her winning the Nobel Peace Prize.

Bakerganj

From Page 1 Col. 8

Nine candidates including three independent are contesting in the by-election.

The are: Mujibur Rahman Sarwar (BNP), Faziul Haq (AL) Shawkat Hossain (JP), Abul Hasnat Noor Mohammad Nurullah (Jamaat), Abdus Sattar (Bangladesh United Communist League), Krishak Mohammad Sadek (Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Mukti Andolan) Ahmed Babul (Ind), SM Delwar

ernment selected by conference delegates, but said the main anti-apartheid movement

establishment enclave.

The moment of truth has

now arrived for all of us. We

can no longer avoid our tryst

with destiny," said Supreme

Court Judge Ismail Mahomed.

way with minimum pomp and

ceremony with the leader of

each delegation giving a 15-

would accept an interim gov-

was resolute that an assembly

Mandela indicated the ANC

The two-day talks got under

co-chairman of the talks.

minute policy speech.

to adopt a new constitution must be selected by universal suffrage. "An interim government, important as it may be, is but the product of agreement between ourselves as political

will not be the outcome of full participation by the people of our country," he said. He said the talks named the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA), provided the best chance for a peaceful settlement to the country's political problems

parties and organisations. It

gated in 1910.

since the White-created Union

of South Africa was promul-

Khaleda From Page I Col. 4 **Education Servi-ces Sunethra** Ranasinghe were present to greet Begum Zia.

She was presented with bouquets and taken to the presentation line.

Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman, who is already in Colombo and Bangladesh High Commi-ssioner to Sri Lanka Shamsher M Choudhury were also present at the

The Prime Minister's arrival was heralded by the beating of Kandyan drums as she alighted from the special flight of Bangladesh Biman.

The airport ceremony was also marked by traditional Kandyan dance and drum beat-The Katunayaka Airport

was decorated and illuminated to welcome the dignitaries coming here to attend the SAARC summit.

From the airport, Begum Khaleda Zia flew to the city by a special helicopter accompanied by the Sri Lankan Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister is leading Bangladesh delegation to the sixth SAARC summit.

Tomorrow's summit will be more "business-like" since all preparatory work leading to the summit had been completed before the annual sum-

mit was postponed. The Bangladesh delegation to the summit includes, Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman, Begum Shamsunnahar Khwajah Ahsanullah, MP and Foreign Secretary Reaz

Rahman. SAARC summit

From Page 1 Col. 4 travel within the seven na-

tions, the officials said.

More than 3,500 policent have been deployed in Colombo for the summit. Army troops and a special anti-terrorist task force were on alert, said a senior police official who requested anonymity.

Armed troops conducted random scarches of vehicles as a precaution against possible attacks by Tamil separatist guerillas who have been fight ing an 8-year-old war for an

independent homeland. Related story on page-0

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Published by the Editor on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd., 52 Motifheel C/A, Dhaka-1000 and printed by him at Offset Printing Dialogue Publications Ltd., 19 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1215. Editorial, News & Commercial offices: 28/1, Toynbee Circular Road, Dhaka-1000. Tel: Editorial & News: 863036. Commercial: 863035. PABX-246023-4. Fax No. 88-02-863035. GPO Box No. 3257 GRAM: DAILY STAR, DHAKA.

tary rations, US officials an-

Gorbachev may opt for social work

In the next two weeks, the European Community plans to fly dirs 3.4 million in food and medical aid to Moscow and St Petersburg, the first installment of a dlrs 260 million

emergency relief programme. NATO and the European Community, meanwhile, have indicated they are nearly ready to recognize the Soviet republics as independent states. In Washington, President Bush said US recognition was "going

to take a little bit of time." Yeltsin informed NATO on Friday that he hopes Russia can become a member of the

Yeltsin said in a statement

defense alliance, once a staunch foe of the Kremlin. Today we are raising a question of Russia's membership in NATO regarding it as a long-term political aim,"

read to a meeting of NATO foreign ministers in Brussels by the Soviet ambassador to Belgium.

The NATO response was non-committal. "Nothing is excluded," said NATO Secretary-General Manfred Woerner. But he emphasized that Yeltsin had said membership was a long-term goal.

Yeltsin got a less equivocal reception in Italy, where he was greeted virtually as a head of state and given dirs 1.3 billion in credits Thursday. Related story on page-5

Markovic quits

protesting 'war budget' BELGRADE, Dec 20 Yugoslavia federal Prime

Minister Ante Markovic an-

nounced his resignation today.

saying that next year's budget

was a "war budget."

His announcement came after the Belgrade daily Borba reported that Markovic handed in his resignation on Thursday because of disagreement over the military share of the 1992 budget.

Wednesday, Bhutto accused

voice inaudible.

management and corruption.

Outside thousands of stone throwing Bhutto supporters clashed with riot police who made baton charges and fired tear gas.