UN must keep up present

tempo: Mustafiz

Mostafizur Rahman told the 46th UN General Assembly today

that 'we must seize the tide whereby the world body had re-

asserted its importance and demonstrated its potential for

collective action.' He said the UN members should carry forward this momentum to peacefully resolve regional disputes,

promote disarmament, contain adverse global forces and

Airlifting of medicine to

flood-hit areas begins

Wednesday to the flood-hit and diarrhoea affected northern

region of the country. According to official sources here last

Airlifting of medicines and water purifying tablets began

UNITED NATIONS (NY), Oct 2 : Foreign Minister A S M

## More parties want repeal of Ordinance

By Staff Correspondent

More political parties and organisations Wednesday protested promulgation of the President Election (Repeal) Ordinance and demanded its immediate repeal

Jamaat-e-Islami described it as an 'undemocratic step' and demanded its immediate withdrawal.

in a statement Acting Ameer Abbas Ali Khan and Secretary General Matiur Rahman Nizami, MP, of the party said "at this nascent stage of democracy, such an ordinance is unwarranted, and against democratic spirit." Democratic rights of the members of parliament has been curtailed and the constitution encroached upon for protecting party interest, they said. The people, they said, did not expect such an ordinance from the present government.

UNB adds: Awamt League leader Tofael Ahmed, MP, said the "constitutional crisis" created through the promulgation of the new ordinance should be resolved before the October 8 presidential election.

The matter should be set tled by a full bench of the High Court before the election," he told UNB.

Tofael, Organising Secretary of the Awami League, said the government pushed the nation into a serious political and constitutional crisis by issuing a controversial and unconstitutional ordinance on the president election. He recalled with gratitude

the rule of the Supreme Court

for its historic verdict concerning the 8th Constitutional Amendment and hoped that the present crisis would also be resolved in the court of law.

The presidential election should not be held keeping the problem alive, he added.

Ganatantri Party leader Suranjit Sengupta, MP, suggested the constitutional crisis created by the "controverstal" ordinance be resolved in a competent forum of Supreme Court before the October 8 presidential election.

"Otherwise, it will threaten democracy and encourage its enemies", he told UNB tonight.

Sengupta, a prominent parltamentarian, appealed to the Acting Chief Justice to exercise his discretionary administrative power judiciously to resolve the "great national cri-

He hoped that Supreme Court would play its glorious role as it did all the time in "our democratic and constitutional struggle."

Replying to a question, he said there is still time to resolve the present crisis at po-First of all, he said, the gov-

ernment must withdraw the ordinance and amend the President Election Act 1991.

Secondly, election schedule should be deferred by an ordinance to create an opportunity for fielding a consensus candidate for presidency in consultation with the Leader of the Opposition and other opposition groups in parliament.

## News commentary

From Page 1 Col. 3 under the Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed in March after the parliamentary polls. Nor it had any effective talks on this issue with other parties represented in parlia-

Democracy is not autocracy, and democracy can function only on the basis of support of others, which can be won through a continuous process of inter-actions and an exchange of views.

It is reported that besides only a few, who piloted the Ordinance, none of the cabinet ministers or state ministers knew anything about it. It indicates there was no meeting of the cabinet to take such an important decision like promulgation of an ordinance amending the Election of President Act.

Two or three persons in power, with an ulterior motive to outsmart their colleagues, reportedly misled the Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and went to the residence of the Acting President to get it signed by him. And the mischief has well been retorted from within the ruling party and outside by the Opposition who took the opportunity to reap some political benefits out of it and inflict injury on the democratic image of the

The sponsors of the candidature of Justice Badrul Haider Chowdhury know it well that their candidate has the least chance to win the presidential election, but the purpose of

their landing in the race has been substantially served due to the so-called wisdom of a handful of persons of the ruling party.

So, what should worry Begum Zia is not the Opposition reaction but the polemics in her party which appear to be developing more alarmingly over the last few months. The crisis of confidence that haunts the BNP high command can be removed only through democratic practice in the party and narrowing of the communication gap among the party lead-

Honestly speaking, we are not used to democratic practice either at home, in office or in an organisation and democratic culture did not develop over the years because of military or autocratic rules frequently imposed upon.

This is for the first time the people of this country are expecting that democracy will gain ground. But the most important factor in the functioning of democracy is the behaviour and attitude of the political parties, both in power and outside. As the party in power, the BNP is supposed to share the major responsibility of building rapport with and an understanding among the political forces so that democracy can operate unobstructed despite differences of opinion.

People are the ultimate judge in a democracy and let them decide what they will do if the Opposition does not re-

## Badrul to go to court

From Page 1 Col. 3 the President may make and promulgate such ordinance, provided it is not inconsistent with the Constitution itself.

Justice Choudhury quoted Article 7 (2) which says the Constitution is the supreme law and any law inconsistent with the Constitution is void.

"This Ordinance is a subordinate legislation and such law can not amend any provision of the Constitution ... Therefore sufficient foundation has been made for my contention in a court of law for challenging the Ordinance."

He said when he filed nomination papers on September 25 there was no such law. "But what happened on 28th that the law has been promulgated, although it saw the light of the day only on the

People are now questioning the bonaside of the law itsel on the ground that it was backdated and malafide, he said.

He further said Alhai Makbul Hossain, the third presidential candidate, had publicly declared that he would withdraw his candidature in his favour and which he did finally.

"Now I'm posing question before the nation for whom this Ordinance has been promulgated and with what ulterior purposes," questioned the former Chief Justice. "For

whom the bell tolls."

Citing an English judge, he said such things were done in Tudor England when the king could promulgate ordinance nominating his own advisors in the Privy Council by sham electoral process. "It is a new kind of despotism."

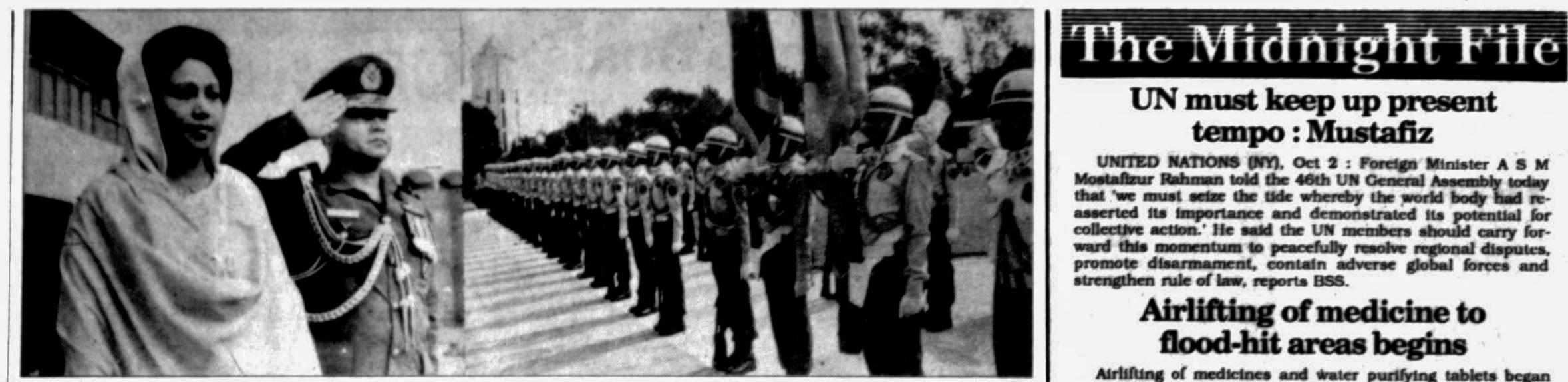
BSS adds: Justice Badru Haider Choudhury has appealed to all members of parliament, irrespective of party affiliations, to support his candidature to make the highest office of the country "a symbol of national unity."

In a printed appeal, also circulated to the press, the former Chief Justice claimed that he did not become the presidential candidate of any particular political party, nor is he a politician. He said he was the 'flag carrier of national consensus and understanding because he believed that the office of the president of the republic should be kept beyond party and political considerations and be regarded as the symbol of national unity and understanding.

Justice Choudhury congratulated the MPs for their "historic role" in passing the Constitution 12th Amendment Bill, saying the nation would remember their role in making the parliament accountable to the people.

#### Editor : S. M. Ali

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Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia taking salute from a smartly turned out Air Force contingent at a guard of honour during her visit to the Air Force Headquarters on Wednesday. Air Force Chief Air Vice-Marshal Altaf Hossain Chowdhury was present on the occasion.

## Transport workers

From Page 1 Col. 8 a meeting of the workers at Mahakhali at 11 am Thursday will decide the new action programme." "We may have to go for an indefinite strike nationwide," he said.

The Federation supported the strike of its North Bengal unit and demanded acceptance of the seven-point demands.

The North Bengal unit of the Federation started an indefinite transport strike in 16 districts from September 27 to realise its demands that include issuance of appointment letters, wage hike, implementation of previously signed agreement with the authorities, removal of the Deputy Commissioner of Naogaon, release of arrested leaders and withdrawal of false cases against them.

The federation leader said that the strike may be averted by immediate issuance of appointment letters to 1,400 workers of Naogaon where the crisis started about two months ago.

An agreement in this regard was signed with the owners and administration of Naogaon which was not implemented.

He said the Deputy Commissioner of Naogaon is largely responsible for the crisis. When the leaders went to Naogaon to discuss the issue the DC threatened them instead. The federation president

however did not explain the criteria of getting an appointment letter by saying that "All the existing workers should get appointment letters." On Monday the Additional

District Magistrate of Naogaon told The Daily Star over telephone that the crisis was resolved on August 31 with the help of local MPs and politi-But the federation called an

September 27 without any nosucs, he also said.

tice reviving the previous is-General Secretary of the Federation Abdur Rashid, Vice President Habibur Rahman and Abdur Rouf, Joint Secretary

Roy Romesh and Shahjahan

Khan MP were present at the

From Page 1 Col. 7

reserves, even more than

India's current level of hold-

ings with its ten times larger

economy than that of

Bangladesh in terms of Gross

Domestic Product (GDP), rep-

resented not the resilience of

the Bangladesh economy, as

the knowledgeable circles

noted. It reflected mainly slug-

gish import demand, caused by

a downswing in overall eco-

activities will have adverse im-

plications for the govern-

ment's overall revenue re-

ceipts in the coming months.

Imports account for most re-

curring revenue earnings of

further lowered the margin for

opening the import Letters of

Credit (LCs) to 10 per cent for

activating the import trade.

But, the prospects for imports

picking up will largely depend

on revival of domestic demand

and higher levels of economic

activities, the knowledgeable

opment expenditures other

than meeting the salaries of

the project officials have been

on a much lower side than

what was projected for first

quarter of current fiscal year.

Salaries for project officials ac-

count normally for about 30

per cent of total expenditures

Development Programme

The official sources said

that revenue receipts in the

first quarter of the current fis-

cal year were higher than the

level of the corresponding pe-

riod last year. The increase in

tax revenue receipts was more

than ten per cent but it was

still short of the level match-

ing the overall annual target

view of the economic situation

According to the latest re-

for the current fiscal year.

the Annual

The government's devel-

Of late, the government has

The slowed-down import

But higher foreign exchange

September 30.

nomic activities.

the government.

circles said.

under

indefinite strike from Bogra on

press conference.

Our Bogra correspondent adds: Five days of the continuous transport strike has caused fuel crisis in the district and prices of essentials have also shot up.

Sufferings of the people have been multiplied by the

#### Political pluralism to be proposed in CPB congress

By Staff Correspondent

The Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) has included political pluralism in its proposed political resolution to be placed in its Fifth congress beginning today at the Institution of Engineers' audi-

The six-day congress which will continue till October will not adopt the document circulated earlier on the basis of the Ajoy Commission Report in line with Glasnost and Perestroika in the Soviet Union.

instead of the document the congress will consider a political resolution drafted by a three-member committee.

For the first time the CPB congress being held after four years (its Fourth congress was held in 1986) will not be attended by any representative of the Soviet Union or any other communist party of any foreign country.

However, the communist parties of Cuba, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Nepal and India have sent greetings to the Congress. CPB leader Shamsuddoha

talking to this correspondent said that for the first time the CPB would contain political pluralism in its constitution for which the central committee will move a resolution in the

#### Workers' service age to be reduced

The government is considering limiting services of industrial workers up to 60 years of age. reports UNB.

of Commerce and Industry

(MCCI), the major macro or

overall economic indicators

deteriorated in the first

quarter (July-September) of

ties in all sectors of the econ-

that the problems in the in-

dustrial sector "are fairly

widespread." Its preliminary

survey of selected units

showed that production and

sale of some major industrial

products declined in the first

quarter of the current fiscal

year. Production in most jute

mills declined by 8.4 per cent

and many jute mills could not

buy the requisite quantity of

raw jute due to fund con-

clined for most items though

production showed some im-

provements, the MCCI survey

showed. While production of

yarn and cloth rose by 6.33

per cent and 5.43 per cent re-

spectively, sales of the same

declined by 24 per cent and

27 per cent respectively. As a

result, stock of finished goods

production and sales dropped

by 47.35 per cent and 46.71

per cent respectively. Sales of

electronic industries declined

by 30 to 40 per cent. In the

tca sector, production

dropped by 5.94 per cent in

the first two months of fiscal

1991-92 while average export

unit price decreased by 4.21

for each sector of the econ-

omy, notwithstanding some

specific problems, has been

the inadequate decline of

credit facilities, the MCCI said

in its review. The expansion of

credit to the private sector

was only 11.47 per cent in

1990-91, the lowest rate

The situation reflected fur-

ther reduction in credit flows

to the private sector in the

The most common factor

In the steel sector, both

In the textiles, sales de-

"There are signs of instabili-

The MCCI said in its review

the current fiscal year.

omy", it said.

straints.

piled up.

per cent.

since 1987-88.

#### Campus peace demos accuse each other of terrorism By DU Correspondent

Various student organisa tions Wednesday continued their demonstrations for a violence free campus but accused each other of unleashing terror in the educational institutions.

They however demanded permanent settlements of dis-

The demonstrating student organisations were the BNPbacked Jativatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), Awami Leaguebacked Chhatra League (S-A) and Democratic Student Alliance (DSA).

The JCD rally held at the DUCSU building premises resented Tuesday's rampage by the BCL workers and alleged that the Awami League and its student front were creating anarchy since the BNP assumed power to destabilise the

country. It said the activities of the alleged killers of Dr Shamsul Alam Khan Milon had increased remarkably in recent days which caused a severe deterioration of the campus si-

The rally threatened to oust all miscreants from the campus if this situation prevailed. It was addressed by Nazimuddin Alam, Elias Ali and

Ali Akkas Nadim. BCL (S-A) rally held at the 'Aparajeo Bangla' termed the government as autocratic and said that it was trying to foil the progressive student movement by using its police

force illegally. It strongly condemned Tuesday's police action on the peaceful demonstration of the students saying it hindered the ongoing process to institutionalise democracy.

The BCL rally blamed the JCD's 'armed hoodlums' for campus-violence and demanded their immediate ar-

The rally was addressed by Ashim Kumar Ukil and Golam Mostafa Suzan.

Democratic Student Alliance (DSA) rally held in Madhu's Canteen premises said that the government was showing irresponsibility in solving the problems of the educational institutions. Recessionary signals

> first quarter of 1990-91. Excess funds with the com-

mercial banks have gone up

and the earlier decision of the

government in April to lower

the cash reserve requirements

from 10 per cent to eight per

cent did not help improve the

the government's move to go

for "softer options" like devalu-

ation instead of going for sort-

ing out the real issues with the

representative fora of trade

and industry to reverse the

process of economic decelera-

crease the government rev-

enue in the form of increased

import duties and Value Added

Tax (VAT) but, in reality, it will

be counterproductive on ac-

count of higher debt service

liabilities for foreign loans", it

The MCCI said that devalua-

tion without corresponding

correction of balance of pay-

ment imbalances would be a

Inspite of devaluation, the

country's balance of trade

deficits increased in recent

pressed its serious concern

over the growth of current ex-

penditures of the government,

the decline in public sector

development spending in real

terms and plummeting private

sector investments in the re-

cent years. It said that domes-

tic demand "is the most pow-

erful mover of the economy"

while pleading strongly for ef-

fective investment and sup-

portive policies for an early

Meanwhile, the govern-

ment, the official sources said,

will go for a massive public

works programme to buoy up

the economy. There will be no

investment cutback in the

public sector and the Annual

Development Programme

(ADP) of Taka 7500 crore will

be kept intact, they added.

economic recovery.

The chamber body ex-

sure invitation to "debt trap.

"Devaluation may help in-

The chamber body resented

situation.

pointed out.

years, it noted.

#### Employers oppose Govt-SKOP deal

Star Economic Report

Bangladesh Employers

Details on page 7

## Aquino gives US 3 years to

MANILA, Oct 2: Abandoning plans for a national referendum on retaining a US naval base, President Corazon Aquino said Wednesday she would give the United States no more than three years to leave its Subic Bay base, reports AP.

oppose the US military presence said they believe three years is too long for the 7,000 Americans to leave Subic, the largest US naval base in Asia.

#### US team From Page 1 Col. 8

infant well-care, and perform minor surgical procedures. AVMT is a non-profit mo-

providing emergency health care to people in Third World and disaster-afflicted countries. Most recently, AVMT members provided emergency medical care in Kuwait and

general or vascular surgeon, an orthopedie surgeon, an anesthesiologist, a family practicomplement of nursing staff and other volunteers.

#### Credit freeze

DESA, the Minister said that the organisation would be responsible for power distribution and revenue collection in the greater Dhaka region. DESA would buy electricity in bulk at 132 kv level from PDB and would sell it to consumers. "this will make DESA accountable which will keep it active to collect revenue from the consumers in time."

"The survey followed by computerised billing will help to stop pilferage of electricity.' The Minister mentioned that the pilferage was a major cause of high system in Dhaka region. In Dhaka city, the rate of pilferage in domestic uses was higher in posh areas like Gulshan and Banani than in others. He admitted that there was pilferages also in industries and commercial establishments that contributed to increase system loss.

Replying to a question, Dr Mosharraf said that the improvement of power distribution management was not possible with erstwhile 'Dhaka Electric Supply' since it was only a zonal office under PDB, and it had not accountability. Now, the employees of

The Minister said that the PDB and they will also have trade union rights

## -PID photo

Association (BEA) on Wednesday opposed the moves by the government to negotiate wages and other related demands with Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parisad

SKOP, the BEA said, has no legal status as any Collective Bargaining Agent (CBA). The SKOP came into being under martial law regime in 1984, noted BEA president M Anis ud Dowla in a statement to the press. He stated that any wage settlement with unregistered bodies like SKOP "is a penal offence."

# leave Subic Bay

But several senators who

bile medical and surgical unit

The mobile team includes a tioner, and a foot and ankle specialist along with a full

The team will arrive with 5,000 pounds of medical supplies and equipment.

### From Page 1 Col. 6

Dr Mosharraf informed that the private consultants would be appointed to conduct survey on maximum as well as minimum power requirement at consumer level. This survey would help DESA to ascertain rate of consumption and to process correct billing through computers.

Dhaka Electric Supply will serve under the DESA, but they will get the option for working under PDB. Similarly, the employees of PDB will get the chance to give options for working under DESA and the opportunity will remain for six months.

employees of DESA will enjoy same facilities that exist in

#### night, a Bangladesh Air Force plane flew to Sayedpur today with adequate supplies of medicines including orsaline, IV fluid, antibiotics and other life saving drugs to gear up medical relief to check the spread of diarrhoea in the northern region, reports BSS.

strengthen rule of law, reports BSS.

rocket fuel spill MOSCOW, Oct 2: A fire in the missile shaft of a Soviet submarine on a training exercise caused a large amount of rocket fuel to be spilled in the White Sea off the northern coast of Russia, Tass reported Wednesday. The accident occurred Friday while the submerged submarine was trying to launch a missile in the exercise, the news agency said, quot-

Soviet sub accident causes

## **World Bank terms**

ing what it called reliable sources, reports AP.

From Page 1 Col. 4 and specific steps would be needed to improve the performance of the badly managed power sector operations before lifting of its credit suspension.

The steps, the World Bank said, should include: immediate implementation of proper procedures for miter reading and billing, aggressive campaign for disconnecting defaulting consumers particularly the large High Tension (HT) consumers, transfer of miter readers and others involved in commercial operations who have been in their present position for more than three years and selective dismissal of corrupt employees. Such steps, it stressed, are needed to improve cash collections and reduce system loss in electric power sector.

The World Bank, to recall suspended on September 4 last any withdrawal by Bangladesh from a 160 million dollar fund committed by the former under an earlier approved energy sector project loan (Credit 2016-Bangladesh) The with holding of energy project loan was announced on reasons of non-commencement of DESA's operations as well as failure of the government to reduce the staggering system loss running as high as 41 per cent, the record level in the world. Alongwith the World Bank, other multilateral and bilateral donors also suspended any fresh energy sector credits to Bangladesh. Total amount of development funds, frozen in the process, amounted to over 650 million dollars, according to sources.

The sources said, the average system loss in electric power sector in greater Dhaka zone is about 50 per cent, entailing a revenue loss of about Taka 750 crore a year. The

greater Dhaka accounts for over 40 per cent of the total domestic consumption. The high system loss has caused the world's highest electricity tariff in Bangladesh adding to the sufferings of the common users. The highest tariff is accounted for by the fact that 100 per cent electricity cost is being charged to only 52 per cent of the saleable units (barring some unavoidable technical system loss).

electricity consumption in

Meanwhile, the agreement between the government and the PDB employees unions has come under strong criticism from local trade and industry circles. A leading chamber body said that the agreement reflected the policy of appeasement towards the corrupt elements. It restricted the rights of the government to take stern actions against "dishonest employees" and other future moves to improve the operational efficiency in power sector. No holding company operation or move for privatising the distribution system would be allowed under the agreement, the same

chamber body further said. The government, after deferring launching of the DESA four times due to stiff resistance from the PDB employees unions, finally made it operational from October 1 through an agreement with the unions.

Interpol Gen Secy

arrives today The Secretary General of the Interpol, R.E.Kendell, will arrive here today on a four-day visit to Bangladesh. This would be his first visit here after Bangladesh has been elected for the first time a member of the Executive Committee of the interpol which plays an important role in furthering

'international cooperation for

law enforcement', reports BSS.

# Writ moved

From Page 1 Col. 5 the party bosses, not by their own consensus. It is the legislation 'in terrom' and hence fully malafide and as such liable to be fully void."

In its order the singlemember bench observed, "It appears that the application for rule and stay involves a question of great public importance of urgent nature and interpretation of law relating to the Constitution."

"As the prayer for stay also calls for consideration of merits of the application so far as it relates to the prayer for issuing a rule which is not within the competency of a singlemember bench, I am of the view the matter may be heard by a larger bench for consideration and determination of both the prayers made and the points raised in the application. Let the matter be placed before the Chief Justice for order.'

The difference of opinion between the Government and the Opposition over the mode of election of the president dates back to July when the legislators were scrutinizing a number of Constitution Amendment Bills of the Government and the Opposition for paving the way for switchover to parliamentary democracy.

The government's Constitution 12th Amendment Bill initially stood for inserting a new schedule (fifth schedule) in the Constitution providing for election of the president by an open ballot while the AL bill had stood for restoration of the second schedule (deleted through the Fourth Amendment) for holding presidential election through se-

cret ballot. The difference was ironed the Parliamentary

Standing Committee on Constitution Amendment Bills on the basis of an understanding that neither of the schedules would be inserted. Instead the government would pass an ordinary law providing for the election of president and the AL would not be a party to it if provision was made for voting

through open ballot Awami League MPs had staged a walkout when the bill was passed in the House. The report of the Select Committee on Constitution Amendment Bills was, however, unanimous.

The Opposition had made up its mind to take up the issue politically. When the government promulgated the September 28 Ordinance amending the Election of President Act, 1991 making it more stringent, they preferred to take to the court.

Deputy Attorneys General A F M Hasan Arif and Salehuzzaman were present in the chamber of Justice Habibur Rahman Khan when the Writ petition was moved on

Wednesday. Lawyers who represented the petitioners were hopeful that an order from the Chief Justice would be available today (Thursday) or the day after

Coordination Council of the Bar Associations of Bangladesh at # meeting at the Supreme Court Bar Association building in the morning demanded repeal of the Election of President (Amendment) Ordinance which, the meeting said in a resolution, practically amounted to an amendment to Article 70 of the Constitution. The meeting was presided over by Shamsul Huq Chowdhury, Convener of the Coordination Council.

## Meanwhile,