The Midnight File

US, Cuba reach accord

on refugees

Cuba reached an agreement today aimed at stemming the

exodus of Cuban refugees at sea, the White House said. The agreement was reached during discussions in New York between Cuban and US negotiators, said officials travelling

with President Bill Clinton. The accord calls for the legal immigration of at least 20,000 Cubans into the United States

Stolen uranium seized in Russia

pounds) of uranium-238 apparently stolen from a plant in a

central Russian city, news reports said Friday. It was the

second seizure of stolen industrial-grade uranium in less than

a month, coming amid heightened Western concerns over the

Lankan troops kill

safety of nuclear materials in Russia, reports AP.

MOSCOW, Sept 9: Police have seized 100 kilograms (220

NEW ORLEANS (Louisiana). Sept 9: The United States and

DOWN TO EARTH

Condition of Women Industrial Workers in City-II

LAND HOLDING. That deprivation drives women to join the fact that the majority of the female workers come from tamilies seems to be related to the pressures created by increasing landlessness and shrinking of the traditional agro-based income opportunities in the rural area.

FAMILY INCOME: That ur-

WORKING HOURS: In garment factories where women force, daily overtime of 3-4 hours is customary. To meet

BENEFITS: In the govern large establishments, the official holiday list is generally folernment managed establish vate establishments, especially the smaller ones, such as gar-

not even the government managed ones have creches, which are stipulated under the exist ing labour laws. The absence of creches give rise to problems related to the safety and health of babies of working mothers.

AWARENESS: The workers are conscious about their poor working conditions. There is sometimes deep resentment about irregularity in payment for overtime, especially in garment factories where overtime is a regular feature of the production process.

Even in the large textile and jute mills managed by government, the lack of physical amenities regarding toilet facilities, ventilation, and light and anxiety about babies left under the dubious care of elder children, neighbours and very young child-minders leads to psychological tensions among women workers. The most significant factor of unhappiness contributing to unhappiness and resentment. however, is their job insecurity which plagues private estab lishments, including rice mi lls, construction, garments, hosieries.

By and large, the women workers seldom articulate their grievances particularly in front of their superiors. Partly the reason is that they are socialised to be patient in the face of adversity and to suffer inconvenience in silence. Partly they are afraid of losing

Women Customers in **Kutcha Bazars**

dence, it was mostly a male

domain to make purchases in kutcha or vegetable markets Nowadays that burden seems to have shifted to female shoulders in many cases. The number of women shoppers in city's kutcha bazars has been steadily increasing. In social standing, they range from the middle class to high-level ones travelling in cars. They engage in such activities either from sheer necessities of family life or just as mere hobbies as in the case of high-income

The kutcha bazars where women can go conveniently are few and far between in the city, such as New Market Kawran Bazar, Gulshan mar kets Nos 1 and 2. The way population is increasing in the city with growing intensification of their activities, the problems faced by women who go for outside activities are also growing. In the past, it was estimated that 90 per cent males used to make such shopping. Nowadays, the figure seems to have come down to 30 per cent.

The main difficulty that bothers women shoppers is overcrowding where women shoppers jostle with men. To give relief in such situations. the strong feminists advocate establishment of separate kutcha bazars for women in suitable locations. A more practical and easy solution seems to be to set apart an area in each kutcha bazar exclusively for women where var ious items of family necessities including kitchen items will be on sale for women customers during certain fixed hours of the day. In such situations, the overcrowding may be more bearable for women shoppers.



Savedabad bus terminal in the city during yesterday's transport strike.

- Star photo

British MPs on impasse

From Page 1 Col 5 tion commission with ade quate powers to hold elections without any interference from the executive wing of a state Andrew also attached importance to providing adequate logistics to the election commission for conducting polls independently.

Opposing 'excessive use of money' in elections, the visiting MPs suggested limiting the poll campaign period to two or three weeks. They also underlined the role of local governments in ensuring transparency in the election pro-

About the negotiations between the country's opposing political camps, the British parliamentarians said 'We have met leaders of both the sides and discussed the contentious issue, but it seems to us that there has so far been no real dialogue between them.

"The BNP would go ahead with its proposed electoral process reforms bill, but the impression we got from our meeting with ruling party leader and Deputy Leader of the House was that it was not going to move fast", he said.

Sanjay Dutt denied bail

NEW DELHI, Sept 9: Hindi movie hero Sanjay Dutt was denied bail by India's Supreme Court Friday, upholding his detention under a tough antiterrorism law in connection with the serial bombing of Bombay last year, reports AP.

Dutt, who has starred in dozens of popular action movies, was jailed July 4 on charges of illegally possessing an AK-56 assault rifle. Prosecutors linked him to the explosion of 13 bombs in office buildings, hotels and the Bombay Stock Exchange in March 1993 that killed more than 300 people.

Dutt was charged under the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act, or TADA, which in ternational critics have called a draconian law that suspends the civil rights of the accused.

The Supreme Court said that under TADA it was up to the defence to prove that the possession of weapons was unrelated to the bombing. Dutt had appealed a decision denying him bail by the Bombay court that is trying 192 suspects in the case.

On the other hand "it appeared to us that the Awami League has been entrenched into its original position on the issue of a caretaker government," the parliamentarians

They, however, felt that the question of the Prime Minister stepping down before elections would eventually be the central theme of a possible dialogue — be it open or secret - between the opposing

Expressing concern over the overall political situation. the visiting MPs said "democracy in Bangladesh now faces a big test. In case, the politicians fail to resolve the crisis through dialogue, the failure would add to the country's image marked by natural calamities including floods and cyclones"

Recalling what they said the unique elections held in 1991 the British legislators hoped that Bangladesh would be able to build up a healthy demo cratic legacy.

The delegation arrived in the city September 5 on a six day visit. The other members of the delegation are: Viscount Waverley, Jack Aspinwall, David Hinchliffe and Roger Godsiff.

'Dhaka siege' a crime against democracy: Saifur

SUNAMGANJ, Sept 9: Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman today said the socalled Dhaka Siege by some opposition parties is an irresponsible act and a crime against democracy, reports

He was speaking at a public rally organised in connection with the opening of 14-kilometre-long 11 KV electric line and 100 KVA sub-station at Doarabazar. "Having failed to capture

power in the fair electoral process, the Opposition is out to terrorise the ongoing democratic process in the country. Saifur alleged.

He said democracy, which is the long cherished hope and aspiration of the people, has "become hostage nowadays in the hands of the terrorist and insane activities of some politicians".

Nazir Hossain MP also spoke at the two meetings

From Page 1 Col 5 unauthorised shops from the terminal.

It will go on an indefinite

of a 9-point demand that includes stoppage of police ha coach terminal.

The association also de mands payment for the requisition of vehicles by police within 15 days, exemption of interest for defaulters in transport sector and release of seized vehicles within 48 hours according to Motor Vehicle Test (MVT) rule. Some 5,000 vehicles and

Asked about the opposition's Dhaka siege programme, he said it had no link with the fransport strike. "Ours is a non-political organisation and we have supporters from all parties," he added.

President of Bangladesh Jatiya Sarak Paribahan Sramik Federation Shah Mohammad Abu Zafar in a statement described the transport strike as a conspiracy to foil the 'Dhaka

Another report says, over two dozens of private cars and auto-rickshaws were damaged by two rival groups of transport workers near Syedabad bus terminal yesterday, witnesses

hurled stones at parked and passing vehicles in front of the bus terminal creating panic in the area. There was also report of clashes between rival groups at Gabtali bus terminal. No bus left or arrived at any

of the three inter-district bus terminals in the city due to an indefinite strike enforced by the owners association from Thursday evening to protest police harassment.

for several double decker BRTC buses were off the city streets responding to the strike call.

ern districts plied up to the other end of the Buriganga Bridge and buses from North Bengal came up to Amin Bazar, passengers said

Transport strike

strike on September 15 if the demands are not met, said its acting chairman GM Seraj, MP. DRTA General Secretary

Khondkar Enayetullah told UNB that they had called the strike to press for realisation rassment and establishment of a city terminal and a special

53 routes from Mohakhali, Fulbaria, Sayedabad and Gulistan bus terminals were controlled by the association. Khondkar claimed.

They chased each other and

Buses and minibuses except But some buses from south

37 Tamil rebels

COLOMBO, Sept 9: Several days after the government and Tamil guerillas proposed peace talks, the army killed up to 37 rebels in their worst defeat this year, the military said Friday, reports AP.

each year, reports AFP.

The soldiers ambushed the insurgents as they passed through a dense forest near an army base in northern Sri Lanka on Thursday night, said a military spokesman, Brig Gemunu Kulatunga.

"Soldiers reported seeing up to 35 bodies of rebels after the battle in which two soldiers were killed and five wounded." Kulatunga said in Colombo. The fighting or curred in Pooneryn, 280 kilometers (160 miles) north of

the capital. Although some military commanders reportedly op pose the proposed peace talks. the ambush did not appear to have been planned to try to prevent them. In predominantly rebel-held northern Sri Lanka, soldiers often hide near their scattered military camps to ambush guerillas as they pass by.

Two other rebels were killed Thursday in an ambush by troops at Weliova, 230 kilometres (145-miles) northcast of Colombo.

Downpour

From Page 1 Col 8 18. Iswardi 17. Rangpur 14 and Srimangal 11 mm

Moderate rainfall is likely today in most places in Chittagong and Barisal divisions, many places in Dhaka and Rajshahi divisions and in a few places in Khulna division. the Met office said. Besides, there might be moderately heavy rainfall in some places in Chittagong, Barisal and Dhaka divisions.

The day temperature in the country today is likely to fall by one to two degree Celsius.

The weather would improve after a couple of days but at the end of the week, rainfall would begin. Met office said.

Rallies banned From Page 1 Col 5

from the northern part of the Hotel Pritom at Bijovnagar road to the UBL crossing adjacent to Bangladesh Secretariat, the Muktijoddha Krira Sangsad between the Shaheed Nur Hussain square and Golapshah Mazar, Osmany auditorium and the whole area of the Osmany garden including the Phoenix Road, western part of the Abdul Ghani Road and northern part of College road, old High Court crossing (Mazar gate), ration office of Segunbagicha, star gate of the Ramna Park, from Maghbazar crossing to the northern part of Kakrail Church crossing of the Park Avenue, entire Hare Road, entire Minto Road from Sheraton Hotel and all lanes

US plane crash From Page 1 Col 7

gage and airplane parts strewn everywhere.

and by-lanes of these areas.

It was total devastation, said Jim Bothwell, director of operations for the STAT MedEvac helicopter service. The airplane was in a million pieces and the people inside were in pieces.

Firemen fought their way to the scene through trees and down treacherous terrain, but there was no road to transport heavy vehicles.

As dusk fell and it became clear there were no survivors. emergency coordinators imported four-wheel drives, dune buggies and chainsaws to patch together a makeshift road so federal investigators could bring in sophisticated equipment Friday.

The search was called off about two hours after the crash, and the area was sealed off for the night. The air space above the crash site was restricted to emergency aircraft.

Witnesses said the plane rolled over once or twice and headed nose-down into the

I looked up and there it was," said Tom Michel, who was at a gas station near the crash site. "It was just coming straight down. I was screaming for everybody to run. It looked like it was under full power

The government recently asked the rebels to free all their military and police captives before peace talks are

Last month, a socialist coalition won control of Parliament and the prime ministership in an election by promising such negotiations, and the guerillas have accepted the proposal. The peace talks would be

the first in four years in Sri Lanka, where the 11-year insurrection by Tamils has killed 34,000 people. Tamils accuse the nation's

Sinhalese majority, which controls the government and the military, of widespread discrimination.

BR to run three inter-city trains today Bangladesh Railway has de-

cided to run three inter-city trains in between Dhaka-Noakhali, Dhaka-Kishoreganj and Dhaka-Sylhet on their weekly off days today in view of countrywide road transport strike, according to railway sources in Dhaka yesterday. reports BSS.

The trains are: Upakul in between Dhaka-Noakhali, Egaro Sindhu in between Dhaka-Kishoreganj and Joyantika in between Dhaka-Sylhet. The trains will run according to their schedule time table, the sources said.

Hartal tomorrow From Page 1 Col 5

itself disrupted the normal life in the city and arrested and tortured opposition leaders and workers in different parts of the capital.

The AL meeting alleged that the government had deliber ately severed the rail, road and launch links with the capital while BNP terrorists have created a reign of terror with the intention to foil the 'Dhaka Siege' programme.

"Being afraid of the current mass movement, the government has chosen the path of torture and confrontation."

The Awami League blamed the government for, what it said, "pushing the country to an inevitable conflict and being engaged in a deep rooted conspiracy to disrupt democracy."

The AL would also organise a rally on Sunday after the hartal, it added. A separate press statement,

issued after a meeting of the Jativa Party presidium with Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury in the chair, urged the city dwellers to observe the hartal on Sunday. A Jamaat press release is-

sued by the party secretary general, Matiur Rahman Nizami, alleged that the government had stripped the people of their democratic right to hold rallies and processions. It also urged the residents

of Dhaka to observe the hartal. Opposition party sources say, the hartal programme may be extended if the situation takes a serious turn because of government action.

Dhaka siege From Page 1 Col 4

an employee at the Gabtali bus terminal told The Daily Star. Railway sources said they

faced a heavy rush of passengers because long-distance bus services remained suspended. "Thousands of passengers have been waiting at the rail-

way station right now," said an official at the city's Kamalapur station. failed to accommodate the

passengers even after annexing additional compartments with regular trains. The authorities also decided to operate three intercity trains in Dhaka-Noakhali,

Dhaka-Sylhet and Dhaka-Ki-

shoreganj routes today - a

scheduled off-day, he said. The air services remained normal, Biman sources said.

As part of preventive measures, police yesterday picked up a large number of street urchins from different parts of the city. About 400 'tokais' were detained in different



- Star photo vesterday.

4 impounded Indian vessels seek clearance

By Staff Correspondent

.Four Indian cargo vessels at Narayanganj September 4 impounded by the authorities for not having necessary papers for entering Bangladesh are now anchored at the Narayangani terminal.

The vessels were not allowed to leave the terminal or unload cargo till vesterday. The vessels entered Bangla-

desh through the Zakiganj border with paper and spices from Karimgani port of India. Two vessels, BB Kaveri and BB Satadru, with about 1230 tons of paper for the Bangla-

desh Textbook Board arrived at Narayangani August 29. Two more vessels - BB Shilai and BB Vima - arrived

with 1000 tons of paper. Meanwhile, officials of

Samudrajatra Shipping Lines. local agent of the ships, said four pilots of the BIWTA had navigated the vessels to Narayanganj. The vessels had taken

and police of Zakigani to enter the Bangladesh territory, But, according to rules, no ship can enter Bangladesh without the BIWTA's permission. The local agent of the ves-

clearance from the customs

sels has applied to the government for permission to offload the cargo.

Muslims from the northeastern Bijeljina region, the ICRC said today, even as Serb leader Radovan Karadzic told a senior UN official he had ordered a halt to the practice, reports

the International Committee of the Red Cross, said between 500 and 600 Muslims were expelled in two groups from the Bijeljina area Thursday evening. "The group had to walk ap-

Serbs expel 600 more Muslims

proximately eight kilometres (five miles) across the confrontation line" at Djokici on the Bosnian government side and Banja-Brdo on the Serbheld side, she said.

SARAJEVO, Sept 9: Bosnian Serb's have expelled up to 600

Lisa Jones, spokeswoman of

ravine.

and he just went straight in."

thanas, police source said.

By AS M Nurunnabi ments, rice mills, construction seem frequently to disregard None of the establishments.

the urban labour is clear from landless and land-poor families. The appreciably higher proportion of women coming from land - poor and land-less

gent survival need of the family has compelled women to join paid work is more clearly seen when family income of work ers is considered along with the land holding pattern. A majority of women workers (68 per cent) belong to families whose monthly income falls between Tk 1000 to Tk

form the inajority of the work clocking over six hours over-

ment managed units and other lowed. Garment factories. however, are often defaulters in this respect, enforcing work on weekly holidays to meet big orders. Where other facilities are concerned, women in comparison with men seem to be deprived more of their legal entitlements, e.g. maternity leave with pay, which the govments seem to follow. The pri-

deadlines, workers reported

Till the advent of indepen-



Foreign Minister of Pakistan Assef Ali (R) shakes hands with Hamid Al Gabid, Secretary General of the Organisation of the Islamic Countries (OIC) after winding up a three-day emergency session in Islamabad yester-

OIC for referendum

against Bosnia.

It said the Bosnian gov-

ernment must be provided

with all means for self-de-

fence,' and asked Islamic

tively provide such means if

the Security Council did not

lift the arms embargo for

convened here at the request

of Pakistan to work out con-

sensus positions on issues

concerning the Muslim world

ahead of the upcoming United

Nations General Assembly ses-

ted by consensus, demanded

free access for the Interna-

tional Committee of the Red

Cross to all detention camps in

Arafat, Peres to

attend peace

concert in Oslo

ign Minister Shimon Peres and

Palestinian Liberation Orga-

nisation (PLO) chairman Yasser

Arafat will attend a peace

concert in Oslo Tuesday, the

Norwegian Foreign Ministry

the "Shalom-Salaam" concert

hosted by the city of Oslo and

the UNESCO, on the first an-

niversary of the signing of the

declaration of principles on

Peres and Arafat are ex-

pected to hold bilateral talks.

in addition to talks with

Norwegian Foreign Minister

Bjoern Tore Godal, according

to foreign ministry spokesman

September 13.

Ingvar Havnen.

The two leaders will attend

confirmed today, reports AFP.

OSLO, Sept 9: Israeli Fore-

Serbia and Montenegro.

A final communique, adop-

The special session was

states to individually or collec-

also rejected as 'absolutely unacceptable' the easing of existing sanctions on Serbia and Montenegro. Winding up a three-day emergency session here, the conference called on the five-

nation contact group, compris-

ing Britain, France, Germany,

From Page 1 Col 4

Russia and the United States, to refrain from 'entertaining such suggestions. Terming it a tactical move on behalf of Serbia, a resolution adopted by the conference said lifting sanctions would be

'dangerous, unbalanced and absolutely unacceptable.' The conference also called on all member states to sever economic and commercial ties with Serbia and Montenegro and reiterated its demand for

lifting the arms embargo Wijetunga won't run for

presidency COLOMBO, Sept 9: President Dingiri Banda Wijetunga has decided against contesting the presidential election in November as the United National Party's candidate, party officials announced Friday.

reports AP. Gamini Dissanayake, the opposition leader in parliament, will run for the presidency for the UNP, officials

Wijetunga will, however, remain in office until a new president assumes office in January next year. The president did not give any reason for his decision to

drop out of the presidential race. Wijetunga recently was hospitalised with chest pains, opening a convenient avenue for a graceful retirement

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Editor: Mahfuz Anam

British MPs laud BRAC activities

The visiting six-member British parliamentary delegation led by Conservative Party MP Michael Colvin had a meeting in Dhaka yesterday with the BRAC, reports UNB.

During the two-hour lun-

cheon meeting hosted by British High Commissioner Peter Fowler the British parliamentarians had detailed discussion with the BRAC on its origin, growth and its present activities. Faruk Ahmed Chowdhury, Adviser, BRAC, explained in

BRAC's activities in rural credit and development, non-formal primary education and women's health and education. The members of the delegation observed, they were deeply impressed with the in-

volvement of the BRAC in ame-

details various aspects of the

liorating the lot of the poor people of rural Bangladesh. The leader of the delegation Michael Colvin described the BRAC as the co-partner in development. Lauding the nonformal primary education programme of the BRAC Viscount Waverly, a member of the House of Lords, said the BRAC was not only working for the

poor but for the next generation as well.

Cairo confce From Page 1 Col 7 on abortion finally in hand. delegates today moved on to other contentious issues, in-

cluding contraception and teen-age sex. UN officials said the full committee that began considering the abortion text today would extend its deliberations to Saturday. The text would go

to the whole conference on Monday. Countries participating in the conference are trying to come up with a blueprint to control population growth. Currently the world population is growing by a record 90 mil-

lion people a year. The draft sets a target of spending dlrs 17 billion a year worldwide by 2000 for basic health care for women and children, family planning and AIDS prevention. That's projected to rise to nearly dlrs 22

billion a year by 2015.

bated the chapter on educa tion, which calls for the eradication of illiteracy and equal education for girls and boys. The conference will also discuss contraception, adolescent sex and the concept of "fertility regulation" — a phrase

the Vatican views as a code

whether immigrants have the

Delegates discussed today

word for abortion.

While abortion so far has

dominated the nine-day con-

ference, which began Monday,

delegates this morning de-

'right' to be united with their families. Some nations with many emigrants say they should, but countries on the receiving end say this would undermine efforts to control immigration.