The Midnight Eile

Serb leaders endorse Bosnia

peace accord, confirms US

today that Bosnian Serb leaders had formally endorsed the Bosnia peace accord agreed to by three Balkan presidents

representing the warring sides earlier this week. The

White House has received a copy of the accord which was

initialled by key Bosnian Serb leaders at a meeting with

Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic in Belgrade on

WASHINGTON, Nov 24: The United States confirmed

## DOWN TO EARTH

## Miseries on City Footpaths

By AS M Nurunnabi

Dhaka city's main roads measure a total of 1,967 km. out of which only 163 km are accounted as footpaths. By and large, the pedestrians are unable to use a large part of the footpaths due to various reasons. Besides, the a large-scale encroachments by these places serve as venues hawkers in all commercial areas of the city, we find lately a process of such encroachment on footpaths in some new areas. For example, the footpaths of Panthapath are slowly being occupied fraudulent means of various by traders of foreign ship furniture. They are even seeking to spread on to the main road. At the same time, building materials, rickshaws and rent-a-car stands have taken up much space of that

Green Road have gone under the illegal occupation of cane furniture traders. In front of the Tejgaon College, unauthorised tempoo stands and kutcha bazar have come up. leaving no space for pedestri- and copper; various oils and ans. The footpaths on the ointments claimed to have Sonargaon Link Road are wonderful curative properties similarly occupied by and foretelling the future businessmen dealing in tiles and mosaic materials. In the Most of these practices relate New Paltan area, moves seem to be under way to encroach on footpaths with overflow of stocks from the newly established car shops.

Lately, prompted by a legal notice served by the Association of Lawvers for protection of environment, the City Cor-Jatiya Sangsad dissolved

Bangladesh were very

democracy-conscious, inde-

pendence-loving and uncom-

sovereignty.

promising on the question of

the people were never

wrong, she said and added.

both in their will and woes.

posing a system which the

The Opposition, she said,

The frequent hartals and

sieges, she said, had caused

untold sufferings to the peo-

ple particularly the rick-

shawpullers, hawkers, gar-

ment workers, small traders,

created by a section of oppo-

sition, Begum Zia said, also

caused damage to the indus-

tries, trade and business, in-

curring loss of Taka thou-

But Zillur reiterated that

his party would not go to the

polls without realising their

demand for a neutral care-

man Mizanur Rahman

Chowdhury said, dissolution

of parliament without form-

ing a caretaker government

was a "blue print" of the rul-

ing party to hold elections

no question arises to partici-

pate in an election under any

party government," Mizan

told The Daily Star last night.

general, Anwar Hossain

Manju said that he was very

much concerned about the

fate of democracy in the

hands of the ruling party

norms. I can only pray to the

almighty Allah for protecting

democracy," Manju said while

talking to The Daily Star.

She (PM) is violating its

The Jatiya Party secretary

"We reject this plan and

Jatiya Party acting chair-

Zillur Rahman said.

taker government.

under it.

leaders.

Chaos and indiscipline,

elderly people and patients.

had disrupted normal life of

the people by enforcing har-

Constitution did not permit.

shallah", she said.

tals and sieges.

The political decisions of

obstructions on the footpaths in the Dhanmondi area. However, no such drive has been undertaken in any other areas of the city.

The city footpaths attract large crowd of people as for sales of a wide range of commodities at compara tively lower prices. Taking advantage of such assembly of people, some sections of unscrupulous traders adopt nature, some of which are so ingenuous that the simple pedestrians are easily hood-

winked. Operators of such deceptive practices are mainly found on footpaths in certain\_areas. Their operations include a variety of The footpaths of the methods and bogus products. The latter include so-called Ayurvedic medications made from exotic shrubs and plants; talisman rings claimed to have been made from mixture of gold, silver with the help of parrots. to health, which, in fact, are threats to health, instead of helping it in any way.

The operators of such practices attract the passersby by using cassette decks and cordless microphones. Various trickeries are adopted to boost sales of poration and the police their harmful products. One launched a drive for clearing of such tricks is to plant

some of their own men among the crowd. These men readily come forward to buy the bogus products. Another usual trick is their declaration that if their so-called medicines fail to produce the promised results, they would refund the money. Some of the planted men come forward to certify that they obtained satisfactory results from these products. This along with the fake guarantee of refund of money tend to create credibility among the general people.

The greatest tool of their trade is, however, their gift of the gab. These charlatans in most cases are past masters of ready wit and human psychology. If anyone in their audience expresses any interest in their products. there is no getting away for him from their enticing tricks. With the help of cassette recorders, they tape their words in such a way as to exercise maximum impact on the audience. Some of them seek to enhance crowd-drawing power by playing popular songs.

On account of these deceptions, a large number of people, mainly those from the villages lose heavy amounts of money. Observers consider it deplorable that no restrictive or preventive measure is taken by the authorities, in the interest of public health or order, to put a check on the activities of these fraudulent operators.



The Jativa Party brought out a torch procession yesterday in the city to drum up support - Star photo for its today's hartal.

Tamil rebels blew up in a

northern guerilla-held town.

unidentified defence sources

as saying about 100 guerillas

of the Liberation Tigers of

Tamil Eelam (LTTE) were

among more than 500 people

killed in the blast in

Chavakachcheri, about 10

miles east of the rebel bas-

Buffaloes

instead of

fish !

From Our Correspondent

faloes instead of fish!

three days.

from Kutubdia.

of the areas.

COX BAZAR, Nov 24: Buf

Yes, some fishermen had

Though it may sound

the new catch in the dep sea

buffaloes — in the last

strange, 25 buffaloes - afloat

in the Bay of Bengal about

100 km from Cox's Bazar

coast- were collected by

some fishermen of Kutubdia

and Moheshkhali under the

district. "We found the large-

size buffaloes floating in the

deep sea. They became thin-

ner due to starvation," said

Kabir Ahmed, a fisherman

faloes came from a neigh-

bouring country. The reasons

were, however, not known.

It is thought that the buf

The incident has created

sensation among fishermen

'88 style polls to

affect business

community: Salman

From Our Correspondent

The president of the Federa

tion of Bangladesh Chambers

of Commerce and Industry

(FBCCI), Salman F Rahman.

has said a general elections

like 1988 will affect the

business community of the

sis will deepen further if ma-

in the next general elec-

tions", Salman said while ad

dressing the installation of

the new executive committee

of the Narayangani Chamber

of Commerce and Industry at

Hossen, president of

Narayanganj Chamber of

Commerce and industry, the

function was also addressed

by Giasuddin Ahmed, vice

president of the Narayangani

Presided over by Afzal

Narayanganj Club yesterday.

jor parties do not participate

"The present political cri-

NARAYANGANJ, Nov 24:

tion of Jaffna.

State television quoted

### Ethnic reprisals feared

## Security beefed up in Colombo

COLOMBO, Nov 24: A security blanket came down on Sri Lanka's capital Colombo today as President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga warned against ethnic reprisals ahead of the imminent capture of Tamil rebels' Jaffna stronghold, reports Reuter.

Police and army commandos set up new checkpôints

See also page 8 around the city over fears that extremists from the Sinhalese majority could provoke violence against the mi-

nority Tamils. Security was beefed-up around government buildings after intelligence reports that rebel suicide squads were preparing revenge attacks for the army's march on Jaffna in

the north. "The war is not against Tamil civilians but against a ruthless group of terrorists who do not want peace," said Kumaratunga in a televised

"Do not in any way harass the Tamil community by word or deed," she warned.

Meanwhile, Sri Lanka's state-run national news agency said today that up to 500 civilians were killed on Wednesday when a truck being loaded with explosives by

### British team

From Page 1

ranged by Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry South Asia Advisory Group (SAAG) of the Department of Trade and Industry, UK, and the British High Commission. Commerce and Information Minister M Shamsul Islam will inaugurate the seminar as chief guest.

The seminar will include four sectoral workshops on power, construction, textile, jute machinery and leather.

The members of the delegation are also scheduled to join the workshop on "investment potentials in the capital market of Bangladesh," to be organised by the DCCI at the DCCI auditorium

on November 27. BSS adds: The leader of trade mission, Peter Lee, yesterday told BSS that there was "significant scope" for investment in Bangladesh as well as for industrial partnership.

"It's a good and exciting time" for us to visit Bangladesh for exploring opportunities for partnership as well as business because of a "great boom" of two-way bilateral trade, he said.

## From Page 1

Mizanur Rahman Chowd-

Moudud Ahmed called upon the people to observe hartal today.

Kazi Zafar said the gov ernment was violating fundamental rights of a citizen by not providing Ershad proper treatment.

Anwar Hossain Manju said the ruling party will face dire consequences," for denying Ershad proper treatment'.

All the leaders reiterated that the agitation for holding general elections under a neutral caretaker government would continue.

torch procession.

A party press release said. ambulance, medicine and the purview of today's hartal

After the hartal is over the party will hold a public meeting at the south gate of Baitul Mukarram Mosque. Jatiya Party central leaders will address the meeting.

## hurled on BNP

RAJSHAHI, Nov 24: At least 12 activists of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) were injured, two of them seriously, when bombs were hurled on a rally here

The BNP was holding a rally at Shaheb Bazar Crossing in the town where city Mayor Mizanur Rahman Manu was addressing.

The rally was organised to hail the Prime Minister's speech.

mi League activists for the incident.

### Jamaat

From Page 1

the reality is that the people seats of the Parliament.

ject the general election if it is not held under a non-partisan caretaker government," he said.

national government had been floated bypassing the Opposition demand for a caretaker government.

## JP calls hartal

hury demanded immediate shifting of Ershad to Combined Military Hospital (CMH) for treatment. The government ignored their demand despite street agitation and hunger strike, he

The rally was followed by a

Ershad has been suffering

from viral hepatitis, commonly known as jaundice.

food shops, fire brigade and vehicles carrying corpse newspapers and journalists would remain exempted from

## 12 hurt as bombs rally in Rajshahi

From Our Correspondent

The BNP blamed the Awa

have rejected the schedule for by-elections to the vacant "The people will also re-

Nizami said the idea of a

## LChamber. AL, Jamaat's programme

From Page 1

ernment and said, "I like to know under what provisions of the Constitution she (PM) made the proposal for forming a national government."

"When she (Premier) agrees to a national government going beyond the Constitution, what makes her disagree to the demand for a caretaker government?' asked Sheikh Hasina.

AL president came down heavily on the ruling BNP for. what she said, "toying with the people by playing a bypoll, by -poll game."

"Stop this mockery now and once for all. Dissolve the House and arrange general elections under a caretaker government," Hasina said amidst clapping and fullthroated anti-government slogans by the cheering crowd, mostly Awami League activists and supporters.

She said the question of holding by-polls at a huge expenditure does not arise at this stage when the whole nation is demanding general election under caretaker government. The ruling BNP has no right to cling to the power by giving announcement for holding by-elections, said Hasina and commented "this government is

party in this country wants by-poll on December 15. We resigned from the Parliament on December 28 last year and the last date of holding bypoils to the vacated seats was March 28 this year. BNP violated the Constitution by not holding the by-polls during that period," said the former Leader of the Opposition in the House.

"It was not realistic also to hold the by-polls now. The Election Commission has not yet completed the voters' list It could not distribute even one per cent of the voters

"BNP is now getting prepared for rigging in the upcoming elections. But, it should realize that BNP no more enjoys the confidence of people after widespread rigging in the earlier byelections and killings at Lalbagh after the Mayor elections," said Hasina, who spearheaded the agitations for caretaker government for

deteriorating law and order in the country. "BNP has made police force its own

that the government had admitted a food deficit of 25 lakh ton in the country. But the real picture is that the country is running through a "famine-like situation with a food deficit of 39 lakh ton." Now, with the launching

of the Premier's mission for 'Dhal-Bhat' for everybody, the prices of pulses have soured to Tk 40 per kg, said the AL president. Power generation has come down to 1600 MW from 2200 MW and growth rate of the economy to 3.9 per cent from 7 per cent under the role of the present government, Hasina claimed.

AL general secretary Zillur Rahman, presidium members Quamruzzaman, Sajeda Chowdhury, Amir Hussain Amu. Abdur Razzak, Tofael Ahmed, central leaders Matia Chowdhury, Suranjit Sen Gupta. Mohammad Nasim, Dhaka city unit president and Mayor Mohammad Hanif and secretary Mofazzal Hussain Chowdhury Maya were, among others, who addressed the

## 'Women's role in agri sector unrecognised'

By Staff Correspondent

The rural women of South

the agricultural sector, yet

generally go unrecognised

gional conference on woman

and exploitation, both at ho-

me and in the work place.

and the situation is intensi-

fied by religious bigotry and

fundamentalism, said the

labour twice as much as their

male counterparts since they

have to work at home as well

they said. adding but instead

of credit, they earn much

less than men for the same

77 file nomination

papers for by-polls

filed their nomination papers

in 47 constituencies yester-

day to contest the parliamen-

tary by-elections which were

scheduled for December 15.

**Election Commission sources** 

(EC) on November 22 an-

nounced the schedule for by-

elections to 145 vacant seats

of Parliament to fulfil its con-

stitutional obligation, but Par-

liament was dissolved last

only one nomination paper

Cyclonic storm

From Page 1

north and north-westerly di-

rection at a speed of about 30

km per hour with an intensi-

fying hurricane core, the

ence of the storm moderate

to heavy rains were likely in

Calcutta, Howrah, north and

south 24 Parganas and Mid-

to 110 km were expected off

the West Bengal coast with

phenomenal seas. Fishermen

were warned not to venture

Great danger signal num-

ber nine was replaced by

great danger signal number

eight in Hooghly ports.

Windeseeds between 100

napore districts today.

PTI adds: Under the influ-

sources added.

out to sea.

The Election Commission

said, reports UNB.

As many as 77 candidates

This was observed at a re-

and unevaluated.

delegates.

Asia play an significant role in their valuable contributions

peasants and agricultural workers yesterday in the city. Moreover, the South Asian peasant women are victims of ence, held at the BMDC audioppression, discrimination

torium. the agricultural work-force in South Asia, the delegates pointed out. The two-day conference is

addressed by Dilara Haroon and Yasmin Haque, joint convenors of the National Preparatory Committee and

Gnana Nathi Menike and WD de Silva of Sri Lanka, and

countries - Nepal and Pakistan — who were scheduled to participate did not attend. Begum Sufia Kamal, the

chief guest designate, could not attend due to ill health. but sent a written message pledging her support for the women's cause.

The opening was followed by the first plenary session where country papers were

The conference concludes today with a second plenary session where a Dhaka declaration on the protection of peasant interests will be

### From Page 1

recent weeks.

## Star Fashion '96

The Daily Star Readers too become Fashion Judges

For Eid '96 your favourite newspaper will organize a fashion competition in which YOU, THE READERS will be asked to judge the Best Design for Eid '96 in 7 categories of items.

So, fashion designers start your creative work to win the hearts and minds of the Daily Star Readers.

Enter STAR FASHION '96.

(See page 11 for details)

### **Editor**: Mahfuz Anam

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### Manju said that his party's Thursday," Press Secretary to Prime Minister Mohammad stand at this moment was clear. The Jatiya Party would Mozammel Haq, said while talking to newsmen. He expressed surprise at the news item published in

not go to the polls until there is a neutral caretaker government, he said. "We will continue the struggle of realising the demand for a neutral caretaker

government," Manju said. Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Prof Golam Azam and secretary general Matiur Rahman Nizami in a joint statement last night said there was nothing new in the Prime Minister's speech.

"The government has bowed down to the demand of the people. Now we are demanding of the governPrime Minister said. She also described as 'not democratic acts' the man-

sands of crores.

"We have great respect for you". Begum Zia said they had handling of the old and workalways stood by the people ing women, beating of the rickshawpullers, the throwwere with you ing of bombs at the hospitals. (people), we are with you and and torching of ambulance and press vehicles. Referring we will remain with you into her letter to the Awami The Prime Minister said League president inviting her that a section of opposition (Hasina) to sit for discussion political parties had taken to about the parliament polls the streets by leaving Parlia-Begum Zia regretted that the ment with the motive of im-Awami League chief in her

> of accepting the caretaker government issue by me. Begum Zia said that the Awami League president had remained firm in her precondition even after my second letter through which I had invited her to sit across

the table to discuss any of her

reply had set pre-condition

proposals. The Prime Minister said that they had tried to solve the existing problem through

discussion. The Opposition, she said, had stopped the way of understanding by attempting to forcibly impose their demand

ment to arrange a free and

fair election by constituting a

caretaker government," they

Rashed Khan Menon, gen-

eral secretary of Workers

Party said that the PM should

have resigned after dissolu-

tion of the Parliament. The

President would then consult

all parties to conduct elec-

tions under a neutral care-

taker government. Only then

there could have been a

trustworthy election, Menon

PM's office denies

meet with Merrill

Minister yesterday denied

that there was any meeting

between Prime Minister Be-

gum Khaleda Zia and US Am-

bassador in Bangladesh David

N Merrill on Thursday as re-

ported in a section of news-

between the Prime Minister

and the US Ambassador on

some newspapers yesterday

including the Daily Ittefaq

that US Ambassador David N

Merrill met with the Prime

no such meeting was held on

the day and termed it com-

pressed the hope that the

concerned newsmen will

check properly before filing

such reports in future.

pletely false and imaginary.

Haq categorically said that

The Press Secretary ex-

Minister on Thursday.

"No meeting was held

papers, reports BSS.

The office of the Prime

It's people's victory

The relief and rehabilita-The Prime Minister said tion programmes and health that they sincerely wanted the holding of free, fair, and care activities in the country's flood-hit northern parts violence-free and rigging-free elections to strengthen were also affected due to stoppage of transport, the democracy.

She said the Election Commission had been strengthened and electionrelated laws were passed in such a way that no government or anti-government force could influence the election process.

been improved. Begum Zia said and added concerned government administration. all officers and employees related to election would come under the control of the Election Commission immediately after the announcement of the election

schedule. The Prime Minister said there was a provision to try any candidate or individual or party in case of the violation of the election laws during the elections by a committee

been created to hold free and

From Page 1 protest demonstrations in-

Police lobbed tear gas bandhu Avenue. A few cock-

there.

government for holding the general election.

in Paltan areas. Jamaat supporters also brought out a procession in Paltan area, protesting the Prime Minister's speech.

Aman, who was a member of the just dissolved House, led a procession of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD). brought out from the BNP central office. Two separate processions were brought out by the Jubo Dal and Jatiyatabadi Ain Chhatra Forum. lauding the PM's speech.

JSD (Inu) brought out a procession and held a rally in front of the party office denouncing the announcement.

Electoral process had

Referring to the introduction of the ID card and preparation of a new voters' list to curb false voting Begum Zia said atmosphere had

## Rallies

stantly. shells to disperse the activities of two rival sides when two processions of the BNP and the Awami League came face to face near the Banga-

tails were exploded. A contingent of police in riot gear, led by the OC of Motifheel thana was seen patrolling the area at around 10 pm. Police lobbed two tear

gas shells, said the OC. Police sealed off all entry points of the Dhaka University campus at 8 pm after some cocktails went off

Awami League brought out a procession from Bangabandhu Avenue, rejecting the PM's speech and reiterating its demand for a caretaker

Witnesses said they hurled

home-made bombs and

pelted stones on passing ve-

hicles on Bangabandhu Av-

enue, near the Press Club and

DUCSU VP Amanullah

suffering from indecision." "Not a single individual or

identity cards," Hasina said.

election. The AL chief was also crit-

ical of the government's alleged failure in checking the .

force," she alleged. Sheikh Hasina claimed

public meeting.

# Thursday, a US official said, reports AFP.

The peasants women have little say in planning and decision-making. And in the absence of equal property rights, the women never own land and are financially and socially insecure, the speakers, from Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka, told the inaugural session of the first South Asian Women Peasants-Agricultural Workers Confer-

Women make up half of

The women farm workers being organised under the auspices of Peasant Development Programme (PDP). Bangladesh. The inaugural session was

delegates Shirin Akhter of SKOP, Hosne Ara of NPC Beijing NGO Forum. Ayesha Khanam of Okkiabadha Nari Samaj, Nurul Rahman and Nurul Alam of PDP Bangladesh. Alauddin Moullah of GSS and Matia Chowdhury of the Awami League.

Mary E Prabhu and Saguna D Sundaram of India represented their respective coun-Other two South Asian

The EC sources said none filed nomination paper in 98 constituencies. Of the rest 47 constituencies, 27 received

presented.

## Bosnia

have effectively denied UN peacekeepers access to the area since it was captured from Bosnian Serbs in September, and October

Although Ivanko said today's report covered only about a dozen houses. UN relief officials, some of whose staff have been able to transit the area, report widespread burning and looting of vacant Serb property in the area in