

HSC examinations begin today

By DU Correspondent

The Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSC) examinations under the Boards of Dhaka, Rajshahi and Jessore begin today (Thursday).

Over two lakh students are likely to appear in this year's HSC examination under the three boards. Of them 89,422 students will appear under the Dhaka Board while 70,754 and 50,320 students will appear under the Rajshahi and Jessore Boards respectively.

The number of male and female examinees under the Dhaka Board is 63,441 and 25,982 respectively. The numbers also included 2177 private examinees.

The HSC examination under the Dhaka Board will be held in 158 centers including two centers for foreign students.

The number of male and female examinees under the Rajshahi Board is 53,707 and 17,017 respectively while the examination under this Board will be held in 154 centers.

Out of the total examinees under the Jessore Board 36,607 are male and 13,713 are female students while the number of examinees from the Arts, Commerce, Science and Home Economics groups under this Board are 31,450, 9,472, 9,267 and 119 respectively.

4,124 private candidates are appearing under the Jessore Board. The Board has opened 128 centers for holding the examination.

Meanwhile, the HSC examination under the Comilla Board

will begin from September 12. The examination was shifted to September as the Board had to arrange holding of the postponed SSC examination from today (Thursday).

Board authorities said adequate security measures have been taken to resist malpractices and unfair means during the examination.

The authorities restricted the entrance of people within 200 yards of the examination centers.

Meanwhile, our Jessore correspondent adds: The Jessore Board authorities are allegedly holding the HSC examination violating the government order to hold the examination of district level colleges by changing the respective centers.

Comilla Board SSC exams begin today

By Staff Correspondent

The Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examinations, 1991, under the Comilla Board begin today (Thursday) more than three and a half months behind schedule.

The examinations of the Dhaka and the Rajshahi Boards were held in May. Those of the Comilla and the Jessore Boards were shifted to June 30 as the coastal districts under them were battered by the devastating cyclone of April 29.

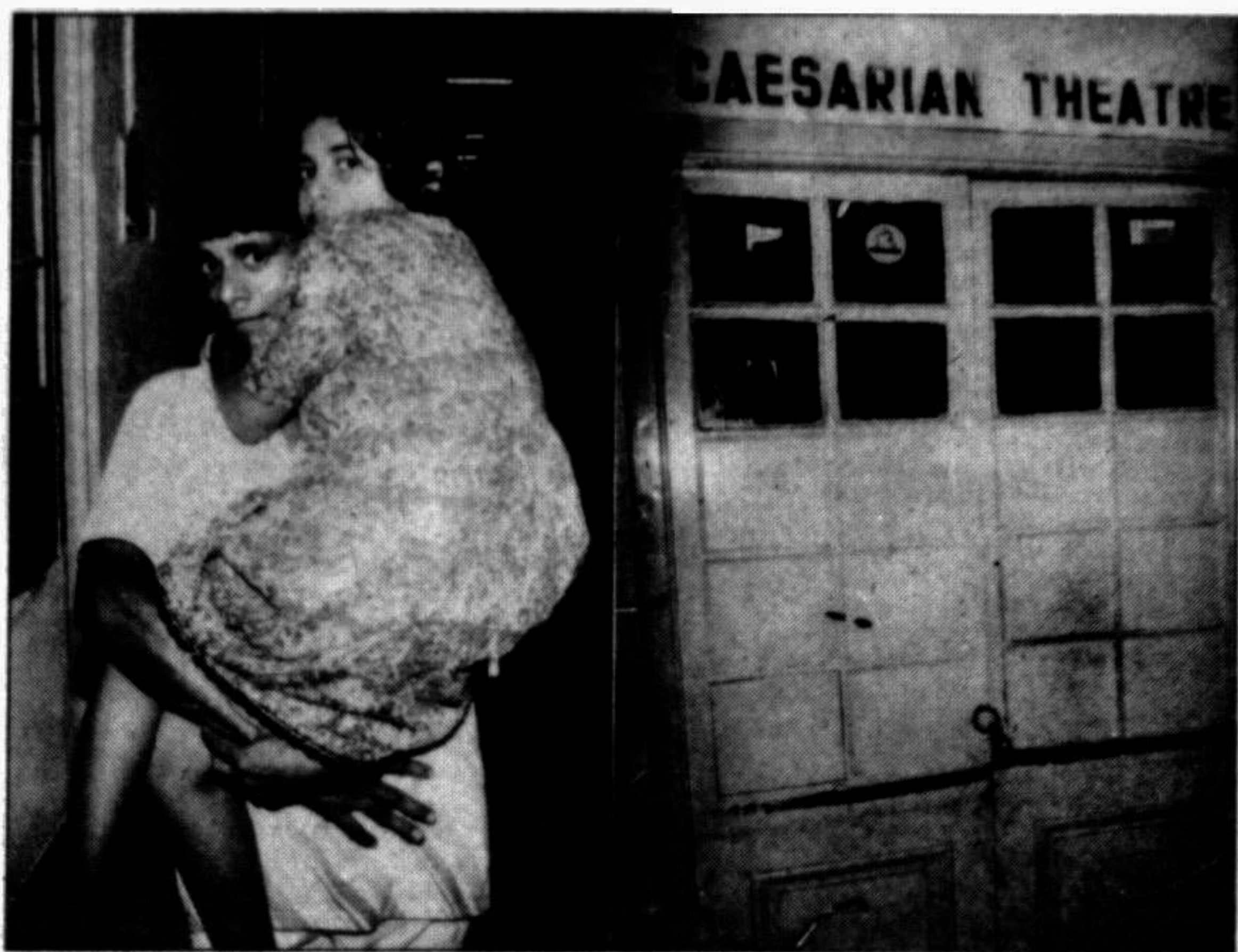
The examinations of the Comilla Board were however cancelled again on July 7 due to the leakage of question papers.

Chairman of the Comilla Education Board, Dr Mohammad Abdul Aziz told The Daily Star on Wednesday that measures would be taken to make good the delay faced by the students appearing under his Board.

He said that steps would also be taken to hasten the publication of the results and since all the four Boards collectively decide the policy regarding admission into the higher secondary classes, the delay faced by students of his Board could be adjusted.

He said that applications for admission into higher secondary classes are usually invited one month after the publication of SSC results.

Another option will be to request the colleges to keep some seats reserved for students of the Comilla Board, he said.



NO OTHER WAY TO MOVE: With the out-patient department of the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) closed due a strike by nurses and employees yesterday, a boy carries out a patient deprived of treatment.

Hasina's call to cast 'Yes' vote in referendum

KOTALIPARA (Gopalganj), Aug 21: Awami League

President and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina today called upon the people to vote in the coming September 15 referendum for parliamentary form of government, reports UNB.

Addressing a number of public meetings in Kotalipara upazila, Hasina said the Awami League had been struggling for establishing parliamentary democracy so that none could snatch people's rights and impose autocracy again.

The passage of the 12th Constitution Amendment Bill seeking return to parliamentary system, was the victory of the people as well as of Awami League's uncompromising struggle, she said.

The meetings were also addressed, among others, by District Awami League President Mohammad Ali Khan (Abu Mia), General Secretary Sheikh Md Abdullah and Kazi Akramuddin Ahmed.

The Awami League President said the constitutional rights of the minority community will be upheld at any cost. Any attempts to fan communalism will not be tolerated, she warned.

Hasina criticised the BNP government for its failure to fulfill its pre-election commitment to solve various socio-

economic problems facing the people.

Referring to campus unrest, the Awami League chief alleged that an identified group has been instigating terrorism in the Chittagong University under what she called government patronage.

She said the problem in the Chittagong University could have been settled much earlier if the government had been sincere.

Sheikh Shahid's bail petitions rejected

The two separate bail petitions of former minister Sheikh Shahidul Islam was rejected Wednesday by a Division Bench of the High Court, reports BSS.

The Bench comprised Justice Anwarul Haq Chowdhury and Justice Muhammad Abdul Mannan.

Bangladeshis safe in Soviet Union

All Bangladeshis in Soviet Union are safe, according to a message received from Bangladesh embassy in Moscow, reports BSS.

BNP rank and file urged to make referendum a success

The Central Committee of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) Wednesday called upon the rank and file of the party at all levels to make the referendum of September 15 a success, reports BSS.

According to a BNP press release here last night, the party requested all the leaders and workers of its front organisations including the Chhatra Dal, Juba Dal, Sramik Dal, Mahila Dal, Sechchhabok Dal and Jatiyatabadi Samajik Sangskritik Sangstha to take effective measures to hold rallies and bring out processions in favour of the referendum.

The party directed the district, upazila, union and village level committees of the organisation to hold meetings immediately and take necessary measures in this regard.

20 injured in Khulna clash

KHULNA, Aug 21: At least 20 students were injured in a clash Wednesday night between supporters of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and the Islami Chhatra Shibir over student union election of the Polytechnic Institute, scheduled for September 15, reports UNB.

Students seek Shahabuddin's intervention in reopening DU

By DU Correspondent

Dhaka University Education Action Committee (DUEAC), a forum of general students Wednesday sought personal intervention of Acting President Shahabuddin Ahmed in the reopening of the university and other closed universities.

The DUEAC at a press conference said it was unfortunate that the university was hostage in the hands of a few terrorists and that the government and the law-enforcing agencies could not do anything in this regard.

It also regretted that the Parliamentary Committee formed to find out ways to settle the problems of the educational institutions also failed to take prompt and effective measures.

The DUEAC referred to the commitment of the Vice-Chancellor Prof Moniruzzaman Miah that the university would be reopened within a couple of days. It hoped the commitment would be kept.

It criticised the political parties and their student bodies for not responding to the VC's repeated observation that their assurance of non-violence was necessary before the reopening.

Press Note

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action taken by the government on their demands, reports BSS.

A press note issued by the Ministry of Establishment Wednesday said all reasonable demands of the employees had been met by announcing the new pay scales, refixation of office timings and forming of a committee for promotion of the employees.

The press note said the government had given sympathetic consideration to the various problems of the government officers and employees at different levels, particularly those at the lower pay levels and announced new pay scales Tuesday, August 20, 1991.

Besides, it had also announced refixation of office timings and formation of a committee for removing complications in the way of promotion of the employees, the press note added.

The press note said the new pay scales had been fixed after giving due consideration to the income of the low paid employees, overall economic condition of the country and economic capacity of the government. It may be mentioned here that the government had met more than once with the leaders of the employees on this issue at different levels.

Under the new pay scales lowest pay had been increased by 80 per cent and other allowances had also been enhanced.

The press note said office timings including the secretariat had been refixed from 8 am to 2.30 pm. The existing office timings of 10 am to 5 pm from Saturday to Wednesday for the district level and mofassil had been retained. On Thursday offices will close at 2 pm, the press note said.

The employees had been holding meetings, rallies for the last few days demanding increased salary and allowances, change of office timings and removal of complexities in the way of promotion. During this time, the government was quite aware of the problems of the employees and as it was considering to take effective steps on an emergency basis for removing these problems it did not take any action against anyone though office work was hampered and people were harassed due to meetings and rallies by the employees.

The government expressed the hope that all concerned attitude and would not allow any sort of indiscipline in the greater interest of the nation and the people in marching towards new way of democracy and maintaining economic and social discipline. Otherwise, the press note said, the government would be compelled to take action under the existing rules and regulations.

The Midnight File

Gorbachev heads for Moscow

MOSCOW, Aug 21: Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev headed back to Moscow on Wednesday night to reassume power after a coup against him collapsed. A plane carrying Gorbachev from the Crimea, where he was at the time of the coup on Monday, left at 7:19 pm (1619 GMT) from Simferopol Airport, according to Col Tsalko, a deputy to Russian Defence Minister Konstantin Kobets. The flight to Moscow normally lasts two hours, reports AP.

Pavlov's condition improves

MOSCOW, Aug 21: The condition of Soviet Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov, taken ill on the morning of a hardline coup he helped lead, has improved, Soviet Television said today. Soviet Television announced on Tuesday night that Pavlov had suffered a serious fluctuation in blood pressure on Monday morning, reports Reuter.

Unrest continues in Croatia

BELOGRADE, Aug 21: Yugoslavia's quarrelling leaders resumed talks Wednesday on the future of their crumbling Balkan federation, as mortar fire continued to rock a city in the rebel republic of Croatia. Negotiations by presidents and premiers from Yugoslavia's six republics and the eight-member federal presidency resumed Wednesday on how the government can function until an agreement on the country's future structure is reached, the government-run news agency Tanjug reported Wednesday. In Yugoslavia, the unrest continued in Croatia, reports AP.

Five killed in Baramulla shootout

SRINAGAR, Aug 21: Indian security forces and Muslim militants traded gunfire today in the Kashmir town of Baramulla leaving five dead. The casualties included two soldiers of the paramilitary Central Reserve Police Force, two militants and one civilian caught in the crossfire, the officials said, reports AFP.

Pay hike to hit economy

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and wages or salaries as set, they observed. This, they said, would create serious resource problems.

In two separate statements, BEA and MCCI expressed their worries over the manner and extent of pay increases for government and public sector employees by as much as 80 per cent for the 'lowest categories' and 67 per cent for 'the highest ones'. It is not possible to generate additional resources of such a size, they stated while noting that 'adverse' overall or macro-economic imbalances and serious deterioration in fiscal deficit would result from the new pay hikes.

BEA said in its statement that the government employees' pay and allowances would constitute 59 per cent of the total current expenditures of the government because of the additional financial involvement of Taka 400 crore following the pay hike in fiscal 1991-92. When the increased allowances will be given effects to in 1992-93, the additional current expenditure will total Taka 950 crore with the share of pay and allowances going up further. Quite clearly it will be beyond the government's means to pay, BEA said.

According to BEA, the additional pay increases are not justified by the rise in cost of living index. Between 1985 and 1990, the average pay of different categories of employees increased by 130 per cent, 137 per cent and 101 per cent respectively but the consumer price index rose by 77 per cent, indicating an average annual rate of 9.8 per cent, it said.

BEA feared that the workers of public sector mills and factories would now demand

similar pay hikes and this would be followed by similar demands by the workers of many private sector mills and factories. Taken together, such wage spiral will not only seriously aggravate the inflationary pressures but also affect adversely the competitiveness of the domestic industries, it observed.

It further stated that labour productivity in Bangladesh was the lowest in South Asia and any wage increases would be held against Bangladesh by potential foreign investors. 'The ultimate casualty will be the target for new job creation', it added.

In its reaction, MCCI said, if the contingency provision of Taka 600 crore in the revenue budget for 1991-92 was utilised to meet the additional expenditures to foot the bill for pay hikes, it would adversely affect contingency expenditures in social sectors or in the event of any natural calamities.

MCCI stressed the need for an across-the-board wage freeze in the context of the prevailing economic situation to help alleviate the poverty of those who are less fortunate. Development experiences of the last decade indicate that the wage restraint in government or public sector was an essential element in the economic strategies of many countries which succeeded in generating increasing sur-

pluses in revenue budgets to finance development infrastructures, it observed.

With the implementation of the new national pay scales, the ratio between the pay of the lowest category of government employees and the per capita national income would further increase, MCCI noted.

Govt employees

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served the work stoppage Wednesday.

Employees of the PG Hospital, Radio Bangladesh, BCS Academy, PWD, National Museum, Public Library, Bangladesh Audit and Accounts, T & T, Dhaka City Corporation and others also held rallies in the city.

The President and Secretary General of Bangladesh Teachers Association, Al-haj Sheikh Amanullah and Al-haj Mohammad Azizul Haq Strong expressed their strong resentment and deep sorrow for not including the teachers of private schools, colleges and madrasahs in the announcement of the new national pay scale.

In a statement, they urged the government to announce the inclusion of teachers of private educational institutions in the new pay scale.

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Shahabuddin

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fair and peaceful atmosphere to preserve the image of the nation had earned internationally through the February 27 polls.

He said all the steps that had been taken to ensure free, fair and impartial polls during the last general elections would be taken again during these bye-elections.

The Acting President said the government had already given written instructions to the Deputy Commissioners, Upazila Nirbahi Officers and all heads of local governments regarding the referendum. Those instructions had also been sent to the upazila chairmen, mayors and ward commissioners of municipal corporations and chairmen and members of union parishes, he added.

They have also been instructed to extend all help and cooperation to the members of law-enforcing agencies including the police, BDR, Ansar and Village Defence Party to be engaged in maintaining peace and order in their respective areas, he said.

Justice Shahabuddin said if there was any breach of peace and discipline or if miscreants tried to foil the referendum, the local government institutions in the respective areas would be dissolved on charges of negligence to duty.

The Acting President said, apart from the deployment of the members of law-enforcing agencies in each of the polling centres, an army unit with a magistrate would remain alert in most of the district headquarters including cantonments on the day of referendum.

In the event of any breach of peace and order in any place, the army unit will rush there and restore peace and order with iron hand, he said adding, if voting was disturbed in any centre there will be re-polling in the same centre the next day.

The Acting President recalled his June 5 address to the nation over radio and tele-

vision in which he had called for putting all efforts for completing the five-year term of the present Jatiya Sangsad in the interest of political stability.

He said he had also cautioned against the strong difference of opinions among the political parties particularly about the form of government which stood against the stability besides the delay in relinquishing his present office of the Acting President.

"Following that speech, political parties, particularly the two major political parties, reached a consensus and passed unanimously the Constitution 12th Amendment Bill during the budget session of the Jatiya Sangsad," he said.

Justice Shahabuddin said in this bill it was decided to revert to the parliamentary form of government from the presidential system. He said under the parliamentary system the Council of Ministers may the Prime Minister will exercise the executive power of the state and for all their work they would be responsible to the Jatiya Sangsad.

The Acting President said when the Constitution 12th Amendment Bill was presented before him for his assent he sent it to the Election Commission for referendum in accordance with Article 142 of the Constitution. He described the forth coming referendum as a very significant event in our national life and said the verdict of the people would be the final decision.

The Acting President said the nation had passed the first step towards transition to democracy through the holding of the historic February 27 elections and then overcame the second phase through the formation of the Council of Ministers with the support from the majority Members of Parliament. This Council of Ministers was given all powers and responsibilities under the provisions of the present Constitution.

Coup collapses: Gorbachev back

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why the coup leaders would travel to the capital of Kirgizia, 2,100 miles (3,380 kilometers) southeast of Moscow in Central Asia.

Sources at the airport told the Associated Press that only KGB chief Vladimir Kryuchkov was on a plane, which they said was headed to the Crimea. He reportedly was accompanied by Communist Party No. 2 leader Vladimir Ivashko.

The discrepancies could not immediately be clarified. A delegation of European ambassadors and top diplomats, including the US charge d'affaires, assembled at a Moscow airport in hope of flying to the Crimea to meet with Gorbachev, who was at his vacation home in the south when he was overthrown on Monday.

A report said Soviet Federal Parliament Speaker Anatoly Lukyanov today flew to the Crimea for a meeting with Gorbachev.

This was announced at a conference of parliamentary committee leaders, which was held by Ivan Laptev and Rafik Nishanov, chairmen of the Supreme Soviet legislature's two houses.

Parliament's presidium is to meet tomorrow to consider the situation in the country.

Failure of the coup could deal a fatal blow to any organized, high-level effort to thwart reform drives.

Despite the show of force, the coup leaders had been unable to dislodge Yeltsin from the Russian Parliament, where

he rallied the opposition. Neither were they able to enforce the curfew or prevent nationwide demonstrations.

The state of emergency was declared Monday after hard-line elements in the military and Communist Party ousted Gorbachev, declaring he was ill. Few believed it.

On Tuesday, hundreds of thousands of people demonstrated against the coup in Moscow, Leningrad, Kishinev and other cities; and coal miners went on strike in Siberia.

A six-hour nighttime curfew imposed in Moscow has been lifted, the military commander

Stock prices jump at news of coup collapse

NEW YORK, Aug 21: Stock prices jumped dramatically Wednesday morning following reports the military coup in the Soviet Union had collapsed, reports AP.

The Dow Jones average of 30 industrials jumped 41.59 points to 2,955.28 at 10.30 am EDT (1430 GMT) in the first hour of trading.

The Dow quickly rose more than 50 points after the opening bell, triggering a so-called circuit breaker designed to limit computerised trading.

The Dow's gain, if sustained, would nearly erase Monday's 70-point drop that followed word of Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's ouster.

West heartened over failure of coup

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CTK news agency, Pankin and consul Alexander Lebedev telephoned early Wednesday and distanced themselves from the 'barbaric deeds, which the Committee for the State of Emergency is committing against the Soviet population'.

CTK reported that Pankin and Lebedev said they consider themselves 'representatives of the legally and constitutionally elected leadership headed by President Gorbachev'.

British action condemned

Britain, France and Japan on Wednesday condemned the overnight use of force by the new Soviet leadership that left

at least two people dead in Moscow. One Soviet ambassador called the coup 'a fatal mistake'.

British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd told the British Broadcasting Corporation the killings were 'wicked and futile'.

At least two people were killed early Wednesday when opponents of Monday's coup trapped an armoured column in an underpass and soldiers opened fire.

A British Foreign Office statement criticised the Soviet armed forces' action that resulted in the deaths but expressed relief that neither the Russian Parliament building in

Moscow nor Russian President Boris Yeltsin had been attacked.

"We condemn the violence and grieve for the victims," a French Foreign Ministry spokesman said.

Japanese government spokesman Misoji Sakamoto told a Tokyo news conference, "Our country strongly condemns this action, and demands an immediate halt to it and strong restrictions of such actions."

He called the coup "a fatal mistake on Yanayev's part."

"I'd like to appeal to Yanayev and call on him to understand."

The leaders of Russian and

the three Baltic republics readied plans to set up governments-in-exile in case they are toppled by the hard-liners. Estonian Foreign Minister Lennart Meri confirmed his republic's plans in Stockholm on Tuesday.

Five Estonian men asked for political asylum while visiting the Swedish city of Malmo, the Swedish national news agency, TT, reported.

Lithuania's foreign minister, Algirdas Saudargas, said in Warsaw he was prepared to establish an exile government in Poland if Soviet forces silenced his breakthrough republic's elected parliament.