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VOL. 1 NO. 234 REGD. NO. DA 781

BHADRA 31, 1398 BS, DHAKA MONDAY SEPTEMBER 16, 1991 RABIUL AWAL 6, 1412 HIJRI

12 PAGES: PRICE TAKA 3.00

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**NEWS BRIEFS**

**Aquino announces referendum**

MANILA, Sept 15: President Corason Aquino announced today a referendum on the future of US bases in the Philippines, countering an imminent Senate rejection of new treaty on the military installations, reports AFP.

**Baltic states reject Soviet pullout pledge**

RIGA, Sept 15: Leaders of the Baltic countries have rejected the Soviet Union's pledge to begin pulling its troops out of their territory as of January 1, 1994, and have demanded that an earlier withdrawal date be set, reports AFP.

**UN team heads for New York**

MANAMA, Sept 15: A UN ballistic missile inspection team headed for New York on Sunday after its mission in Iraq was thwarted by Baghdad's refusal to allow it to use UN helicopters, reports AP.

**Low turnout in Hong Kong polls**

HONG KONG, Sept 15: Apathy overcame activism Sunday as voter turnout was low in Hong Kong's first direct legislative election in 150 years of British colonial rule, reports AP.

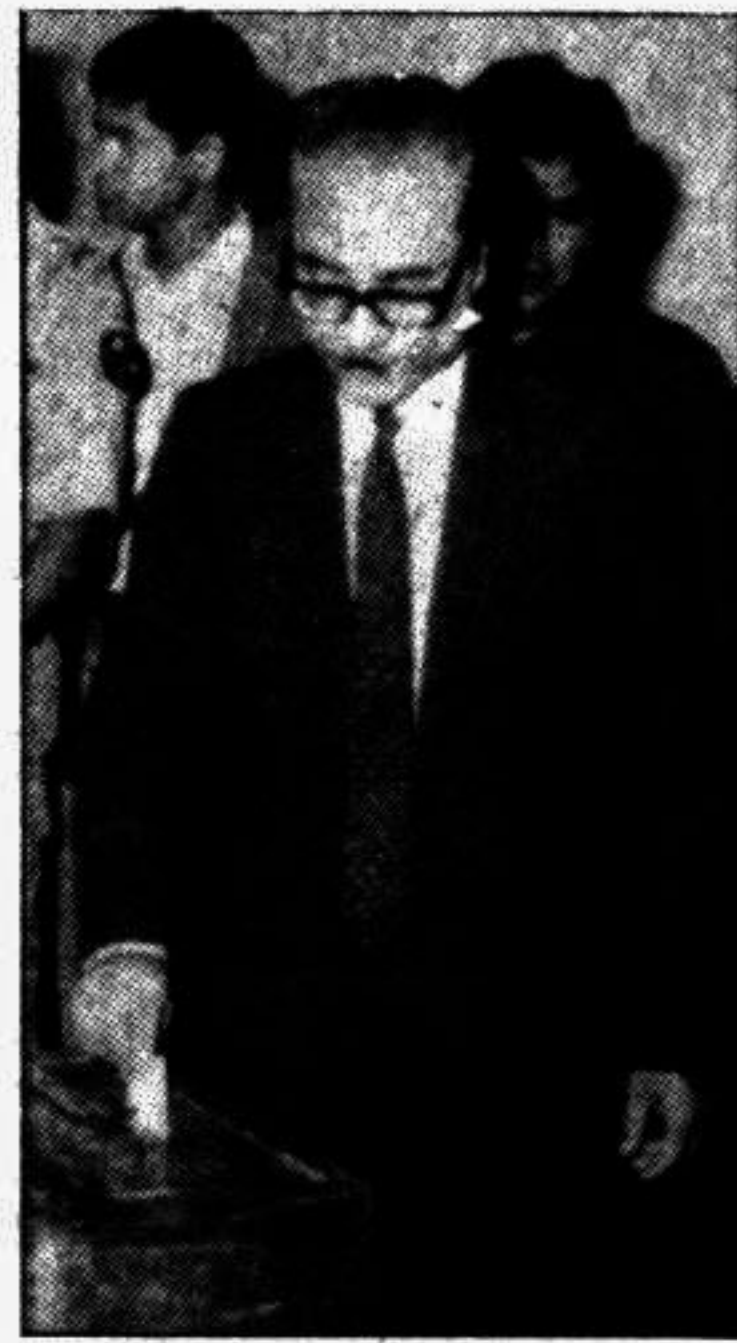
**Death due to lack of pure water**

NEW DELHI, Sept 15: An epidemic of gastroenteritis has killed more than 700 people in central India this year because of the lack of pure drinking water, the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported Saturday, says AFP.

# People say 'yes'



Voters waiting in a queue at a water-logged city polling centre to give their verdict in the referendum on Sunday. —Star photo



Acting President Justice Shahabuddin casting his vote at Viquarunessa Noon Girls' High School polling station. —PID photo



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia casts her vote at Adamjee Cantonment College polling centre. —PID photo



Leader of the Opposition in parliament Sheikh Hasina casting her vote at Dhanmondi Girls' High School polling station. —Star photo

## Heavy rains, floods impede voters' turnout

By Staff Correspondent

The referendum on the Constitution 12th Amendment Bill seeking to introduce a parliamentary system was held in a peaceful atmosphere in the country Sunday.  
 The polling began at 8am and continued till 5pm without break. The turnout of voters was poor in the morning. Heavy rain caused inconvenience to voters. The rush of voters to polling stations increased in the afternoon when the rain let up.

It was the first referendum on the Constitution amendment. The provision for holding of referendum was inserted in the Constitution through the Fifth Amendment which put the Preamble and Articles 8, 48, 56, 58, 80 and 90A under a guarantee clause.  
 The holding of the referendum became necessary as the Constitution 12th Amendment Bill passed unanimously in the Jatiya Sangsad (parliament) on August 6 midnight sought to

amend some of these protected articles of the constitution.  
 Even though there was a consensus on the new Constitution amendment bill for switchover to a parliamentary system, there was very limited campaign by the political parties to motivate people to cast 'yes' votes in the referendum. The enthusiasm for casting of votes seen among the people during the February 27 parliamentary elections was

not observed on Sunday.  
 The day was declared a public holiday to facilitate casting of votes by all sections of people. However, floods in a total of 21 districts and inclement weather restricted the movement of the people.  
 The election Commission took all preparations in cooperation with the local administrations and the law enforcing agencies, military and paramilitary forces, to ensure proper conduct of the referendum.

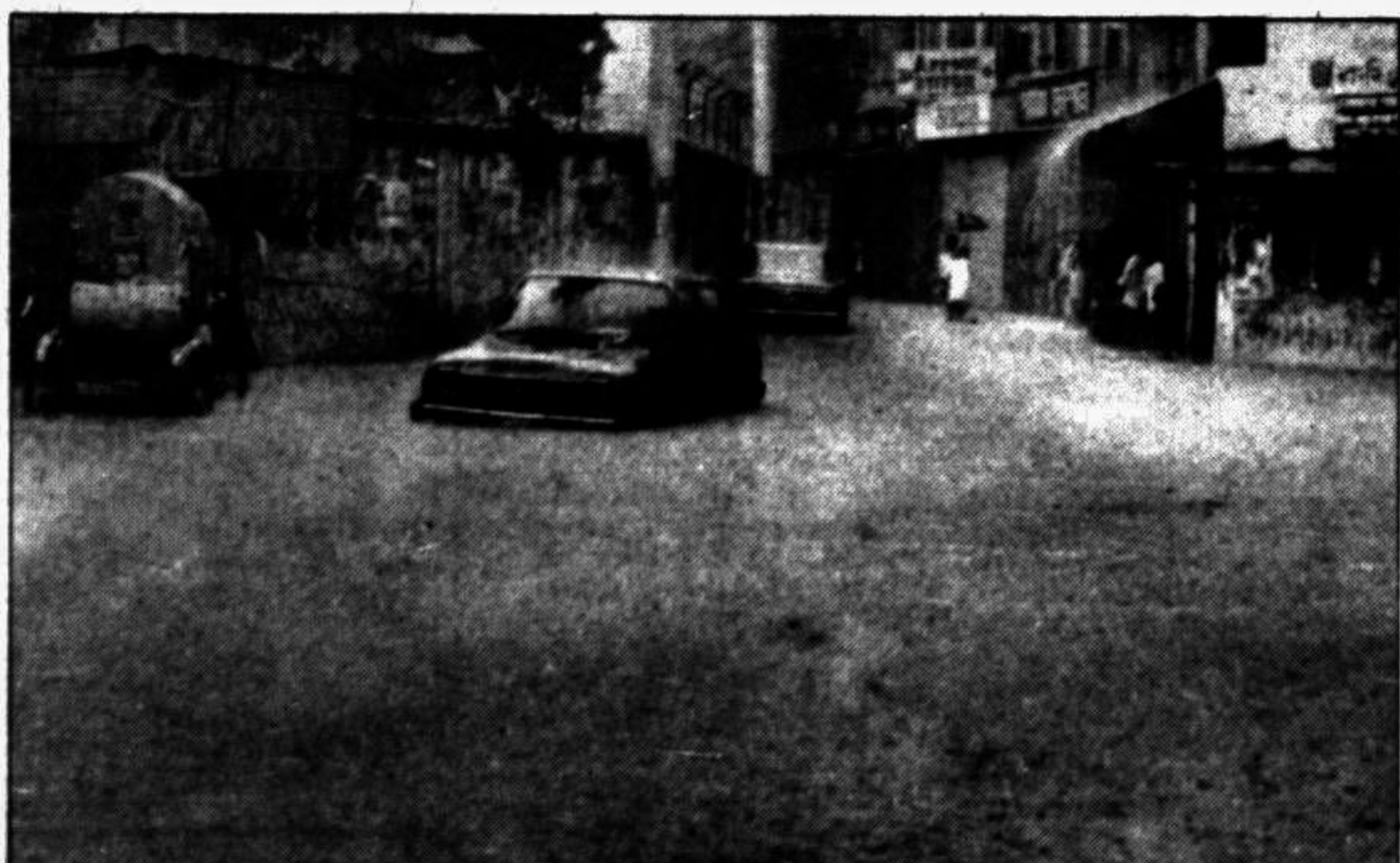
Police, BDR and members of Ansar, Village Defence Party were posted, while Armed Forces were kept ready for necessary backup, if and when necessary. The Election Commission also made campaign in favour of the referendum through the mass media.  
 Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed cast his vote at the Viquarunessa Girls' High School polling station.  
 Prime Minister Begum

**Late night tally**

By Staff Correspondent  
 The people on Sunday overwhelmingly voted in favour of the Constitution 12th Amendment Bill by casting 'yes' votes in the referendum.  
 Results reaching Dhaka from different districts till our going to the press late last night suggested that more than four 'yes' votes were cast against every 'no' vote.  
 See Page 12 Col. 3

## Flood situation worsens in 14 districts

By Staff Correspondent



New Elephant Road in the heart of the city submerged in Sunday's rain. —Star photo

Heavy rains coupled with onrush of water from upstream aggravated the flood situation in 14 districts.  
 The situation deteriorated in Madaripur, Shariatpur, Faridpur, Kishoreganj, Manikganj, Gazipur, Munshiganj, Narayanganj, Chandpur, Magura, Pabna, Naogaon, Jamalpur and Bogra.  
 Though most of the rivers started receding at a slow pace, there was no marked improvement in the overall flood situation in the country.  
 Although waters were receding from the towns of Panchagarh, Dinajpur, Rangpur, Thakurgaon, Nilphamari, Kurigram and Kushia, other areas of the districts remained under water.  
 The late monsoon deluge affected at least four million people rendering nearly a quarter of them marooned and

homeless.  
 Total cropfields going under water were reported to be about 13 lakh acres and the flood information centres said that one-third of the total crops might have been perished.  
 Besides, dwelling houses numbering about 3.4 lakh were damaged of which over one lakh were completely destroyed by the floods in the affected 21 districts.  
 Seven more deaths, two from Rangpur, three from Chapainawabganj and two from Dinajpur were reported Sunday. Reports of more diarrhoeal attacks were received from some areas of Panchagarh, Rangpur, Dinajpur, Sirajganj and Kishoreganj.  
 The Flood Information Centre of Water Development Board warned that the flood

situation in Dhaka, Narayanganj, Munshiganj and Manikganj will deteriorate further.  
 Situation in the districts of Rangpur, Gaibandha, Bogra, Sirajganj and Dinajpur is likely to improve further but will remain unchanged in Chapainawabganj, Rajshahi, Pabna, Kushia, Faridpur, Madaripur and Chandpur.  
 Our Madaripur correspondent reports that 60 unions in four upazilas of the district including low-lying municipal areas were affected by flood that marooned about five lakh people. Erosion of Arial Khan river at Kalatala and Shantinagar have taken a serious turn threatening the Madaripur town. The river was flowing above danger mark.  
 In Kishoreganj, waters from the rain-swelled Meghna, Dhanu, Arial Khan and

## Record rain floods city

By Staff Correspondent

Heavy rain throughout Sunday paralysed normal life in Dhaka city and elsewhere in the country.  
 The rains flooded the city and several areas in the metropolis went under knee-deep to waist-deep water.  
 Meteorological Department recorded the season's highest rainfall of 120 mm in the city in 12 hours ending at 6 pm Sunday. The earlier record was 97 mm on September 9.  
 Early morning drizzles turned into torrential rain at about 11.30 am and continued

without intermission till 2-30 pm in the city. Moderate rainfall also continued till evening.  
 Most of the city roads, lanes, by-lanes and low-lying areas went under water. Water up to one foot and above was seen till evening in roads and lanes in Bashabo, Kamalapur, Khilgaon, Dhanmondi, Mohanmadpur, Tejgaon, Gulshan, Ramna, Motijheel and Sabujbagh areas causing sufferings to the people.  
 The downpour and water-logging in the city affected voting in yesterday's referen-

ce.  
 Water entered into the shops after submerging the footpaths in Elephant road, Nilkhet, Dhanmondi, Kakrati, Malibagh, Santinagar, Nazimuddin road areas where shopkeepers were seen guarding their shops opening the shutters.  
 Slum dwellers were seen taking shelter at different city shopping centres and at dry footpaths as water entered their sheds. Vendors disappeared from the footpaths in

## By-election results gazetted

The official results of the September 11 by-elections of the eleven Jatiya Sangsad seats were announced Sunday in the gazette notification by the Election Commission, reports BBS.  
 The successful candidates are: Alhaj Karimuddin Bharracha (Rangpur-1), Paritosh Chakrabarti (Rangpur-2), Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury (Rangpur-5), Shah Muzammil Hussain (Rangpur-6), Helaluzzaman Talukdar Lala (Bogra-7).  
 See Page 12 Col. 4

## US concerned at drug abuse in Bangladesh

From Rahman Jahangir

WASHINGTON, Sept 15: The United States Assistant Secretary of State Mervyn Levitsky has said here last week Washington will continue to support all programmes of the Khaleda Zia government against drug trafficking and abuse in Bangladesh.  
 He was talking to The Daily Star in an exclusive interview at the voice of America training centre here on September 10.  
 Levitsky, who is in charge of the office of international narcotics matters, said the US government is now concerned over emergence of Bangladesh in the global map of countries afflicted with deadly drug abuse. He expressed his surprise over lack of initiative in Bangladesh to monitor closely the drug situation inside its national territory and said there is no reliable data avail-

able. The JKLFP is one of the several Muslim groups waging an independence campaign in Kashmir.  
 Meanwhile, another rebel group freed the chief of an educational institution here today after keeping him in custody for 12 days.

## India deploys troops in Assam to fight ULFA

NEW DELHI, Sept 15: Indian Army troops were deployed today in the oil-rich northeastern state of Assam to fight separatist guerrillas holding seven civilians hostage since July, reports AFP.  
 An unspecified number of soldiers immediately launched coming operations against the outlawed United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA), arresting several rebels, the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported.  
 The troops fanned out in the districts of Tinsukia, Dhemajai, Dibrugarh, Jorhat and Naogaon, which are known

ULFA bastions, raiding the well-knit group's numerous hideouts.  
 Twelve militants were arrested in the sudden swoop at Naogaon, some with arms and ammunition, and some others in Tinsukia and Jorhat, PTI said.  
 The news agency did not say if there was any resistance from the ULFA, a self-styled Maoist group which does not recognise India's Constitution and says Assam was never a part of India.  
 Assam, a state of 22 million, is governed by India's ruling

Congress (I) Party.  
 ULFA, which was on the run after an army crackdown in November 1990 which was later called off, has refused to let off seven of 12 hostages seized July 1 despite the release of more than 400 jailed rebels by the Assam government.  
 The fate of the seven, including four officials of the government's Oil and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC), was not immediately known. No further details of the army operation were available in New Delhi.

Demands for army deployment in Assam mounted after the ULFA shot dead a hostage, ONGC engineer T S Raju, and Bipul Mahanta, an Assamese who was mediating the release of the abducted men.  
 The killings sparked off a crippling strike in ONGC, halting a daily production of half a million barrels of crude oil and shaking India's economy, already reeling under its worst crisis.  
 Today's army deployment came hours after federal Home Minister S B Chavan urged the ULFA to free the hostages and

come to the negotiating table.  
 Another report said: Kashmiri separatists today gunned down an Indian intelligence officer they had abducted the previous night, a rebel spokesman said here.  
 The powerful Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) said its guerrillas killed Subash Bose of the Federal Border Security Force (BSF) after he admitted playing a role in the arrest of 11 militants.  
 Bose, described as a senior intelligence officer, was seized by JKLF militants on the out-

skirts of Srinagar, the summer capital of Kashmir, India's only Muslim-majority state.  
 No further details were available, and BSF officials in New Delhi or in this urban hub of the separatist campaign could not be reached for comment.  
 The Sir Lankan Foreign Minister delivered a letter from the Sri Lankan President Ranaasinghe Premadasa to Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia inviting her to attend the Sixth SAARC Summit scheduled November 7 in Colombo.

## What experts say on formation of new govt

By Reazuddin Ahmed

All executive powers of the republic, so far exercised by the President, shall vest in the Prime Minister with the announcement of the officials results of the referendum on Wednesday, according to constitutional experts.  
 The experts are, however, divided on whether Begum Zia will form a new cabinet on Wednesday or she will continue in the office as interim Prime Minister until the new President is elected under the 12th Amendment of the Constitution.  
 Some of the experts told The Daily Star that the present cabinet will stand dissolved as soon as the 12th Amendment comes into force and Begum Zia will form her cabinet.  
 Another group strongly feels that the leader of the majority party in parliament will be invited to form government only when the President is elected under the 12th Amendment. With the completion of the presidential election, the 12th Amendment See Page 12 Col. 2

## 'No' outnumbers 'Yes' in Rangpur

By Staff Correspondent

The people of Rangpur district as a whole voted against the Constitution 12th Amendment Bill. In Sunday's referendum 'No' votes vastly outnumbered 'Yes' votes in the district.  
 In all other districts of the country 'Yes' votes were far ahead of 'No' votes, according to results reaching Dhaka till late last night.  
 Rangpur is the home district of ousted President See Page 12 Col. 3

## CMC closed sine die

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Sept 15: The Chittagong Medical College (CMC) was closed sine die today following armed clashes between rival student groups.  
 The decision was taken after a 12-hour joint meeting of the Academic Council, Disciplinary Committee and the students union of the college ending at 3 am.  
 The joint meeting was convened following a series of clashes between the workers of the pro-BNP Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and the Awami League-backed Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) during last three days.  
 Several hand-made bombs were also exploded on the college campus when the meeting, which began at 8 pm yesterday, was going on.  
 The 12-hour meeting reviewed the campus situation which gradually deteriorated See Page 12 Col. 8

## DU reopens tomorrow

By DU Correspondent

Dhaka University reopens tomorrow (Tuesday) after 48 days unscheduled closure following armed clash between two rival student groups.  
 The residential halls will reopen today (Monday).  
 The university was closed on July 31 following three-day armed clashes between the supporters of BNP's student front Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and Awami League See Page 12 Col. 8

## Lankan FM leaves city

Sri Lankan Foreign Minister James Edward Harold Heart left for Bangkok Sunday afternoon after a three-day visit to Bangladesh, reports UNB.  
 He was seen off by Foreign Minister ASM Mustafizur Rahman at the Zia International Airport.  
 The Sir Lankan Foreign Minister delivered a letter from the Sri Lankan President Ranaasinghe Premadasa to Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia inviting her to attend the Sixth SAARC Summit scheduled November 7 in Colombo.