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STOCK MARKET
 DSE price index 764.85 (+0.08%)
 Market capital Tk 47.30 billion
 Transactions in volume 141617
 Transactions in value Tk 19.40 million

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Recommendations by Morshed Committee Foreign Ministry needs complete overhaul

By M Anwarul Haq

The Special Committee on Foreign Affairs has recommended a complete overhaul of the Foreign Ministry and the missions abroad for facing the new challenges in the arena of foreign policy.

In the changed global scene, there is a 'shift from conventional diplomacy dealing mainly with security and political work to economic diplomacy where emphasis should be on economic, social and environmental work,' it said.

The report submitted to the Prime Minister recently by the special committee, otherwise known as the Morshed Committee, emphasised allowing the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) the central role in the conduct of foreign relations, having overall coordinating responsibility. As regards foreign relations, other ministries must not act independently, "but in concert with it through appropriate consultation."

Prepared in two volumes, the report contains more than 50 recommendations and several observations. The committee took seven months to prepare the report and interviewed more than 150 experts in the field of foreign policy and other areas to draw their opinions and draft the conclusions. The committee suggested immediate setting up of a Task Force by the government to implement the recommendations.

The committee, in a major recommendation, suggested that the functions of all personnel working in diplomatic and consular missions abroad be brought under a single unified command of the head of the mission. It proposed that all officers or personnel whether from the cadre service or other ministries should be working under the direct supervision of the ambassador or high commissioner. The present practice gave scope for the officers posted from different cadre services to work and report directly to their respective ministries, often keeping the head of the mission uninformed or without effective supervisory control. See Page 12 Col 2

SC conveys opinion to President Thursday

By SC Correspondent

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court will communicate to the President Thursday its advisory opinion on the reference on MPs' absence and vacation of seats.

Chief Justice A T M Afzal said this yesterday at the end of the hearing of the first ever Presidential reference which continued for seven days since July 16.

But the opinion would not be pronounced at the open court, the Chief Justice said, adding it would be communicated to the President through the Registrar of the court.

The Supreme Court of Bangladesh (Appellate Division) Rules, 1988, says "After the hearing of the Special Reference, the Registrar shall transmit to the President the Report of the Court thereon."

Certified copies of the advisory opinion would be available from the court after the Registrar formally submitted it to the President, the Chief Justice said.

President Abdur Rahman Biswas made the reference on July 4 as more than 140 Opposition MPs' absence from the House crossed the 90-day constitutional limit on June 19. The President asked for opinion on four law points relating to the consecutive 90 days of absence and vacation of seats under Article 67 (1) (b) of the Constitution.

A total of 12 legal experts gave varied opinions on the issue in the course of hearing by the five-member full bench of the Appellate Division chaired by the Chief Justice.

The other members of the bench are Justice Mostafa Kamal, Justice Latifur Rahman, Justice Mohammad Abdur Rouf and Justice Ismailuddin Sarkar.

During the hearing, some of the legal experts said absence from Parliament due to prolonged boycott is not contemplated in Article 67 (1) (b) while some other said the opposition members are 'absent' from Parliament within the meaning of the relevant Article, no matter. See Page 12 Col 3



Bosnian Muslim refugees from the Srebrenica enclave waiting on Sunday for rations of bread at the UN air base in Tuzla. Serb forces stepped up an attack on the government-held Bihac enclave in northwestern Bosnia Sunday, a day after Croatia pledged military assistance to the Bosnian Army. — AFP/UNB photo

Clinton may veto Cong Bill today

WASHINGTON, July 24: US President Clinton will reject any attempt by Congress to unilaterally lift the arms embargo on Bosnia, White House Chief of Staff Leon Panetta says, reports AP.

"It's called a veto," Panetta told CBS "Face the Nation" Sunday.

With NATO allies moving toward an active policy of air strikes, Clinton last week persuaded Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole to put off a vote on ending the arms embargo.

But Dole, a Republican from Kansas, has indicated he will bring up his resolution, which has wide support in the Senate, tomorrow. See Page 12 Col 1

RRF guns not for Bosnians

UNDATED, July 24: New guns being deployed by the United Nations and its Rapid Reaction Force around Sarajevo are designed to protect peacekeepers, not the city's 280,000 civilians, reports UNB.

The new Rapid Reaction Force only has a UN mandate to bolster peacekeepers, not defend civilians. If they were to defend one side of the conflict from another side, the United Nations — which has pledged to remain neutral — believes it would be taking sides.

Moreover, the June 1993 resolution laying out terms for defending UN "safe areas" like Sarajevo is ambiguous. See Page 12 Col 1

Dhanmondi Lake water emitting poisonous gas

By Staff Correspondent

There is no oxygen in Dhanmondi lake water. The contaminated water is emitting poisonous gas in the surrounding areas, according to tests done by the Department of Environment (DOE).

The oxygen content of the lake water stands at zero mg per litre whereas the minimum requirement of oxygen for aquatic life is four mg per litre, according to the tests done here yesterday. "The amount of coliform, indicating existence of harmful bacteria in the water is now 65,000 numbers per 100ml. The normal count is 5000 numbers," an engineer of the DOE told The Daily Star.

"We have been monitoring the lake water for a long time but we did not see anything like this before. No aquatic life can survive in this condition," the engineer added.

The engineer also warned that the existence of other highly toxic substances was very much apparent and this could lead to a 'dead' situation of the water body.

"The lake water is now producing noxious gases such as hydrogen sulphide, mercaptan, methane and methyl chloride," a senior official of the DOE said.

He also added that this would create health hazard in the area.

The DOE has already notified the WASA and the City Corporation authorities to set up aerators at different points of the lake to improve the water. See Page 12 Col 8

India bans bus, truck movement thru' Tin Bigha

LALMONIRHAT, July 24: Indian authorities have imposed restriction since Sunday afternoon on the movement of heavy vehicles like buses and trucks to Dahagram and Angarpara enclaves through the Tin Bigha corridor, reports UNB.

About 45 trucks mostly carrying sand and bricks including two with foodgrain and medicine and five buses with passengers were forced to return today due to the ban.

Commander of 15 Rifles Battalion Lt Col Ilias Pathan said a protest letter today to the Commander of 191 BSF Battalion SR Mallik, but did not receive any reply till late in the evening.

Deputy Commissioner of Lalmonirhat also informed the matter to the District Magistrate of Kuchbihar.

Meanwhile, tension mounted in the area as the Indian. See Page 12 Col 8

Ctg judge's court takes up case Order to produce Ershad, 4 others on Aug 7

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, July 24: The District and Sessions Judge's Court here today took up the Gen Manzur murder case which was shifted to this court from the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court on July 20.

The Sessions Judge, Ifikhar Rasool, today issued production warrants against the five accused including deposed president H M Ershad and fixed August 7 as the date for hearing.

The judge, in his order, said "This court will take cognizance of the case under Sub-Section (1) of Section 193 of the CrPC. For the purpose of taking such cognizance, this court as a court of original jurisdiction has to have corpus of each individual accused within the jurisdiction of this court."

The judge also said "I am unable to accept the contention of the learned public prosecutor (PP) that this court can take cognizance of the case without presence of the accused before this court."

He pointed out the provisions as laid down in Sub-Section (1) of Section 193 of the CrPC to the effect that "No court of sessions shall take cognizance of any offence as a court of original jurisdiction unless the accused has been sent to it by a magistrate duly empowered in that behalf."

"So before taking cognizance of the case, the presence of the accused before this court is sine qua non", the judge pointed out.

He said the submission of the learned advocates for the accused were good enough so far as they related to the 'non-taking of cognizance' without the presence of the accused before this court. See Page 12 Col 6

Cabinet okays BR reforms

The Cabinet yesterday approved, in principle, a proposal for institutional restructuring of Bangladesh Railway suiting need of the time, reports UNB.

The approval was given at a regular weekly meeting of the Cabinet, held at Bangabhaban with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in the chair.

It also endorsed the proposal of Ministry of Environment and Forest regarding Bangladesh's ratification of the International Convention to Combat Desertification.

Besides, the draft amendment of Administrative Tribunals Act 1980 (Act VII of 1981) was approved by the Cabinet.

Medium-scale industrial ventures WB credit unutilised due to glut of bank liquidity

A glut of liquidity in banks has left a World Bank credit, earmarked for financing medium-scale industrial ventures, unutilised for years, reports UNB.

Only 12 per cent of the Tk 102 crore credit, made available from the IDA — the World Bank's soft-lending window, has been disbursed since its effectiveness in March 1993, said an official source.

Banks, rolling in huge excess liquidity of their own, have been showing apathy to utilise the IDA credit. Three private lending institutions — AB Bank, IFIC Bank and IPDC — are the authorised relenders of this credit.

Pursuance from the Bangladesh Bank has failed to activate the utilisation of the credit while the deadline for sanctioning money under it is December 1996.

A World Bank review mission has recently rated the credit project as one of the worst performing ones and even recommended its cancellation. The government, however, is making efforts to retain the credit.

Talking to UNB, a banker observed that little thought had been given to the issue of excess liquidity during negotiation of the credit. Private Sector Industrial Credit (PSIC). Such credits from multilateral donors are not worthy now when local banks are burdened with excess liquidity worth several thousand crore taka, he observed.

Lack of adequate incentives to the relending institutions has further accentuated their indifference, according to insiders. A senior official of the AB Bank said: With 5.50 per cent refinancing rate payable to the IDA and another 5 per cent interest, the banks are not willing to provide loans. See Page 12 Col 1

RU syndicate fails to meet

From RU Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, July 24: The Rajshahi University Syndicate meeting, which was scheduled for today could not be held as its members were not present.

The Vice Chancellor had called the meeting to discuss the prevailing situation on the campus.

A meeting of the Selection Committee of the university, also scheduled for today did not take place due to the teachers' boycott.

The Rajshahi University Teachers' Association (RUTA) at an emergency meeting last night demanded immediate resignation of the Vice Chancellor alleging his failure to See Page 12 Col 6

Danis leaves, threatens int'l campaign

Canadian lawyer Marcel Danis, who left for London last night, said that he would launch an international campaign for fair trial of former president H M Ershad in the General Manzur murder case, reports UNB.

In a pre-departure statement, Danis said: "My plan is to go to Geneva where I will lodge a formal protest with Human Rights Commission in Geneva using it to a movement to international fora so that free and fair trial is held particularly in this vitally important murder case."

Besides, the Canadian lawyer said, he would contact Commonwealth Secretary General Chief Emeke Anyaoku and other important leaders to inform them about this particular case.

Danis said that he would also try to meet some leaders of the UK and France, and write to the Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of House of Representatives and Senate of the USA.

"I will also write to other leaders in US and other democratic countries," he said.

All set for functioning of Sylhet Division

From Iqbal Siddique

SYLHET, July 24: Steps are about to start functioning of the country's sixth administrative division in Sylhet from August 1.

With this the long-felt demand of about one crore people of 4 districts in the Greater Sylhet region would be fulfilled. The districts are, Habiganj, Moulvibazar, Sunamganj and Sylhet.

However, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia will formally inaugurate the division on September 1, according to official sources.

The National Committee for Administrative Reforms (NICAR) in its meeting held on June 28 last with the Prime Minister in the chair took the decision to start functioning of the division from August 1 with its headquarters in Sylhet. On the next day, a Gazette Notification in this regard was published.

Offices of the Divisional Commissioner and the Deputy Inspector-General of Police will be housed in the present Zila Parishad building. Site for construction of the permanent office complex has been selected at Alanpura in Sylhet town.

The sources said officers and other staff of these two offices will start attending their offices from August 1.

Habibur Rahman, Joint Secretary (Border), Ministry of Home is likely to take over as the Divisional Commissioner. Modabber Hossain Chowdhury, DIG, Rajshahi Range may be posted as the DIG, Sylhet division. Division-level offices of other departments will be set up later.

The expenditure for construction of their offices has been estimated at Tk 3.3 crore.

The Division Implementation and Greater Sylhet Development Action Council has taken up a day-long programme on August 1 to celebrate functioning of the division. The programme includes a victory procession and a public meeting and *milad mahfils*. The local BNP will accord a mass reception to Finance Minister Saifur Rahman at the Registry Maidan.

নির্বাচন কমিশন সচিবালয়
 শেরে বাংলা নগর, ঢাকা

নং নিকস/নিঃ-১/ভোঃরেঃ(তালিকা মুদ্রণ)-১(১১)/৯৫/২৭৮
 তারিখ: ২৩শে জুলাই, ১৯৯৫ ইং/০৮ই শ্রাবণ, ১৪০২বাবং

কম্পিউটার কম্পোজ প্রিন্টিং ও লেটার প্রিন্টিং-এর মাধ্যমে ভোটার তালিকা ও ভোটার পরিচয়পত্র মুদ্রণের জন্য দরপত্র তফসিল দাখিলের সময়সীমা বৃদ্ধি প্রসংগে

৩রা জুলাই, ১৯৯৫/১৯শে আষাঢ়, ১৪০২ তারিখের নিকস/নিঃ-১/ভোঃরেঃ (তালিকা মুদ্রণ)-১(১১)/৯৫/২৬১ নম্বর বিজ্ঞপ্তিতে প্রকাশিত কম্পিউটার কম্পোজ প্রিন্টিং ও লেটার প্রিন্টিং এর মাধ্যমে ভোটার তালিকা ও ভোটার পরিচয়পত্র মুদ্রণের জন্য দরপত্র তফসিল দাখিলের তারিখ ২৫শে জুলাই, ১৯৯৫/১০ই শ্রাবণ, ১৪০২বাবং (মঙ্গলবার) এর পরিবর্তে ৩০শে জুলাই, ১৯৯৫ইং/১৫ই শ্রাবণ, ১৪০২বাবং (রবিবার) নির্ধারণ করা হইল।

মোহাম্মদ জকরিয়্যা
 সিনিয়র সহকারী সচিব (নির্বাচন-১)
 ফোন: ৮১৫৩৬৭ (অফিস)
 ৪০৪৯২ (বাসা)।

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Begum Wazir to lead Pak team

Begum Shahnaz Wazir Ali, advisor to the Prime Minister of Pakistan on social sector, would be leading the Pakistan delegation to the two-day SAARC ministerial meeting on women beginning in Dhaka July 29. She will be accompanied by two senior officials from the Ministry of Women's Development and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, reports BSS.