

Constitutional crisis

In search of a way out



In today's instalment of The Daily Star interview series on current political deadlock, Justice KM Subhan supported formation of a caretaker government with MPs elected thru' by-elections, who will be acceptable to all the major political parties. According to him, this formula will not require any amendment to the Constitution.

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We request the readers to send in their suggestions towards resolving the crisis.

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STOCK MARKET

DSE price index	780.25 (-4.19%)
Market capital Tk	48.25 billion
Transactions in volume	112629
Transactions in value Tk	28.77 million

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NEWS BRIEFS

Shahjalal varsity reopens today

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, July 31: The Shahjalal University of Science and Technology re-opens tomorrow. It was closed after a series of armed clashes between the activists of the Islami Chhatra Shibir and the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal on July 1. Meanwhile, the authorities have suspended all kinds of political activities on the campus for three months from tomorrow.

Single authority should manage city streets, traffic

By Staff Correspondent



Mayor of the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) Mohammad Hanif speaking at the Open Discussion on Streets of Dhaka jointly organised by The Daily Star, BUET and the DCC at the Nagar Bhaban in the city yesterday. Seated from left to right: Mahfuz Anam, Editor of The Daily Star; Prof Meer Mobasher Ali of the BUET, A N Hossain, Commissioner of the DMP; Manzurul Karim, CNC, Bangladesh Scouts; and Ismail Hossain, Chairman, BRTA. — Star photo

Speakers at an open discussion yesterday called for the formation of a single central coordinating authority, comprising representatives from the DCC, DMP, WASA, DESA, T and T Board, Titas, Roads and Highways Department and Bangladesh Railways, to deal with all aspects relating to the streets and traffic in the city.

They also underscored the importance of framing a unified traffic law, fixing optimum number of rickshaws for the capital, evicting hawkers encroaching on main roads, building a mass transit system, and creating general awareness about traffic rules to ease the severe traffic problem that plagues the capital city.

The discussion on the "Streets of Dhaka" organised by The Daily Star in collaboration with the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) and the Dhaka City Corporation

(DCC) also suggested introduction of meters in baby-taxis and taxis, strict enforcement of traffic laws and construction of a ring road and more by-passes and link roads.

The open discussion, was

Detailed recommendations will be published tomorrow

participated by the city Mayor Mohammad Hanif, Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Commissioner AN Hossain, Chairman of Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA). See Page 12 Col 1

93pc driving licences fake!

By Staff Correspondent

Commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police AN Hossain said yesterday that 93.07 per cent of all vehicle driving licences including those of buses, trucks and private cars were "found to be fake."

He was speaking at the open discussion on "Streets of Dhaka" organised by The Daily Star in collaboration with the BUET and the DCC.

Spot-checking by the DMP over the last three years revealed this astonishing data. The Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA), responsible for issuing licences, said that a total of 500,000 licences have been See Page 12 Col 8

Latest proposal on caretaker govt Come up with complete formula : Speaker

By Nazmul Ashraf

Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali has said proponents of the idea of an interim government without amending the Constitution should use their good offices to find out a solution to the long-persisting political standoff.

Asked about the formula floated recently by veteran lawyer Syed Ishtiaq Ahmed and others, the Speaker said, "It's an incomplete formula... the architects should come up with a complete one."

Explaining, he said, the proposed formula for an interim government to conduct the next general elections only provides that 10 consensus candidates will be elected in the by-elections to the vacant parliament seats to form an interim government. But it did not say anything regarding the other seats which fell and is likely to fall vacant. "The formula needs to be specific and elaborate".

Talking to The Daily Star at his Hare Road official residence yesterday, the Speaker said the people would appreciate if any personality like Ishtiaq comes up with a practical solution to the long-standing



political crisis. Whenever the formula is, he said, it must be in conformity with the Constitution since no amendment to the Constitution is possible after

OMS of rice from today

The government will start open market sale (OMS) of rice in 226 flood affected thanas of 38 districts from today, an official handout said yesterday. Three kgs of rice at a price of Taka 10.50 per kg will be sold per head under the OMS system. The OMS operation will also start at 20 centres in the flood-hit adjoining areas of Dhaka City from today, reports BSS.

the vacation of the opposition MPs' seats.

Parliament needs two-third majority of its members to amend the Constitution and the ruling party lacks such strength.

"There is no scope for a caretaker government as demanded by the opposition parties", the Speaker pointed out.

On Ishtiaq Ahmed's idea, Razzak Ali further said, "Let him take the role of an arbitrator and I request him to make it practical".

The Speaker said, "Somebody will have to bell the cat".

In this regard, he also cited the failed attempts by the Commonwealth Secretary General's emissary, Sir Ninian Stephen, to resolve the issue of a caretaker administration.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia discussed with his cabinet colleagues the prevailing political situation after the regular weekly cabinet meeting yesterday. The Speaker also attended the informal meeting, sources said. Details could not be known.

87 JS seats declared vacated

By Staff Correspondent

The Parliament Secretariat yesterday circulated two gazette notifications announcing vacation of the seats of 87 Opposition MPs who remained absent from Parliament for 90 consecutive sitting days without leave of the House.

The gazette notifications were printed July 30. Eighty-six of the seats were declared vacated with effect from June 20 while that of Akhteruzzaman Choudhury Babu from June 26.

The first gazette notification contained the list of 86 MPs and the second one mentioned about Akhteruzzaman Choudhury Babu.

Parliament Secretary Abul Hashem published those under the provisions in Article 67(1)(b) of the Constitution and Rule 178(4) of the Rules of Procedure of Parliament.

The Parliament Secretariat also started sending copies of the gazette notifications to the MPs concerned and relevant offices yesterday.

However, the Secretariat could not despatch yesterday letters to the remaining 55 of the 142 absentee opposition MPs asking them whether they had joined the sessions during the Opposition boycott of the House since they had signed the attendance See Page 12 Col 4

Nepal to help develop water resources, control flood

By Staff Correspondent

Nepal has agreed to assist Bangladesh in developing its water resources management and minimising sufferings due to recurring floods through flood-forecasting and early warning.

The agreement to this effect was reached in the ninth meeting of Bangladesh-Nepal Joint Economic Commission that concluded here yesterday.

The JEC was informed by the Nepalese side that the report on 'Measures for Mitigation of Flood and Optimal Use of Water Resources', carried out by a Bangladesh-Nepal Joint study team, was awaiting final approval of the Nepalese government.

According to the agreed minutes, signed here yesterday, the decision would be conveyed to Bangladesh through diplomatic channel at an early date. Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman and Nepalese Finance and Supplies Minister Bharat Mohan Adhikari signed the agreed minutes on behalf of their governments.

The Nepalese side also agreed to start preparatory work before approval of the report. They also suggested nomination of appropriate executing agencies in both the countries immediately.

Our country will extend its support to Bangladesh in developing water resources management and mitigating sufferings due to recurring floods, the Nepalese Minister said while addressing a press conference after signing the agreed minutes.

"Our country's water resources could be beneficial to the whole region," he said.

Asked to comment on Bangladesh's proposal for creation of reservoirs at the See Page 12 Col 3

9 killed, 20 injured as train rams minibus

BOGRA, July 31: At least nine people were killed and 20 injured when a train ramed a minibus on the level crossing near Shantahar railway junction early today, reports UNB.

Police and witnesses said the Shantahar-bound Karotoa inter-city train rumbled in and slammed the Bogra-bound minibus while crossing the railgate at about 5:30 am, leaving five of the bus passengers dead on the spot.

Four others succumbed to injuries on way to Naogaon Hospital.

Seriously injured 11 were admitted to Naogaon Hospital, from where four of them shifted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital in

critical condition. The minibus from Shantahar ran onto the level crossing as the gate was open. The bus totally shattered in the crash.

Identity of the dead could not yet be ascertained.

Meanwhile, Public Relations Department of Railway in a release in Dhaka said the concerned gateman of the level crossing was suspended after the accident.

Directives have also been given to determine cause, and responsibility of the accident.

Senior officials of Lalmonirhat Railway Division visited the scene and the injured people at Naogaon Hospital.



Abahani's custodian Dulal Hossain Dhanu (L) makes an abortive attempt to thwart a goalbound shot of Mohammedans Russian striker Andre Kazakov (R) during their Lifebuoy Premier football league match at the flood-lit Dhaka Stadium yesterday. Incidentally it was the first goal against Abahani in the league. The Dhaka derby, however, ended 1-1. (details on Page 10). — Star photo

'Redesign SAP to avert economic debacles'

By Staff Correspondent

Reforms under the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP) have failed to lead the economy towards self-reliance. Unless these are redesigned to reflect the requirements of the people, they may produce many Mexican debacles, some prominent economists have said.

They were addressing a discussion on "Structural Transformation for Self-reliant Development of Bangladesh" on the concluding day yesterday of the 11th biennial conference of Bangladesh Economic Association (BEA) here.

Chaired by president of the BEA, Prof Anisur Rahman, it was participated by State Minister for Planning Dr A Moyeen Khan.

Prof Rehman Sobhan, former finance minister M Syeduzzaman, former planning minister Dr Fashuddin Mahtab political advisor of Awami League S A M S Kibria and Workers' Party leader Rashed Khan Menon MP, A message from Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina, from USA, was read out in the discussion meeting.

In her message Hasina said a comprehensive and long-term strategy should be developed to reduce the country's dependence on foreign aid and build up a genuinely self-reliant economy. Alleviation of poverty will remain an unattainable goal if the economy remains sluggish and if the farm sector's share of the GDP shrinks, said Hasina. See Page 12 Col 1

15 hurt in clash for tickets in stadium

By DMCH Correspondent

At least 15 persons were injured when a group of angry people went on rampage and clashed with police after they failed to get tickets for the Lifebuoy Premier Division football match between Abahani and Mohammedan at the National Stadium here yesterday. The match, however, began on schedule at 6-30 pm.

Of the injured persons six including Vladimir Kobzev of Rahmatganj Club, and press photographer Shamim Noor were taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital for treatment. They received cuts and bruises, medical sources said.

The unruly people damaged some ticket counters before police brought the situation under control by resorting to lathi charge and hurling tear gas shells.

Sylhet Division starts functioning today

From Iqbal Siddiquee

SYLHET, July 31: Sylhet division, the sixth administrative division of the country, starts functioning tomorrow.

The new division comprises Habiganj, Moulvibazar, Sunamganj and Sylhet districts.

The newly appointed Divisional Commissioner, Habibur Rahman, and the Deputy Inspector General of Police, Modabber Hossain Chowdhury, are already here. Offices of the two are temporarily housed at the former Zila parishad Hall.

The Divisional Commissioner will sit in a meeting with the Deputy Commissioners of Habiganj, Sunamganj, Moulvibazar and Sylhet districts tomorrow morning while the DIG will also sit with the SPs. Though the divisional See Page 12 Col 8



20000 delegates to attend Beijing confce

Some 20,000 delegates from 180 countries, UN agencies and NGOs are expected to attend the ensuing World Conference on Women in Beijing to discuss a 362-point agenda, diplomatic sources indicated yesterday, reports UNB.

The 12-day conference, fourth of its kind, is due to begin on September 4.

Earlier, on September 1, delegates from the NAM countries are likely to meet in the Chinese capital to determine a common position of the member states on women's problems.

Simultaneously with the world meet on woman, an NGO forum conference will be held in the Chinese city of Hunirou, close to Beijing.

Water confce in city today

Experts from Bangladesh, India and Nepal will discuss possibilities of solution to the outstanding issues relating to eastern Himalayan rivers in a regional conference beginning in Dhaka today, reports BSS.

Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman will inaugurate the two-day conference on 'Converting Water into Wealth-the Case of Eastern Himalayan Rivers' at Sonargaon Hotel in the morning.

The Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad (BUP), a private non profit think tank of the country, is organising the conference.

The issues they will discuss include sharing of the Ganges water, disaster preparedness and management and modalities of cooperation aimed at finding regional solution for equitable benefit of all countries concerned, organisers said. See Page 12 Col 1