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DSE MARKET

DSE price index	1088.89 (-0.09%)
Market capital Tk	7470.38 cr
Transactions in volume	423786
Transactions in value Tk	8.87 cr

CSE MARKET

CSE price index	488.87 (-1.10%)
Market capital Tk	4020.77 cr
Transactions in volume	17228
Transactions in value Tk	28.14 lakh

Metropolitan

Dhaka Day by Day



NEWS BRIEFS

Smuggled salt seized

From Our Correspondent
COX'S BAZAR, July 23: Bangladesh Rifles seized smuggled salt worth Tk 11 lakh from four trawlers when they tried to enter the Bangladesh territory at Teknaf early today. The trawlers were also seized. However, the smugglers escaped.

Int'l Islamic confce in Cairo from today

State Minister for Religious Affairs Moulana Mohammad Nurul Islam has left the city for Cairo to attend International Islamic Conference begins today. The State Minister who was accompanied by Islamic Foundation Director General Syed Ashraf Ali will address the 4-day conference, reports UNB.

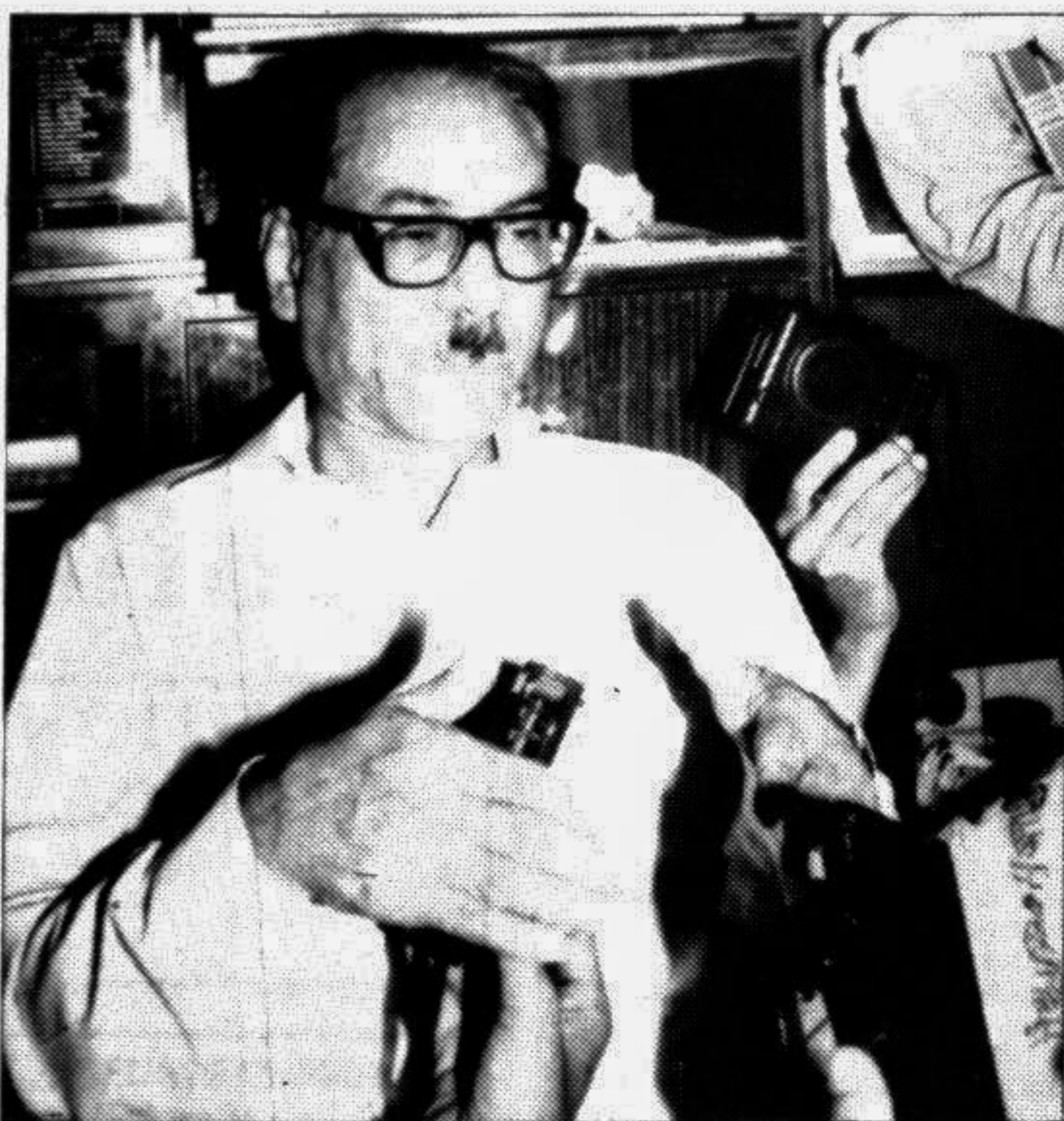
101 more Rohingyas go home

COX'S BAZAR, July 23: Another batch of Rohingya refugees comprising 101 members of 18 families returned to their homes in Myanmar today. Officials of UNHCR and Bangladesh government were present on the bank of the river Naaf when they sailed for their homeland in the morning. Officials said 48,155 refugees are now awaiting their repatriation, reports UNB.

2 killed in Kushtia road accident

From Our Correspondent
KUSHTIA, July 23: Two persons were killed and 10 others injured in an accident on the Kushtia-Bheramara road near Gobindapur this afternoon.

Shahabuddin declared President-elect Neutrality to be maintained



President-elect Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed talking to newsmen at his Dhanmondi residence yesterday. - Star photo

By Staff Correspondent

President-elect Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed said he will try to maintain neutrality of the office of the Head of State.

"I will try to maintain neutrality of the office of the President," Justice Shahabuddin said while talking to newsmen at his Dhanmondi residence yesterday hours after the Election Commission declared him elected unopposed President of the country.

He, however, refused to say anything about the policies of the government saying, "Still there are two months fifteen days to go for my swearing in to the office."

The Election Commission yesterday announced that Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed had been elected unopposed President of the country according to Article 7 of the Presidential Election Act, 1991 and sub-clause 6 of clause 12 of the Presidential Election Regulation, 1991.

The ruling Awami League had nominated him as its candidate for the presidency with no other contestant from the

Opposition.

Justice Shahabuddin will replace President Abdur Rahman Biswas whose tenure expires on October 8.

A former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed had also headed the caretaker government which conducted the 1991 general elections. The 1991 election was acclaimed nationally and internationally as a free and fair one.

"There was no precondition from any quarter," Justice Shahabuddin said about his nomination for the post of presidency. He, however, said that he would have been more happy if his nomination papers were signed by both the major parties in the country.

Justice Shahabuddin said that he accepted the offer of the ruling party for the sake of upholding the democratic system. "In the parliamentary system there has to be a President. Otherwise, it ceases to exist."

Citing examples from other Commonwealth countries where parliamentary democracy is practised, Justice Shahabuddin said that he would not be a President for the sake of a party.

But the BNP legislators

Unscheduled debates in Jatiya Sangsad

By Staff Correspondent

The Jatiya Sangsad yesterday witnessed unscheduled debates on various legal and political issues including formation of a Special Parliamentary Committee to scrutinise some bills placed by the ruling party status of Jatiya Party in the Sangsad and nomination of a retired judge as a candidate for the post of President.

A large number of legislators belonging to both the Treasury and the Opposition benches including Prime Minister and Leader of the House Sheikh Hasina and former Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition Khaleda Zia participated in the debates.

The debate on formation of the Special JS Committee ensued when Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina unilaterally proposed a 15-member parliamentary body, comprising members of the ruling party, BNP, JP and Jamaat-e-Islami, to scrutinise a few bills introduced so far in the House.

She also said that the ruling party had adequate numerical strength to pass the bills without the support of the Opposition. "But we want all the parties in Parliament to be involved in the legislative process."

Earlier, another debate sparked off when the Speaker announced the 15-member

JS special committee formed

Parliament yesterday formed a 15-member special committee to scrutinise three amendment bills, which were introduced on Sunday, keeping their passage in abeyance, reports UNB.

Leader of the House and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina proposed formation of the committee as per section 266 of the Rules of Procedure for what she said facilitating Opposition's participation in the law-making process.

Hasina also proposed that the special committee would scrutinise all bills to come in the House until the standing committees were constituted.

Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury, amidst protest

See Page 12 Col 3

BIRDEM strike Authorities meet today to discuss demands

By Staff Correspondent

A good number of patients left the BIRDEM hospital as the indefinite strike by nurses and other employees continued for the third day yesterday, according to sources in the hospital.

The striking employees "forced" the doctors not to attend patients and perform emergency operations, secretary general of the BIRDEM Fashi Uddin Mahtab alleged.

"The hospital authorities are determined to implement the contract service rules. If contract service rules are not implemented, service condition in the hospital will deteriorate," he said. He however

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News Analysis A Salutary Choice

By Mahfuz Anam

A few days back, concerning the nomination of a new President, we speculated as to how "visionary the PM will be". We are delighted to find that she has not let us down, and heartily commend her for it. In nominating a man like Mr. Shahabuddin the Prime Minister has reflected the overriding preference of the people of the country, who wanted to see the stature and prestige of the office of the President restored to the level originally envisaged in the Constitution. Through this choice Sheikh Hasina has also shown a rare courage, an extraordinary vision and a maturing of her own self that has risen her prestige many fold in the eyes of her countrymen and women.

There was an electrifying impact at the announcement Monday evening that Mr. Shahabuddin has agreed to accept Awami League's nomination to be the next President. It dramatically proved once again that sensible politics still gets the loudest applause. Even the

bitterest critic of AL could not but nod in support of the nomination.

No other decision of this government could have so unified the nation as this. Awami League is correct in assuming that the man who was the consensus choice of all the opposition parties in '91 should once again be able to capture that same unity in '96.

The immediate result of this choice is the belief that appropriate honour and dignity will be restored to this office, which had so tragically been allowed to erode over the years. The moral authority, which is the only and the most powerful weapon that the office of the President has, will now be able to have its full play as Mr. Shahabuddin, independent of any official position, enjoys the trust and the respect of the whole nation.

The selection is a significant indicator of the PM's thinking. This action shows, as

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BNP questions validity of Shahabuddin's election

Opposition BNP questioned the constitutional validity of announcing Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed elected country's next President, reports UNB.

The BNP argued that the presidency is a post of profit and, as per the Constitution, a retired chief justice cannot hold any office of profit after his retirement.

Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury of the BNP stood on a point of order to say the Election Commission has declared the election of a new President of the country, which lacks constitutional validity.

He termed the presidential office as an office of profit and said there is no specific law outside the Constitution which allows any retired chief justice to hold such an office.

He read out the relevant articles of the Constitution and suggested that the matter be referred to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court for an advisory jurisdiction.

The opposition lawmaker

See Page 12 Col 7



TRIUMPHANT TRIO: Beth Bostford (C) of the United States, the winner of the 100m backstroke, glinting with glee at the podium along with compatriot Whitney Hedgepeth (L) and South African Marianne Kriel who won silver and bronze respectively on July 22. Story on page 10. - AFP/UNB photo

Kalpana issue 24 Infantry Div terms it a conspiracy against Army

CHITTAGONG, July 23: The 24 Infantry Division of Bangladesh Army has categorically denied any involvement of the security forces in the alleged kidnapping of Kalpana Chakma, reports UNB.

No officer or jawan of the security forces was involved in the so-called kidnapping of the tribal girl on the night of June 11 from the New Lalbaghona village in Rangamati district, reports UNB.

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No computer error: Chairman DB to review results of 908 candidates

By Staff Correspondent

The Dhaka Education Board will soon set new rules for the computerised evaluation system to minimise confusion and errors by SSC and HSC candidates. Chairman of the board Moyez Uddin Ahmed said yesterday.

He said at a press conference in the city that due to candidates' errors in filling the code of questionnaire set in the answer scripts, results of 2785 SSC candidates in the Dhaka Board were 'affected'. Of them, 908 candidates were declared unsuccessful exclusively for not writing the set codes.

The Chairman said as per the Prime Minister's instruction, the board will review the results of these 908 candidates under the Dhaka Board. Results of such other candidates under four other boards may also be reviewed, he said.

"If the problem of the set code is solved, 42 of these 908 candidates may get star marks, 342 first division, 510 second division and 14 third division," he added.

"It was found that these candidates did not fill up the

question set code box. We have four sets of questions so that candidates cannot copy each other's answer sheet. If somebody does not specify what his question set is, it is impossible for the computer to decide which answer sheet was written against which question set," the Chairman said.

He said actions were being taken against the invigilators who played an irresponsible role by overlooking the mistakes of the candidates in filling the set code.

The computerised system currently being used is hundred per cent error free. But mistakes are being done by candidates and invigilators. We will now set new modalities so that candidates do not make mistake," he pointed out.

There is still some confusion among the people regarding the computerised evaluation system which is actually much more reliable than the conventional method," Moyez Uddin Ahmed said.

The present SSC and HSC answer sheets are formatted for an error-free, impersonal

See Page 12 Col 8

Jailbreak 4 securitymen on fresh remand

By Staff Correspondent

The four arrested security personnel of the Dhaka Central Jail were placed on a fresh remand for three days yesterday, police said.

The CID produced the arrested persons before the court yesterday morning, at the end of a five-day remand.

The CID arrested the securitymen - Shayestha Khan, Abdus Salam Sarkar, Md Robulul lah and Mujibur Rahman Khondaker - on July 17 following the escape of 13 prisoners.

See Page 12 Col 7

Two dacoities in Chittagong

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, July 23: Armed dacoits committed robberies in two houses here today and decamped with over Tk five lakh in cash and valuables.

According to police and local people, a group of dacoits stormed in to the house of one Abdul Alim at Mallapur under Doublemooring thana at 8 am and confined all the family members in a room at gunpoint.

Then the dacoits looted Tk

See Page 12 Col 6

Low-lying areas around Dhaka city flooded

Flood situation around capital Dhaka, Madaripur, Shariatpur, Faridpur, Rajbari, Munshiganj, Manikganj and Narayanganj districts worsened yesterday due to continuous swelling of rivers, reports UNB.

The situation in Bogra, Sherpur, Sirajganj, Jamalpur and Tangail districts remained static but showing an improving trend as water levels of the rivers of these districts marked fall in upstream points.

Four people, including two children, drowned in the flood water at different places of Sirajganj district in the last 24 hours till 6 pm yesterday.

The victims are: Asad Ali, 45 of Chhatiantoli in Sadar thana, Abdul Matin, 65 of Dar-gapara in Shahjadpur, Kho-deza, 8 of Taltola in the same thana and Haten, 5 of Nag-gati village in Belkuchi thana.

Part of the district town of Madaripur went under water yesterday leaving more than 2 lakh people of the district in abject misery.

Shantinagar, Amirabad, Kalatala, Sabujbag and BSCIC areas in the district headquarters were flooded as the rivers maintained steady rise with downrush of water from upstream.

Leakage of water was found at several points of the town-

LATEST FROM ATLANTA

Most popular souvenir

The most popular souvenir of these Olympics is a plastic ticket pouch on a neck cord. For just five dollars, spectators can look like journalists or athletes sporting credentials as their coveted tickets dangle in front of their chest. An estimated 11 million tickets to Olympic events have been sold. "My tickets were getting soggy in my fanny pack, and I wanted to save them as a memento," said Djuana Holtman of Acworth, Georgia.

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Role of media in sustainable development stressed

From M Anwarul Haq

BEIJING, July 23: Media representatives from 20 countries today called for creating greater awareness on environmental issues to ensure sustainable growth in the developing countries.

A balanced development is precondition for improving the quality of lives of people in the Asia and the Pacific region, they said.

The role of the media was highlighted by the speakers attending the three-day conference on "Reporting on Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific" organised by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

The conference, first of its kind, is being held in conjunction with the China Environmental Protection Agency (CEPA) at the sprawling complex of the Beijing Municipal Training Centre for Environmental Technology.

The workshop, attended by over 40 journalists from 20 countries, was inaugurated by Wang Zhijia, Deputy Director General of the Department of International Cooperation (NEPA) of China and was addressed, among others, by Dr Suvit Yodmani, UNEP Director for Asia-Pacific and Prof Zhang Kunmin, Deputy Administrator of NEPA.

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Inspection of govt food godowns begins

By Reaz Ahmad

Inspection of the government food godowns has begun with the objective of examining both the quantity and quality of rice in the godowns, sources in the Food Ministry said.

According to official records, there is a food stock of 10 lakh tons now.

During the inspection, it will be verified whether the stock in godowns tally with the records in the Food Ministry. Besides, quality of rice will be checked to help build an improved stock, the sources said.

The Ministry decided to strictly follow the rule of "First Stock, First Release" to stop corrupt practices, they added.

A highly placed source in

the Ministry told The Daily Star on condition of anonymity that during the on-going inspection drive, it was found in a number of cases that at times of need, 'fresh stock of rice' was released from godowns, allowing the 'old stock of rice' to get rotten.

Agriculture, Food and Relief and Disaster Management Minister Begum Matia Chowdhury told this correspondent that she had directed the authorities concerned to issue suspension orders if any official or employee was found responsible for this.

This would stop the long practised technique of selling rice from government stock at

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