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Expecting and nursing  
mothers will be able to

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## MPs blast Article 70

**Say they cannot  
speak freely**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Opposition BNP and Jatiya Party MPs in parliament yesterday came down heavily on Article 70 of the constitution saying that lawmakers cannot speak freely because of this provision.

Two JP MPs and a BNP lawmaker were speaking after taking part in discussion on a bill titled “Chattagram Port Authority Bill-2021”.

Prime Minister and Leader of the House Sheikh Hasina was present at the time.

According to Article 70, a person elected as a member of parliament in an election in which he was nominated as a candidate by a political party shall vacate his seat if he -- (a) resigns from that party; or (b) votes in parliament against that party; but shall not thereby be disqualified for subsequent election as a member of parliament.

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Ten-month-old Tanjid was admitted to icddr,b on an emergency basis early yesterday as he has been suffering from diarrhoea for over seven days. His mother, Nahar, who is feeding him medicine, has also been suffering from the disease for two days now. The number of diarrhoea patients in the city hospital has been increasing every day for over a month.

PHOTO: STAR

## SRI LANKA ECONOMIC CRISIS

# President loses House majority

**Dozens of MPs walk out of ruling coalition, urge his resignation**

AGENCIES

Sri Lanka’s president lost his parliamentary majority yesterday as dozens of lawmakers walked out of ruling coalition and urged his resignation, following days of street protests over the island nation’s crippling economic crisis.

Severe shortages of food, fuel and other essentials -- along with record inflation and crippling power cuts -- have inflicted widespread misery in the country’s most painful downturn since independence from Britain in 1948.

President Gotabaya Rajapaksa’s once- powerful ruling coalition is in turmoil after a string of defections, capped yesterday by the new finance minister’s resignation just one day after taking office.

And as anti-Rajapaksa demonstrations continued for a fifth straight day, the government warned of retaliation if rallies turned violent.

“Security forces will not hesitate to enforce the law against those involved in violence,” defence ministry secretary Kamal Gunaratne said in a statement.

More than 60 people had been arrested in connection with unrest since Friday and many have said they were tortured in police custody.

The UN Human Rights Council said it was closely watching the deteriorating situation in Sri Lanka, which is already facing international censure over its human rights record.

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