

JP won't take part in polls if boycotted by any major party

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Jatiya Party (JP) Chairman HM Ershad yesterday said his party would not participate in the elections scheduled for January 23 if any large party or alliance boycotts the elections.

Iajuddin should have resigned before taking new advisers

Says B Chowdhury
BSS, Dhaka
President of Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury yesterday said President Prof Iajuddin Ahmed should have resigned from the post of chief adviser (CA) to the caretaker government before appointing new advisers.

EC keeps eye on Bangladesh development

UNB, Dhaka
The European Commission (EC) is very closely following the events in the run-up to the parliamentary elections in Bangladesh, including the changes in the composition of the caretaker government, army deployment and the steps taken to improve the accuracy of the voter list.

Table with 3 columns: Prayer Timing, December 13, Azan. Rows include Fajr, Zohr, Asr, Maghrib, Esha with corresponding times.

Suicide bomber kills 60 in Baghdad

Bush to review Iraq policy

REUTERS, Baghdad
A suicide bomber targeting poor labourers killed 60 people in Baghdad yesterday hours before President George W Bush was to review his unpopular Iraq policy in a video teleconference with US military commanders in Iraq.

the cafes and street vendors while waiting for the chance of some work. Many of the workers who gather at Tayan Square are poor Shias.

Hussein sympathizers and Sunni Islamist al-Qaeda. "These terrorist groups are trying to spread chaos by killing and fuelling sectarian strife," he said in a statement.

Efforts to create level playing field for fair polls failed

Sami reasons his resignation

UNB, Dhaka
Adviser CM Shafi Sami, who resigned Monday, yesterday said he quit the caretaker government, as their efforts to create a level playing field for a clean and participatory election had been unsuccessful.



Troops stand guard yesterday behind a barbed wire fence around Naya Paltan Community Centre in the capital they now use as a temporary camp.

Annan raps US in farewell speech

AFP, Washington
UN Secretary General Kofi Annan took a sharp farewell swipe at US foreign policy Monday, implying America had ditched core principles in its zeal to battle global terrorism.

States remained aloof. Annan chose the symbolic venue of the Independence, Missouri, library of late president Harry S Truman, whom he lionized as a "master-builder" of the United Nations, to highlight recent US policies which rocked the world body.

rights struggle. "But that lead can only be maintained if America remains true to its principles -- including in the struggle against terrorism," said Annan.

Israel has atom bomb: Olmert

Media calls it a 'nuclear slip' of tongue

REUTERS, AFP, Jerusalem
Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert Monday appeared to list his country for the first time among states, which have the nuclear bomb, before his official spokesman issued a denial.

Plot to hold farcical polls to be foiled

14-party leaders say

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Leaders of the Awami League (AL) led 14-party coalition yesterday said they will seek to resist what they said was President and Chief Adviser Iajuddin Ahmed's plan to hold a stage-managed election.

continues as the chief of the caretaker government. The leaders threatened to go for even tougher agitation programmes with one-point demand for Iajuddin to stand down as the chief adviser if the 'package of proposals' drawn up by the interim government is not implemented immediately.

Military must stay neutral in poll campaign

Says HR Watch

The Bangladeshi military, deployed on December 9 to "ensure security" in the run-up to national elections, must avoid partisan sympathies and respect human rights, Human Rights Watch said yesterday.



Demonstrators of 14-party alliance yesterday burn a photo of President Iajuddin Ahmed at Muktangan in the capital demanding his resignation from the post of chief adviser to the caretaker government.

Election mood absent in people's mind

EC Saiful says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Newly appointed Election Commissioner Saiful Alam yesterday said even though the poll schedule has been declared, people are not in an election mood as they are more intrigued to know whether the two election commissioners would go on leave.

POLL CANDIDATURE BB for legal steps to prevent loan defaulters

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The central bank has asked all the commercial banks to take strong legal steps to prevent the loan defaulters from exploiting various legal loopholes for contesting the upcoming elections.

polls. If loan defaulters have their names in the CIB, then they are barred from running for the parliament. A BB source said that this step has also been taken to prevent a number of identified loan defaulters who, before every elections, are known to get a stay order from the High Court to strike out their names from the CIB list.