

PADMA BRIDGE RAIL LINK PROJECT IS BEING BUILT WITH BSRM

COUNTRY'S NO. 1 STEEL EXPERT & BSRM



GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS RECOGNIZES

World's Largest VRM



Polls system coming apart

Experts warn at a discussion, urge campign for fair polls, electoral reforms

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country's democratic system will collapse and there is a need to wage a movement with fresh demands for fair polls, good governance campaigners, politicians and former bureaucrats said yesterday.

Fair polls are the outcome of a well-managed electoral system and also the steppingstone of a country's democratic system, they said at a discussion marking the "Seventh National Council-2020" of Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik

There is no alternative to fair polls when it comes to ensuring good governance, they added.

Shujan, which campaigns for good governance, arranged the daylong programme at the auditorium of Institute of Diploma Engineers Bangladesh in the city.

Addressing the discussion as chief guest, former chief election commissioner Mohammad Abu Hena said reforms have been made over the years to improve the country's electoral system and better functioning of the Election Commission to strengthen the democratic system.

He said one major reform in the system was to make public affidavits of polls candidates while another was the registration of political parties.

However, despite these initiatives, the results or achievement were not as expected, he added.

Abu Hena said such reforms will not bear fruit if their implementation is not effective, adding that any institution becomes effective if competent people work for it. The official voter turnout in the 11th parliamentary

polls was more than 80 percent but it might have been 30 percent in reality, said noted economist and former caretaker government adviser Akbar Ali Khan.

An additional 50 percent voter turnout was shown "farcically", he said.

Akbar said voter turnout remained below 30 percent in the municipality polls.

Usually, the average voter turnout in national polls remain lower because political party candidates are not as organised at the grassroots as the local candidates of union parishad or municipality polls are, he said.

During the union parishad or municipality polls, local SEE PAGE 10 COL 5



РНОТО AMRAN HOSSAIN

in the capital. Another policeman, inset, asks a

woman to steer clear of the office. The BNP held

the rally to demand that its Chairperson Khaleda

Zia be released.

KHALEDA'S RELEASE Repression can't stop movement

Says Fakhrul

Unb, Dhaka

Claiming that police BNP's obstructed procession and arrested its men, party Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday said the government won't be able to stop people from demanding release of Khaleda Zia by carrying out repressive activities.

He was addressing a rally in front of BNP's Nayapaltan central office in the capital, demanding release of the party chairperson from jail.

"The government thinks it can obstruct the movement seeking Khaleda Zia's release by oppression. But they have forgotten that one cannot linger on in power through such oppression. The people's just demand can never be suppressed by oppression," he said.

Terming the current government illegal, Fakhrul said it captured power forcefully and was ruling the country without people's mandate. "The government resorted to repression and torture to establish a oneparty rule. Today, people have no confidence in this government."

He also alleged that 25 lakh BNP leaders and activists were put behind

> The BNP leader said they SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

TRIPLE MURDER IN CITY

Police think missing husband had big loans

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday recovered a note which they suspect was written by the husband of the woman who was murdered, along with her two children, in the capital's Dakshinkhan area.

The woman's husband -- Raquib Uddin Bhuiyan -- had not been seen in the locality since Tuesday, locals and law enforcers said.

Police on Friday evening recovered the bodies of SEE PAGE 10 COL 5



PRAYER TIMING FEBRUARY 16 Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha

AZAN 5-25 12-45 4-30 5-57 7-15 JAMAAT 6-00 1-15 4-45 6-01 7-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

'No complacency'

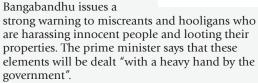


A four-member Soviet youth delegation calls on Bangabandhu, who wears Uzbek attire, at his official residence on February 16, 1972.

FEBRUARY 16, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

MISCREANTS WILL BE **DEALT WITH SEVERELY**



"You must be on guard against such bad characters," he urges freedom fighters. He also asks

'Free' Copyrighted Content

Google mulls deals to pay news outlets

Google is in discussions on deals to pay media organizations for content, a move aimed at blunting criticism that it unfairly profits from copyrighted news, according to people familiar with the talks.

Negotiations between the internet giant and news outlets were said to be in the early stages, with most of the publishers located in France and other parts of Europe. Paying for news would diverge from the Alphabetowned internet titan's practice of freely mining the internet

for material it displays in search results. A licensing deal would likely be welcomed by news organizations that contend Google derives profits from

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

Drop charges against Nur, Shariat

HRW urges govt STAR REPORT

The Human Rights Watch yesterday called upon the government to drop charges against prominent Bangladeshi publisher Nur Mohammad and baul singer Shariat Sarker and release them from custody.

"Both appear to have been detained for having criticised the ruling party, and religious leaders, respectively," the HRW statement read, adding "The authorities should end all arbitrary arrests and a crackdown on freedom SEE PAGE 10 COL 2



