# Communists leading in Russian polls

MOSCOW, Dec 18: Communists and nationalists were leading Monday in results from parliamentary elections, but moderate parties that back president Boris Yeltsin's democratic reforms were doing better than expected after a large voter turnout, report agencies.

The leader of the Russian Communist Party, Gennady Zyuganov, welcomed today his party's hefty win in parliamentary elections.

"I am happy we got support in the Russian heartland — central Russia, the Volga, Kuzbas," he was quoted as saying by Interfax. as preliminary results showed his party had won 22 per cent, with 43.9 per cent of the vote counted.

Zyuganov said he hoped the hard-left Agrarian Party. which was polling 3.5 per and the Centrist Women of Russia, with 4.5 per cent, would manage to climb over the tive per cent barrier needed to win seats under proportional represen-

The preliminary results were issued by the central electoral commission at 1120 GMT in percentages, after counting of some 27 million votes in 65 of the country's 89 regions.

Following the Communist Party were the ultranationalist Liberal Democratic Party with 11.2 per cent, then the government party Our Home is Russia with 9.5 per cent and the Liberal Yabloko Party with 8.4 per cent, Electoral Commission Chairman Nikolai Ryabov said on ORT state television

Meanwhile, Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov called on Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin's government to resign today. saying that Sunday's election proved no-confidence in the government.

# Not a single weapon

From Page 1 meeting, they said.

The government in a directive on December 10 asked the manufacturers. possessors and users to surrender the illegal arms by December 20 at the nearby police station.

So far, the response to the directive is very poor, according to reports received from a number of police sta-

Describing some of the aspects of the proposed drive, an official said, at the moment, the Home Ministry has received a comprehen sive list of possessors. traders and manufacturers of illegal weapons from police and other law enforcement agencies.

The list covers almost all the districts of the country, he said.

The official, who talked on condition of anonymity said when the operation really takes off, para-military Bangladesh Rifles would be deployed to seal off the porous land border to check movement of weapons.

Most of the illegal weapons used inside the country is smuggled in from across the border.

"Whatever operation we'll launch... it will be intense and time-sensitive," the official

He said plans are being reviewed to launch the first step of the operation by arresting the illegal weapons users, dealers and manufac-

The next step might be further recovery of weapons and arrests of criminals on the basis of information supplied by the arrested individuals and from informants of the law enforcing agencies.

However, when asked how the government plans to tackle the possible fall-out of such a short campaign, the official said the issue would be discussed in the meeting.

"Our aim will be to arrest only the listed criminals possessing illegal weapons." he said. "It is not in our jurisdiction to judge whether he is a political activist or not."

unidentified youths snatched

away the rifle of a security

guard at a Janata Bank branch

in the Khilgaon area in the

city at around noon yesterday.

injury in his hand when the

gang fired a shot at about

11:30 am, according to

sources. None was arrested

were seen near the cash

counter where the gas bills

are received, police sources

said. On the other side, the

two accomplices attacked the

guard and snatched the rifle

creating panic and fleeing

the spot by firing gunshots

A case has been filed with

Tejgaon thana in this connec-

Ex-MP Mobarak

Hossain dead

liament Mobarak Hossain

died early vesterday morning

at the Holy Family Hospital,

Former member of par-

He was taken to hospital

Mobarak Hossain, an emi-

on Sunday evening while he

nent student leader and

freedom fighter, had been

elected member of parlia-

ment twice - in 1973 and

1986 from Narayanganj-3

DU teacher

Dhaka Medical College Hospi-

tal (DMCH) last night, hospi-

His blood pressure and

respiratory system were

functioning normally. His

right eye and a part of the

brain matter were affected.

Department of Economics,

was admitted to the hospital

Sunday night with injuries in

the right eye and backside of

the head he suffered when

some unidentified persons

stabbed him with sharp

weapons near the South

Plaza of the Sangsad Bhaban

ried to Sohana Najmin about

two years ago, went out of his

residence at Sir Syed Road in

Mohammadpur at about 7 pm for repairing his still

camera, family sources said.

Tejgaon thana police took

injured Noban to the DMCH

nection with the incident.

None was arrested in con-

and informed his family.

Noban, 35, who got mar-

in the city.

police said.

Noban, a lecturer of the

attending doctor said.

From Page 1

Two of the gang members

in this connection.

sources added.

reports UNB.

fell ill. He was 48.

constituency.

tal sources said.

tion, sources said.

The guard received bullet

#### **Bomb** blasts Bank guard's rifle snatched rock Agrabad area in Ctg By Staff Correspondent A group of about four

From Staff Correspondent CHITTAGONG. Dec 18: Sporadic bomb blasts rocked the Agrabad commercial area

According to witnesses. some cocktails were blasted in front of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry this evening while people were seen running for safety.

A vehicle of the chamber was partially damaged during the explosion at its premises. chamber sources added.

Earlier a series of cocktails were blasted near the Agrabad Commerce College by some unidentified youths. police said. They also allegedly attacked and damaged a vehicle of a contractor to stop him dropping the tender in a local office at noon, police added.

Later police patrol was intensified at the Agrabad commercial area to prevent any outbreak of violence.

## One killed, DU student hurt in road accident

By DU Correspondent An unidentified rickshawpuller was killed while a student of the Dhaka University

was injured in an accident on the campus yesterday. Shahidul Islam, an M Phil student of the Department of Finance and Banking of the university, was travelling in the rickshaw which was hit

land between Jagannath and SM Hall at about 2 pm. The rickshawpuller, aged about 20, received grievous injuries when the bus hit the rickshaw from behind. The puller succumbed on the way to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), hospital

by a minibus near the road is-

## Shot dead

From Page 1 shot at about 11:30 pm. He

sources said.

died on the spot, police said. Police recovered the body and sent it to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) for autopsy.

Police could neither arrest any of the attackers till last night nor could say anything about the motive of the killing.

Meanwhile, Awami Jubo League in a press release last night alleged that Joni was killed by armed terrorists of BNP and demanded punishment of the persons involved in the murder

## Merrill meets Shamsul, Amu

By Staff Correspondent

US Ambassador in Bangladesh David N Merrill called on Information and Commerce Minister M Shamsul Islam and Awami League leader Amir Hossain Amu at their residences in the city yesterday, according to sources.

Merrill discussed with the two leaders the present political crisis and the bids to

Details could not be

## Rickshawpullers clash with police at Malibagh

By Staff Correspondent A group of rickshawpullers locked into a clash with police near Malibagh crossing in the city yesterday after-

Police lobbed at least five rounds of tear-gas shells to bring the situation under control. Chase and counter chase between the rickshaw pullers and the police created panic and halted the traffic movement for around 30 minutes, according to

Police said that the trouble began when a plain-cloth police intervened to stop an altercation between a passenger and a rickshawpuller in the area at about 4:30 pm. After hearing a rumour

that police took a rickshawpuller inside the nearby CID office. The rickshawpullers gath-

ered in the crossing, chased the police on duty and started pelting stones on

## Gun recovered from outside BAU hall

MYMENSINGH, Dec 18: The security branch of the Bangladesh Agricultural University (BAU) today recovered a single barrel gun from outside the boundary wall of Shahjalal Hall, reports UNB.

The gun, recovered after the Saturday's clash on the campus that left three students killed and 50 injured. was handed over to the local police, university sources

The university has been closed till December 31 following the Saturday's inci-

The university officials said the work for first year admission test is going on smoothly and all foreign students of the university are

## Shibir calls half-day hartal tomorrow

The Islami Chhatra Shibir vesterday turned down the press reports that its activists had played an offensive role in the clashes on the Bangladesh Agricultural University campus on Saturday that left four students dead.

reports UNB. Addressing a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club, Shibir president Muhammad Rafiqul Islam Khan claimed that the four students killed in the incident belonged to his organi-

He also announced a series of programmes to protest the killings on the BAU campus.

The programmes include a half-day hartal in the divisional towns, including Mymensingh, on Wednesday and a siege on the Prime Minister's Secretariat on Saturday.

He blamed the activists of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), the students' wing of ruling BNP, for the killings and demanded immediate arrest and punishment of the culprits.

From Page 1

# Seventh SAF Games

From Page 1

ence in utter dismay is the way the officials paraded. When the other participating teams followed the proceedings in a disciplined manner with chef-de-mission and his deputies following the flagbearer, then our officials had crowded behind a bearded Atique for reasons best known to them.

Among the front runners an employee of the Ministry of Youth and Sports was seen along side the chief of the Bangladesh contingent. Ahbab Ahmed. Besides, Mohi uddin Ahmed, director (admin) of the National Sports Council (NSC), was surprisingly took steps to remain ahead of everyone.

However, that was not the end of an indisciplined Bangladesh team. As soon as our athletes settled in the middle they engaged in an unhealthy competition of preserving memories of the gale opening ceremony with a random clicking of flashes.

The enthusiasm was turned even worse when Indian celebrated athlete PT Usha was conducting the official oath, two of Bangladeshi players were seen taking photographs despite requests

## Jatrabari bus fire Police suspect involvement of influential groups

Star Report

Police suspects involvement of some influential groups in the December 4 bus fire at Jatrabari that left at least 12 people dead. Six persons, arrested from

the Syedabad bus terminal area in this connection, are now on police remand for interrogation. The statements of the six parsons recorded by the police bring into light involvement of some influential groups in the incident, said a police official yester-

The arrested persons may be produced before the court today or tomorrow, the source said.

Police, however, could not arrest the driver of the bus Shamsu Miah who is absconding since the incident.

According to the police. Shamsu Miah was brought to the city from his village home at Chatkhali, under Noakhali district a couple of days before the incident and was kept under protection of an influential group.

Police is yet to receive the report of the forensic department.

The Noakhali-bound bus (Dhaka-Ja-1468) Green Star caught fire at about 11:30 pm on December 4, soon after it had left the terminal with 31 passengers.

From Page 1

should she resign if there

was no negotiated settle-

said the party had toughened

its stand on the PM's resig-

continued rejection of any

move to end the crisis before

the PM steps down, the

sources added, the ruling

party would follow the Con-

stitution as regards the PM's

resignation and holding of

Meanwhile, the process of

behind-the-scene negotiation

between the government and

the opposition parties had

slowed down as the negotia-

tors of both the sides feel

they've got more time to bar-

gain for their respective po-

sitions — the BNP seeking to

settle all issues relating to

the polls before the PM re-

signs and the Opposition

demanding the PM's imme-

Secretary General and LGRD

minister Abdus Salam Taluk-

Dhaka puts forward 8 proposals

Asked on the issue, BNP

Other sources in the BNP

In case of the Opposition's

DIE

nation issue.

the elections.

PM opens Motijheel Digital Telephone Exchange today

Prime Minister Begum

Khaleda Zia will inaugurate

the 20,000-line Motifheel

Digital Telephone Exchange

today at 11 am, reports UNB.

tions Minister Tariqui Islam.

Secretary M. Hafizuddin Khan

and T&T Board Chairman

MH Chowdhury will address

The Motifheel Exchange

Some 12,000 analogue

telephone lines have been

converted to digital lines out

of the 20,000 in the Moti-

theel digital exchange. Of the

remaining 8,000 lines, only a

few have been installed and

the rest will be completed

Half-day hartal

in Khulna today

Jubo League has called a half-

day hartal in Khulna city to-

morrow from 6.00 am in

protest against the killing of

its leader Aminul Islam Bablu

president of Jubo League at a

press conference at the

Khulna Press Club also de-

clared a five-day agitation

programme demanding im-

mediate arrest and punish-

WASA ordn

From Page 1

effect a complete restructur-

ing of the administration of

administrative system - one

executive branch and one de-

cision making - which will

have autonomy in project

designing and implementa-

tion, a highly placed official

ecutive set up of one ap-

pointed chairman and three

members. WASA will have

one Managing Director (MD)

and three Deputy MDs, who

will be recruited on a con-

board headed by a Chairman

elected from amongst the

cision-making organ of the

agency while the executive

branch will be responsible for

The amendments was

made in line with the World

Bank's conditionalities for fi-

nancing WASA projects.

amendments was given at a

cabinet meeting held in the

cabinet room of the Prime

Minister's office in the

Prime Minister Begum

The approval of the

project implementation.

In addition, there will be a

This board will be the de-

Instead of the present ex-

It will have a two-tier

ment of the killers.

the Dhaka WASA.

source said.

tractual basis.

seven members.

Mizanur Rahman, district

KHULNA, Dec 18: Awami

very soon.

vesterday.

in the capital is one of the 19

new exchanges being set up

for 150,000 digital telephone

lines across the country.

the inaugural function.

Post and Telecommunica-

from the groundsmen. For the Indians, renowned athlete Shiny Wilson, who achieved the rare feat of making her presence in all the seven version of the regional sort of Olympic Games since it inception in 1984, led the hosts amidst cheers from the terraces. Shabaz Ahmed, the all time great hockey player of the world who inspired Pakistan to win the World Cup, carried

his country's flag. Later, eight sportsmen of vestervears carried the games torch, rounded the stadium and finally lit the games flame at 4:47 pm.

Four celebrated Indian singers - Anuradha Padwal. Manoi. Chitra and Swarnalatha - presented the Games Hymn form a special rostrum. The Indian wonder women and famed athlete, PT Usha, took oath on behalf of the participation sportsmen and women.

The opening function was also featured by one-and-ahalf hour cultural programme participated by some 11,500 boys and girls performers of Tamil Nadu and 10 other Indian states.

The ceremony concluded with five minutes of mass fireworks and playing of the Indian national anthem.

## Scotland Yard opens file on Al-Badr chief

LONDON, Dec 18: Scotland Yard is investigating war crimes allegations against a prominent Bangladesh-born Muslim, according to a report published Sunday, reports AP.

The observer newspaper said that Scotland Yard's War Crimes Unit had opened a file on Chowdhury Moueen Uddin, who heads the Islamic Forum Europe.

Witnesses have said that Moueen Uddin headed Al Badar, a pro-Pakistani group that flourished during Bangladesh's War of Independence in 1971.

Al Badar preferred Pakistan's Islamicist policies to Bangladeshi nationalism. Survivors claim the group was behind mass killing and rape. Moueen Uddin emigrated

to Britain in the mid-1970s. The charges against Moueen Uddin and two other prominent Muslims surfaced earlier this year. Moueen Uddin. who led European support for the 1989 Iranian death sentence against author Salman Rushdie, has denied the charges.

Britain's war crimes legislation allows prosecution of crimes committed in foreign lands.

A Scotland Yard spokesman would not comment on the report.

his Bailey Road official resi-

dence last night that the

seemed discouraged after AL

Chief Sheikh Hasina spoke

against the personal level

to resolve the crisis through

dialogue despite their refusal

to comply with our request",

the BNP Secretary General

said, "Even if the Prime

Minister desires, she cannot

resign unless a negotiation

(about her successor) takes

place. She is under oath to

uphold the Constitution. She

can't create any constitu-

tional vacuum ... If she re-

signs, there will be no gov-

ernment and the country

can't be run without a gov-

aside a press report which

said his party had made a

new proposal to the Opposi-

tion that the PM would re-

sign 45 days before the polls.

The minister further pro-

The BNP leader brushed

On the PM's resignation,

The Opposition leaders

"We'll continue our efforts

process was still on.

contacts, he added.

he said.

ernment".

#### Khaleda Zia presided over PM firm not to resign the meeting. Ministers and State Minisdar told some reporters at

morning

sources said.

ters in charge of different ministries attended the meeting. Cabinet Secretary. Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister and Secretaries concerned were present in the meeting.

### EC directive From Page 1

and impartial manner.

Media

The EC also directed the state-owned media to maintain a total neutrality in broadcasting news on the occasion of ensuing national elections. The EC also asked the

concerned media to follow the code of conduct properly for giving balanced opportunity to all the political parties going to the polls.

· The decisions came at a meeting of Information Ministry, state-run media and Election Commission with Chief Election Commissioner Justice AKM Sadeque in the

Radio and television will broadcast and telecast the news of opposition political parties in proportion to the number of seats obtained by them in last parliament, said the EC in a press release. After the completion of fi-

nal candidate list, the contesting parties will be allowed coverage on the media according to the number of their nominees in the electoral race, but only the parties putting up atleast 30 candidates will get the opportunity.

### IU students asked to vacate halls

KUSTHTIA, Dec 18: Islamic University (IU) au-

cation till December 31. Campus sources said the IU Syndicate in an emergency meeting today took the decision in the wake of tense

# The Midnight File

## Syria accepts 9-pt proposal for talks with Israel

JERUSALEM, Dec 18: Prime Minister Shimon Peres said today that Syria has agreed to a nine-point programme for negotiations which could produce a final peace agreement before Israeli elections in October. Speaking to a closed-door session of his Labor Party group in parliament. Peres said the negotiating principles had been accepted by Syrian President Hafez Al-Assad as the basis for talks to begin next week, according to deputies who attended the meeting. He said a tenth point proposed a summit meeting with Assad, but was not accepted by the Syrian leader, reports AFP.

## Second COMDECA

From Page 1 camp for development with participation of all in society and it is a special gathering or jamboree where scouts and rovers participate in social development activities

along with the local people. This enhances the efficiency and partnership of the scouts in practical work and, side by side, this raises the awareness of the villagers about social uplift

Australia, Indonesia, Japan, India, Nepal, Pakistan, the Maldives, the Philippines. Switzerland, Korea and Thailand have sent their scouts to the COMDECA. The USA and UK have also sent their delegations to the meet.

The Bangladesh Scouts organised community development camp for the first time at Bahadurabad in Gazipur district in 1992 and has arranged the second such jamboree in light of its experiences and successes.

The prime minister said. Scouting makes the children and youths self-reliant and inspires them to dedicate themselves to the service of society.

Begum Zia cited the projects taken up by the Bangladesh Scouts. Among those, the Bangladesh-Australia Child Health Project. Bangladesh-Korea Joint Social Development Project and the Diarrhoea Prevention Port Project now under implementation in Khulna division in cooperation with UNICEF deserve special mention, she said.

Maintenance of public health, diarrhoea prevention port project, elimination of malnutrition of mother and child, afforestation, preservation of environment, repair of roads and construction of cyclone shelters, demonstration of fuel-saving stove and solar stoves etc will make COMDECA attractive and ed-

ucative, she said. "Besides, our scouts are imparting training on rearing of poultry and livestock, tailoring, typewriting and computer use. These activities are very beneficial to the country and the common-

man," she said. She also mentioned that the Bangladesh Scout is firmly committed to building the youth community as a disciplined well-organised.

welfare and service-minded and, above all, a development

oriented force in the country. The inaugural function was also addressed by President of Bangladesh Scouts M Mahbubuzzaman, Chief National Commissioner of Bangladesh Scouts Manzoor Ul Karim and Chairman of Asia-Pacific Regional Scout Committee Felix Li Tai Ho.

Among others, the meet is being attended by World Scout officials and leaders including Felix Li Tai Ho. Kim Kyu Young, John Liem Beng Kiat, Abdullah Rashed Naravan Parajuli, Prof Leeil-Choul, Gazanfar Mashkoo and Dr Tomomichi Goke.

Marking the occasion Begum Zia released a commemorative postage stamp and a first-day cover issued by Bangladesh Post Office. Post and Telecommunications Minister Tarigul Islam and other senior officials of postal department were present on the occasion.

Meanwhile, Radio Bangladesh is broadcasting twohour live programme everyday from Tamatu during the jamboree.

## Intra-SAARC

From Page 1 view but differed on the manner in which this could be done with Dhaka even suggesting creation of a 'SAARC' conciliation group' to ease tensions and to resolve disputes among member na-While Nepal was stient on

the issue, Bhutan and Sri Lanka felt that misunderstanding and suspicion among the SAARC countries east a long shadow on its activities. The Bhutanese foreign

minister, Lyonpo Dawa Tswering, said the "popular domestic politics of neighbour-bashing" was not conducive to regional coopera-Creation of a South Asian

Development Fund (SADF). and establishment of a South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) by the end of the second decade of SAARC and setting up of a South Asian Economic Conference were among the specific suggestions made at the commemorative meeting to give a new direction to SAARC.

# self-reliant, self-respecting.

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thorities asked the students to vacate their residential halls by 5 pm today, reports The university was in va-

situation on the campus.

#### expansion of intra-regional sources from long term pertrade, reports BSS. Bangladesh foreign minisspective, thereby changing one of the poorest regions in ter ASM Mostafizur Rahman the world to come to one of made this commitment while the most prosperous.' tourism.

diate resignation.

addressing the 16th session of SAARC council of ministers at the Vigyan Bhavan here. Rahman said as "we step into the second decade of the SAARC, we are committed to

boldly facing the challenges awaiting us, to grasping the opportunities that are presented to us and to building a better future for the peoples of South Asia by intensifying regional cooperation with visionary zeal."

The Foreign Minister in his speech made an eightpoint proposal for the consideration of the member nations. His proposals include sharing of vitally important water resources 'in our region where four countries legislative South Asian parshare common waterways. liament.

Let us look at this issue of sharing such common re-Referring to the opera-

tionalisation of SAPTA agreement, he said it has to ensure that the least developed states obtain the benefits they expect from this agreement. The other proposals made by Rahman include gradual

abolition of visas between the member countries to strengthen people to people contacts and interaction at all levels across the entire spectrum of South Asian society, promotion of study tours for students at different levels, development of SAARC speakers and parliamentarians association into a non-

posed, 'let us re-invigorate the existing but moribund, land and rail routes between us with the aim of promoting greater intra-regional Referring to the achievements of SAARC in different

fields he said 'these could have been much greater had it not been for certain negative forces and the wide divergence of views between states on some issues.' In this context, he stressed the need for dialogue and cooperation among leaders and policy-makers as South Asia faces a host of problems arising out of indigenous and extraneous factors.

He proposed the formation of 'SAARC conciliation groups' to try and bring about reconciliation between the member states with disputes outside the formal confines of our deliberations.