Vote judiciously

B Chy, Dr Kamal urge people

UNB, Dhaka

Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB) President AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury yesterday urged all to vote judiciously on December 29 to elect those who stood against corruption and muscle power to bring about the change everyone dreams of.

"You're all intelligent enough and I'm sure you'll choose worthy candidates to bring about the desired change for the betterment of the nation," he said.

He was addressing a public meeting organised by Jatiya Jukta Front at the city's Moghbazar in the evening in favour of its candidate Major (Retd) Abdul Mannan from Dhaka-11.

Accusing both the previous ruling and opposition parties of plundering state wealth, B Chowdhury said they do politics for serving the people and urged the voters to boycott the after being elected.

Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain, chairman of Progressive Democratic Party (PDP) Dr Ferdous Ahmed Qureshi, key coordinator of Jatiya Jukta Front and secretary general of Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh Major (Retd)

Addressing the rally, Dr Kamal said people are eagerly waiting to see an election in which black money holders and corrupt people will get defeated by the dedicated, patriotic and honest people.

"Wedon't want to go back to those horrific days

He said, "People want a change through this election, we need fair persons to build a fair nation."

pleasantries with editors

UNB, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed yesterday exchanged pleasantries with editors, managing directors, heads and senior journalists of different dailies, weeklies, news agencies, radios and television channels.

The chief adviser, whose caretaker government is to make its exit through holding the upcoming general election, invited them to a tea at the International Conference Center (ICC) at the CA's office complex.

About 50 editors, managing directors, heads and senior journalists of print and electronic media attended the function.

CA's Press Secretary Syed Fahim Munaim, Information Secretary Jamil Osman and Principal Information Officer Iftekhar Husain were also present on the occasion.

RETURN TO DEMOCRACY

Australia optimistic about peaceful transition

UNB, Dhaka

Australia is cautiously optimistic that parliament polls in Bangladesh next week will return the country to democracy, despite years of delays and a history of violence.

Parliamentary Secretary for International Development Assistance Bob McMullan will be part of a large contingent of international observers, reports ABC Radio Australia.

He says it is a good sign that both major parties are taking part in the poll. But McMullan said that with 90 million registered voters, conducting the poll and ensuring its legitimacy

are huge tasks. "That's the key issue that we'll be looking at - has the legitimacy of the election been such that it will actually be a transition, the basis for a peaceful transition back to

democracy," he said. "To assume that's going to be the case would be a courageous assumption but I'm hopeful."

4 BNP teams to assist its candidates in polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP formed four teams yesterday to assist its candidates and keep eyes on election activities across the country.

Central Coordinating Committee of the party requested all the party candidates to inform the respective divisional teams about their queries relating to the election process, problems of respective constituency and complaints.

Available telephone and fax numbers of the teams are: Dhaka Division Fax number 02-9887813 and phone numbers 02-8810909, 02-8833203 and 02-8833044, Chittagong and Sylhet Divisions Fax number 02-9894670 and phone numbers 02-8812600, 02-8833244 and 02-8829998, Rajshahi Division Fax number 02-9882625 and phone numbers 02-8833266 and 02-882934 and Khulna Division Fax number 02-9882637 and phone number 02-8833040.

culprits who brought miseries to public life

Abdul Mannan addressed the rally.

(before 1/11)... we want to see a bright future where educational institutions will be turned into nation-building tools to ensure a knowledgebased society," Dr Kamal told the rally.

CA exchanges Countrymen my kith and kin

Hasina tells videoconference with local people in Bhola

UNB, Bhola

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina yesterday said she looks upon the countrymen as her kith and kin and wants to make Bangladesh a modern and prosperous country for their well-being.

"Traditional relatives are not my only relations. But also those who believe in the ideology of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, vote for Boat -- the symbol of prosperity -- are my kith and kin," she said during video electioneer-

The Awami League chief made the remarks while addressing a videoconference power. from Sudha Sadan in Dhaka with the local people on the Bangla School premises in

Bholaat 6:00pm. District AL leader Azam Khan asked the AL chief if she would show any indulgence to two sons of her cousin who are contesting the parliamentary polls from Bhola-1 and Bhola-

2 constituencies as candidates of the BNP-led four-party alliance.

In reply, Hasina said those who believe in the ideology of Bangabandhu are her rela-Advocate Yusuf Hossain

Humayun, the grand alliance candidate for Bhola-1, district Awami League general secretary Abdul Momin Tulu and several other persons posed various questions to the AL president. Hasina said AL would build

the coastal district headquarters of Bhola as an industrial city and take steps to save the region from erosion, if voted to

Hasina also addressed another videoconference with the people of Purbadhala upazila in Netrakona.

videoconferences with the people of Borhanuddin upazila in Bhola and of Durgapur in Netrakona will be

ELECTION MANIFESTOES

Political empowerment of women stressed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday urged the political parties to fulfill their commitments of the election manifestoes for political empowerment of women in order to establish good governance and democracy.

Equal rights and participation of the women are recognised in the Constitution and in different policies of the state, but the women are still now treated as second-class citizens of the country, they

They were speaking at a discussion on 'Good governance and women's rights in the electoral manifestoes' organised by Karmojibi Nari (KN) at National Press Club

vesterday. Former adviser Advocate Sultana Kamal said the main political parties except Jamaat-e-Islami had adopted their election manifestoes with commitments of ensuring women empow-

erment if they are voted to

She said the political parties will have to be strongly monitored whether and how they will implement their electoral pledges for the empowerment and development of the women after assuming the power.

Presided over by KN President Shirin Akter, the meeting was addressed by women leaders Hamida Hossain, Shirin Sharmin Chowdhury, Dilara Chowdhury and Monwara

KN Director Mahmuda Imam read out a written statement on the occasion.

They demanded the government ensures all-out security for all the candidates, including Awami League President Sheikh Hasina, for holding of a free and fair election.

They also demanded punishment to the killers of Gonotantri Party President Nurul Islam.

BSS, Sunamganj

Chief of Army Staff General Moeen U Ahmed yesterday underscored the need for ensuring food autarky by adopting modern technologies in the agriculture sector.

food grains. If we use the modern technologies in the agriculture sector, we will be able to make our food production double," he said this while visiting a 'floating vegetables cultivation project' in thedistrict

under the management of the Bangladesh Army in coopera tion with the upazila administra tion at Mollikpur in the district.

General Officer Division Major General M Abul Cooperatives Society and local elites were present.

KIBRIA KILLING CASE

Accused allege torture in jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The accused of former finance minister Shah AMS Kibria killing case yesterday demanded of the authorities concerned to give exemplary punishment to the police officials who had pressed 'false' charge sheet against them and had 'mercilessly tortured' them in the custody in connection

with this case. AKM Abdul Kaiyum and nine other accused of this case, who were released from jail in July this year on bail after three years in the prison, urged the government to exempt them from the

At a press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity (DRU) auditorium, they alleged that then ASP of CID Munshi Atiqur Rahman (now retired), then additional DIG of Sylhet Range AKM Mahfuzul Haque (now rector of Police Staff College), then sub inspectors (SIs) of DB Zubayer (now on duty in Sylhet) and Zahir (now on duty at Beanibazar) had physically tortured them on remand for realising confessional state-

Abedin Jalal, Shahed Ali, Joynal Abedin Mumin, Ayat Ali, Salim Ahmed, Jamir Ali and Tajul Islam were also present at the press conference.



Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Khulna

Barisal

Sylhet

Cox's Bazar

Weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today. Prevailing moderate to thick fog over the country may continue during mid night till morning.

Night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said. Highest temperature 27.0 degrees Celsius was recorded

yesterday at Cox's Bazar and lowest 13.6 degree Celsius at

The sun sets in the capital at 5:17pm today and rises at 6:38am tomorrow. Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded

in some major cities and towns yesterday were: Humidityin Temperature in City/Town percentage Celsius Morning Evening Min Max 72 15.5 23.3 Dhaka 82 96 17.5 23.8 Chittagong 86 21.8 Rajshahi

17.5

23.5

24.0

25.1

27.0

15.5 89 83 87 16.0 88 14.0 84 17.9 80

84

in 'crossfire'

METROPOLITAN/NEWS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amember of underground Purbo Banglar Communist Party was killed in "crossfire" during a shootout between police and his accomplices at Talgharia village of Bagmara upazila in Rajshahi early vesterday.

The police identified the victim as Mansur Rahman, also known as killer Mansur of Bajekola village of Jogipara union of Bagmara upazila.

According to police, Mansur was arrested at his home on Sunday afternoon.

Following his confession, police took him to Talgharia to retrieve hidden firearms. As they reached the village, the accomplices of Mansur opened fire on the police, prompting them to retaliate.

Mansur received bullets and was rushed to the Bagmara Health Complex where doctors on duty declared him.

Two bullets, a knife and two machetes were retrieved from the spot.

Police said Mansur was accused in more than one murder case and also blamed for extortions and terrorist activities.

Adopt modern tech to ensure food autarky: Gen Moeen

"We have to produce our own

The project is being run

Commanding of 33rd Infantry Kalam Azad, members of Mollikpur Vegetables Growers

charges of the case.

ments. Seven other accused- Joynal



Symposium

United Nations Association of Bangladesh organises a symposium marking the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Venue: Cirdap auditorium: Time: 4:30pm.

Roundtable

A roundtable will be held on expectation to the government on developing urban transport system. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 11:00am.

Book launching

The launching ceremony of the book 'Terrorism in the 21st century: Perspectives from Bangladesh' edited by Dr Imtiaz Ahmed will be held. Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI) organised the event. Venue: BEI conference room. Time: 4:30pm.

Health workers diary

The launching ceremony of the health workers diary prepared by Director General of Health Services will be held. Venue: Sasakawa conference room, ICDDR, B. Time: 4:00pm.



BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia introduces four candidates -- (from left) Shafi Chowdhury, Dildar Hossain Selim, M Ilyas Ali and M Saifur Rahman -- of the four-party alliance at an electoral meeting at Sylhet Alia Madrasha ground yesterday. (Story on Page 1)

Stop eviction of Korail slum dwellers

Human rights activists urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Human rights activists yesterday called on the government to stop the process of evicting about 1.2 lakh dwellers from Korail slum in the city.

The move might be a part of conspiracy as such an initiative was taken at the fag end of the caretaker government's tenure, they said at a press

Navy new entry sailors' passing out parade held

UNB, Dhaka

The passing out parade marking the induction of a batch of new entry sailors of Bangladesh Navy was held at BNS Shaheed Moazzam parade ground in Kaptai yesterday.

A total of 261 new entry sailors were inducted in this batch in different trade group of Navy which included seaman, engineering, electrical engineering and radio electrical engineering.

Meanwhile, new entry sailors successfully completed their primary training at BNS Titumir in Khulna. Commodore Commanding

Chittagong Commodore M Nasir reviewed the smartly turned out parade and took salute of the impressive march past. He also distributed awards among the outstanding new entry sailors. Z Hossain, OD/UT was

adjudged the best all round

new entry sailor and awarded

the coveted Cup of the Chief of Naval Staff. He also claimed the Admiral Mahbub Cup securing the top position in the seaman branch. Meanwhile, M A Islam ME-2/UT was awarded the Shaheed Moazzamn cup

while MS Rahman, REN-2/UT

Admiral Sultan Cup for their

proficiency in the engineer-

ing, electrical and radio elec-

trical branch respectively.

conference. Presenting a keynote paper, remaining work as shouldnot be declared illegal. rickshawpuller, domestic help and as day labourer.

The caretaker government had earlier conducted slum eviction drives in different areas without taking any rehabilitation measures, she said, adding that the representatives of human rights organisations then met the housing and Environment Lawyers' public works adviser who Association (BELA) and Centre assured them of not carrying for Urban Studies (CUS) organout further eviction without rehabilitating the slum dwell-

But the housing and public slum dwellers have been resid- also spoke.

ing there for around 35 years.

She said a writ petition was Executive Director of Ain O also filed with the High Court on Salish Kendra Sultana Kamal behalf of the slum dwellers said about 25 to 30 lakh people recently, and the court issued a reside in different slums in rule upon the government to Dhaka city. Of them, 10 lakh are explain why the government's garments workers and the order to evacuate Korail slum

The court also asked the government to maintain status quo regarding eviction of the slum until January 5, she added.

Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK), Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST), Coalition for the Urban Poor (CUP), Bangladesh ised the press conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity audito-

BLAST Director ANM works department on Mahmud, CUP Executive November 16 issued a notice on Director Mostofa Qayum the Korail slum dwellers to Khan, Salma A Shafi of CUS, evacuate immediately, Sultana Taslima Islam of BELA and Kamal said, adding that the Dr Hameeda Hossain of ASK

GUN ATTACK IN CITY

Another dies at hospital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

One of two persons injured in indiscriminate firing at Manikdi in the city on Sunday night died yesterday, raising the death toll to

7:00am while the condition of another injured, Kabir Hossain, was stated to be critical. The two persons killed on the spot on Sunday night were Ariful Alam, 30, a graphics analyst of a

Banani firm, and Belayet Hossain alias Swapan, 25. The police suspect that an internal feud among two gangs of criminals might have led to the gun attack that took place at around 8:00pm.

Local people said another person, Ayub Ali, was also injured in the attack, but he

Sub-Inspector Zillur Rahman

of Cantonment Police Station, who is investigating the case, Sayeed died at Dhaka said those who were killed or injured were involved in crimes. Medical College Hospital at However, he could not say whether it was a gun attack or a

managed to escape.

gunfight. Abul Kalam, father of Swapan who died on the spot, said his son was a mason and that he was

Local people said Sayeed and

injured Kabir and Ayub are local

residents and they took part in

electioneering in the area, but

they were not criminals.

activities.

Dhanmondi residence in the city after Maghrib prayers today, says a press release.

He left behind his one son, one daughter and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn

his death. never involved in any criminal | ers are requested to attend his qulkhwani and pray for salva-

tion of the departed soul. He was a regular contributor to The Daily Star, the Bangladesh Observer and the Holiday.

Siemens scam

secret life had ended.

FROM PAGE 16 At that moment, Siekaczek, a stout, graying former accountant for Siemens, the German engineering giant, knew his

he told the officers crowded around his door. "I have been expecting you." To understand how Siemens, one of the world's biggest companies, ended up

paying \$1.6 billion last week in

the largest fine for bribery in

modern corporate history, it is

"I know what this is about,"

worth delving into Siekaczek's unusual journey. A former midlevel executive at Siemens, he was one of several people who arranged a torrent of payments that eventually streamed to well-placed officials around the globe, from Vietnam to Venezuela and from Italy to Israel, according to

interviews with Siekaczek and

court records in Germany and

the United States. What is striking about Siekaczek's and prosecutors' accounts of those dealings, which flowed through a web of secret bank accounts and shadowy consultants, is how entrenched corruption had become at a sophisticated company that externally embraced the principles of a transparent global marketplace built on legitimate trans-

Siekaczek said that from 2002 to 2006, he oversaw an annual bribery budget of about \$50 million at Siemens. Company managers and sales staff members used the slush fund to cozy up to corrupt government offi-

actions.

cialsworldwide.

The payments, he said, were vital to maintaining the competitiveness of Siemens outside of Germany, particularly in his subsidiary, which sold telecommunications equip-

Siekaczek's telecommunications unit spent \$5 million in bribes to win a cellphone contract in Bangladesh, paying the son of the then-prime minister and other senior officials, according to courtdocuments. Siekaczek's group also paid \$12.7 million to senior officials in Nigeria for

government contracts. In Argentina, a different win a \$1 billion contract to already been sentenced in a fee to the consultant, who in produce national identity cards. In Israel, the company bation and a \$150,000 fine. provided \$20 million to senior government officials to build the most egregious offenders. was \$16 million for metro rail lines. In China, \$14 million for medical equipment. And in Hussein and his cronies.

Afghanistan, Haiti, Iraq, Myanmar and Somalia are the five countries where corporate bribery is most common, according to Transparency International, a nonprofit group. The SEC complaint said Siemens paid its heftiest bribes in China, Russia, Argentina, Israel and Venezuela.

"Crimes of official corrup-

Weinstein, the Justice accounts in Dubai and the Department prosecutor who oversaw the Siemens case.

All told, Siemens will pay more than \$2.6 billion: \$1.6 billion in fines and fees in Germany and the United States and more than \$1 billion for internal investigations and reforms.

sel, Peter Solmssen, during an

interview in Washington, said

the company acknowledged

that bribes were at the heart of

the case. "This is the end of a difficult chapter in the company's history," he said. "We're glad to get it behind us." Siekaczek, who cooperated contract. This was typically a Siemens subsidiary paid at with the German authorities local resident with ties to the least \$40 million in bribes to after his arrest in 2006, has country's leaders. Siemens paid Germany to two years of pro-

Siekaczek's unit was one of power plants. In Venezuela, it Court documents show that the telecommunications unit paid more than \$800 million of the \$1.4 billion in illegal pay-Iraq, \$1.7 million to Saddam ments that Siemens made from 2001 to 2007. Managers in the telecommunications group decided to deal with the possibility of a crackdown by making its bribery procedures more

motion by moving money out of Austria to Liechtenstein and secrecy laws provided greater cover and anonymity. He also reached out to a trustee in tion threaten the integrity of the global marketplace and Switzerland who set up front undermine the rule of law in companies to conceal money government investigators. the host countries," said Lori trails from Siemens to offshore

difficult to detect.

British Virgin Islands. Each year, Siekaczek said, managers in his unit set aside a budget of about \$40 million to \$50 million for the payment of bribes. For Greece alone, Siemens budgeted \$10 million to \$15 million a year. Bribes were as high as 40 percent of The Siemens general coun- the contract cost in especially corrupt countries. Typically, amounts ranged from 5 percent to 6 percent of the value of

acontract. The most common method of bribery Siemens engaged in involved hiring an outside business consultant to help "win" a turn delivered the cash to the ultimate recipient.

In addition to Siekaczek's detailed payment records. investigators secured five terabytes of data from Siemens offices - a mother lode of information that was the equivalent of five million books. Siekaczek turned out to be one of the biggest prizes of the day. After calling his lawyer, he immediately announced that he would cooperate.

US officials began investi-Siekaczek set things in gating the case shortly after the raids became public. Knowing that it faced steep fines unless it Switzerland, where bank cooperated, Siemens hired a U.S. law firm, Debevoise & Plimpton, to conduct an independent, internal investigation and to work closely with US

(Abridged version)



pared. We can understand the process has advanced," she told reporters after Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury held a meeting with heads of diplomatic missions and International Organisations at the foreign ministry. Asked if they perceive any

going well--everything is pre-

factors that might obstruct the polls, Rapold said, "I don't see any reason why the election should not take place on December 29." She, however, said it is up to

the Bangladeshis to decide about dealing with any room for adversities of such kind. Iftekhar, who briefed the

diplomats on the election matters as well as reforms undertaken by the caretaker government, said Bangladesh is now recognised as a responsible international active player and "we hope this identity will be maintained in the future".

He said several hundred foreign observers will be observing the December 29 elections and the government will extend cooperation to them.

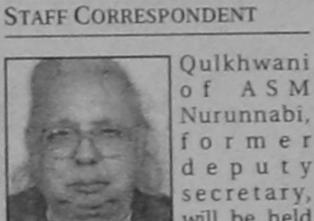
Ex-BNP MP Lalu freed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Former BNP lawmaker Helaluzzaman Talukder Lalu was released from Bogra district jail on bail yesterday after being detained for about two years on corruption charges. BNP leaders and workers

greeted him with wreaths at the jail gate and took out a procession in the town. Lalu had been arrested from Champamahal at Sutrapur in the town on

February 13 last year. Qulkhwani



Nurunnabi, former deputy will be held

He passed away due to oldage complications at a city hospital on Saturday at the age

Relatives, friends and admir-