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EVMs should be used in all future polls

Comilla polls prove voting machine's effectiveness: CEC

RASHIDUL HASAN

After the success with electronic voting machines in the Comilla City Corporation polls, the Election Commission yesterday strongly advocated for the use of this "safe and user-friendly" device in all polls including the next general elections.

Talking to The Daily Star, Chief Election Commissioner ATM Shamsul Huda said, "When the machines are used in all elections, we will be able to stop using tonnes of paper that waste a huge amount of public money."

"Dispelling fear and doubt, the electronic voting machines have proved reliable in the Comilla and Narayanganj polls," the CEC told The Daily Star last night.

The BNP-led main opposition has been opposing the use of the machines, saying the devices could be tampered with to rig polls.

Comilla election was the first time when all voters of an election used machines to vote. The commission used 421 machines in 65 polling centres and almost all voters

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Students of Monipur School form a human chain in Mirpur in the capital yesterday demanding refund of the excess money the school took as fees and protesting corruption by school officials.

PHOTO: STAR

MONIPUR SCHOOL Guardians protest high fees

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Students and guardians yesterday staged demonstrations before Monipur High School and College main branch at Mirpur, and Shewrapara branch, in the capital, protesting high admission fee charged by the school authorities.

They also demanded that the education minister remove lawmaker Kamal Ahmed Majumder from the school managing committee.

The crowds in front of the schools were also seen chanting slogans against the MP, who is the president of the managing committee, for his involvement in irregularities centring on student

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Unicef chief Anthony Lake in Dhaka

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Unicef Executive Director Dr Anthony Lake arrived in Dhaka yesterday on a three-day official visit to highlight the challenges faced by children and women.

This is his first visit as

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Degradation of student politics frustrates youths

Convention of South Asian youths begins in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Youths at a gathering yesterday expressed frustration over the degradation of moral standards in mainstream and student politics.

Mostly from different educational institutions, they hurled a volley of questions at Awami League Leader Tofail Ahmed on the opening day of LEAD 2012, a convention of South Asian youths.

Their questions related to why politics now failed to inspire and attract the young, what the differences were between student politics of present and past, and why a student did not dream of being prime minister or president anymore.

Hundreds of young people from Saarc countries, the majority being from Bangladesh, attended the event held at

Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in the capital.

Saarc Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) and Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) organised the two-day convention to motivate youths to be the pioneer of socio-economic change in the region.

Tofail Ahmed, who was upbeat about the glorious days of student politics in the 1960s, pinned the blame for bad politics on the nation's military rulers. He also thought that not holding elections to student unions at universities and colleges was another reason.

He said ideological practices were the

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MORE IN STAR BUSINESS

Her dream a dowry-free Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Farjana Easmin, the young woman who drew the nation's attention last year through calmly and courageously divorcing her husband hours into their wedding as a protest against his family's demand for dowry, says she dreams of freeing the country from the malaise one day.

"It is tough for a girl to fight against dowry, but I will continue my struggle against it."

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Alarming rise in disappearances

Extra-judicial killings declined last year, says rights body Odhikar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

While there has been a fall in incidents of extra-judicial killings, the number of 'enforced disappearances' allegedly at the hands of law enforcers saw an alarming rise last year, the rights group Odhikar said yesterday.

Revealing its Human Rights Report 2011, the organisation termed the country's overall human rights situation in 2011 "disappointing", noting that violence on women and journalists had also registered a rise.

Odhikar said 30 persons became victims of enforced disappearances last year while the number was 18 in 2010 and two in 2009.

Only those whose disappearances were linked to members of state-run agencies have been counted. Of the 30 incidents, the Rab was reportedly behind the disappearance of 14 individuals, the police behind 13, including 11 through its Detective Branch, and others were responsible for three others who disappeared.

Releasing the report at Jatiya Press Club yesterday, Odhikar Secretary Adilur Rahman Khan said, "The state might have adopted this tactic [enforced disappearances] due to national and international outcry against extra-judicial killings."

The report also said 46 persons were reportedly

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PHOTO ON PAGE 5



Samson H Chowdhury laid to rest

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU, Pabna

Business icon Samson H Chowdhury was laid to eternal rest at his family graveyard in Pabna yesterday with love and respect of people of all walks of life.

Chowdhury's body was taken to his village Ataikula by an ambulance in the morning. Following a pause at his ancestral house his body was taken to Ataikula

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PHOTO: STAR

Officials of Channel i and Champs21.com, an initiative of The Daily Star, sign a deal yesterday which will lead to the private TV channel telecasting "The Daily Star Spelling Bee".

Channel i to air Star's 'Spelling Bee' competition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Champs21.com, an initiative of The Daily Star, and Channel i, signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) yesterday under which the private satellite TV will air the globally renowned English spelling competition "Spelling Bee", to be launched by the newspaper.

Expected to be launched on February 1, the program titled "The Daily Star Spelling

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Integral Energy Limited
ONLINE POLL

Do you think the Prime Minister's address to the nation reflects peoples hope and aspirations?

Yes (28.7%)
No (69.9%)
No Comments (1.4%)
TOTAL VOTES: 621

TODAY'S POLL

Do you agree with TIB executive director Dr Iftekharuzzaman that fighting graft needs change in our political culture?

PLEASE CAST YOUR VOTE AT
www.thedailystar.net
YOU MAY ALSO VOTE AT
facebook.com/dailystarnews

Congress is free to quit alliance

Mamata Banerjee says

PTI, Kolkata

The widening rift between Congress and Trinamool Congress came out in the open yesterday with West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee lashing out at her ally at the Centre and said it was free to quit the alliance.

Congress, however, has said it would not quit from ministry in West Bengal, stressing that it would remain in the gov-



Mamata Banerjee

ernment as long as the people desired.

The Trinamool chief accused the Congress of spreading canard against her party because it had opposed FDI in retail, petrol price hike and interference in the federal structure.

"Congress is spreading canard and is carrying out false propaganda against TC

SEE PAGE 19 COL 5

2nd war crimes tribunal by next month

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will form another tribunal within February to try crimes against humanity committed during the Liberation War in 1971,

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PRAYER TIMING			January 8
Fajr	5-30	6-05	
Zohr	12-45	1-15	
Asr	4-00	4-15	
Maghrib	5-30	5-35	
Esha	7-00	7-30	

Source: Islamic Foundation



শোকবার্তা

দেশ বরেণ্য শিল্পপতি
স্বয়ং প্রণেয়
প্রতিষ্ঠাতা চেয়ারম্যান

শ্রদ্ধেয় স্যামসন এইচ চৌধুরীর
স্মরণে

দেশ বরেণ্য বিশিষ্ট শিল্পপতি, শিল্পায়নের অগ্রদূত ও এক অদম্য সাহসী শিল্প উদ্যোক্তার তিরোহানে আমরা সকলে শ্রদ্ধাভরে গভীর শোক প্রকাশ করছি।

আমরা তাঁর বিদেহী আত্মার শান্তি-কামনা করে তাঁর শোক-সন্তপ্ত পরিবারের সদস্যবৃন্দের প্রতি সমবেদনা জ্ঞাপন করছি।

পদ্মা গ্রুপ অব কনভারটারস্ পরিবারের সকল সদস্যবৃন্দ