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Ruling party tries to capture everything

Ex-CEC critical of democracy Bangladesh style

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The type of democracy practised in Bangladesh is something vulgarised by the ruling party, which encourages black money and muscle power in the absence of the rule of law.

ATM Shamsul Huda, the immediate past chief election commissioner, said this yesterday, adding that electoral democracy does not necessarily mean a complete democracy as every time the poll winner tries to take all.

"Instead of building up institutions, they [the ruling party], in most cases, try to destroy institutions like the Election Commission and the judiciary," he said. "They also try to politicise the bureaucracy, police, administration and, dangerously, the military."

Sometimes, they even scrutinise the Public Service Commission's recommendations, he said. "Such was not possible



ATM Shamsul Huda

even in the Pakistan period."

The rule of law is something of fundamental importance, he observed. Every citizen has a right to file cases with police stations. But often police do not want to record cases.

Shamsul Huda was addressing a book launch and a seminar on "India-Bangladesh-Myanmar Relations: Challenges for Mutual Development" at Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI) in Dhaka.

The book, "Democracy in Bangladesh: Political Dimensions of National Development", a compilation of papers, has jointly been edited by Zillur R Khan and Syed Saad Andaleeb.

At the seminar, eminent jurist and former foreign minister Dr Kamal Hossain said money has destroyed democracy in Bangladesh. "Electoral democracy has

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A running battle between two factions of Jubo Dal, a pro-BNP youth organisation, at Sholoshahar in Chittagong yesterday. The rivals were locked in a clash over moderating a preparatory meeting for the March 12 programme, "March towards Dhaka". Story on page 5.

PHOTO: STAR

Spelling Bee

Spellers of 5 schools in 2nd round

SHAHNOOR RABBANI

Young spellers of five schools in Dhaka fought hard yesterday to see them through the first round of The Daily Star Spelling Bee contest and qualify for the second round.

In the initial rounds, words were comparatively easy to spell but in front of a big audience, the young "Spelling Bees" rushed, seemingly out of

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Gas price hike soon

Domestic users have to pay Tk 800 a month for single-burner and Tk 1,000 for double-burner stove

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government plans to hike the prices of natural gas for domestic consumers within a few months to meet the soaring costs of hydrocarbon exploration and gas purchase and to reduce wastage.

Tawfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury, energy adviser to the prime minister, was speaking to newsmen at Bidyut Bhaban in the city yesterday after launching the online application system of Dhaka Electric

Supply Company for new electricity connections.

The prices of gas used by domestic consumers are much lower than those of other fuels, he pointed out. "So prices should be increased at a reasonable rate. The wastage of gas in households remains high due to its cheap prices."

His comments came over a couple of months after Petrobangla had sent a proposal to the energy ministry to raise the

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India orders Farakka sluice gates probe

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, from New Delhi

The Indian government yesterday ordered an investigation into the circumstances leading to the collapse of two sluice gates of Farakka Barrage which allegedly are allowing excess water flow into Bangladesh.

The decision came a day after West Bengal

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Gone beyond rescue

Father flies in all the way from Kuwait with ransom money only to find body of his abducted boy

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Expatriate Arab Ali flew back in a hurry from Kuwait yesterday to rescue his six-year-old son from kidnapers, but only to miss him forever.

He got the news on Wednesday and managed to fly within 24 hours after collecting Tk 5 lakh, the amount which was demanded by the kidnapers for his son Nafiz Ahmed's release. He landed at the Shahjalal International Airport

at 5:00am and rushed to his Keraniganj house on a CNG-run three-wheeler.

But all these efforts of a helpless father failed to save his son. Arab found Nafiz's body on a pile of sand beside the road through which he was travelling to his house on the outskirts of the capital.

"Seeing a gathering, I got off from the CNG on my way back home. As I went close to it, I saw my son's body

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Students of Holy Cross School in Dhaka take part in the Spelling Bee contest yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Ghulam Azam denied bail

SAYEDEE'S TRIAL

Another witness fails to turn up

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal yesterday denied former Jamaat-e-Islami chief Ghulam Azam bail for the second time.

The three-member tribunal led by Justice Md Nizamul Huq said there is no new evidence that

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STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The prosecution yesterday once again failed to produce any witness before the International Crimes Tribunal in the case against Jamaat-e-Islami Nayeb-e-Ameer Delawar Hossain Sayedee.

Yesterday's proceedings ended in just seven minutes. This was the third time the prosecution had failed to produce a witness in the case against Sayedee, who faces charges of crimes against humanity committed during the Liberation War.

After the prosecution failed to bring in any witnesses on Wednesday due to "personal reasons of a witness", the court fixed yesterday for recording the 28th witness' testimony.

"No witness today?" is how tribunal Chairman Justice

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PRAYER TIMING February 24

Azan	5-20	5-55
Fajr	5-20	5-55
Juma	12-30	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	6-03	6-07
Esha	7-30	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation

The Daily Star

Integral Energy Limited ONLINE POLL

Do you think that the three-day India-Bangladesh home minister-level talks will help stop the brutal treatment of Bangladeshis and escalating tension at the borders?

Yes	(6.6%)
No	(91.6%)
No Comments	(1.8%)

TOTAL VOTES: 499

TODAY'S POLL

Do you think the proposed compensation package for the small investor will bring any significant changes in the present condition of the capital market?

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LOOK OUT FOR OUR SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT ON

THE YOUNG

coming out on 27, 28 & 29 February

Check out The Daily Star for the special Youth Supplement, where we have profiled around 200 young stars of Bangladesh! As we dedicate our 21st year to the youth of Bangladesh, we put together inspiring stories of young achievers and showcased them in the fields of Arts, Agriculture, Environment, Public Services & Professionals, Academia, Industry & Services, Politics, Entrepreneurship, Sports, Social Activism and Science & Technology. While some stories speak of hard earned success, others showcase extraordinary abilities -- dedication towards one's field, determination to succeed and the drive to touch the sky.

It's an absolute 'don't miss!' So, tell your hawker to get you your special supplement on February 27, 28 and 29.

21st Anniversary of The Daily Star