

DHAKA CITY POLLS Turnout under 20pc in one third of centres

ZYMA ISLAM and PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

The turnout was less than 20 percent in 709 centres in the February 1 Dhaka city polls, shows Election Commission data on all the 2,468 centres released yesterday.

It also shows that the overall turnout in the Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) polls was 29 percent while it was 25.32 percent in the Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) elections.

Experts said such a low turnout was an ominous sign for democracy and it exposed several issues, including voters' lack of confidence in the current EC's ability to hold a free and fair election.

In the previous city polls in 2015, the number of centres with less than 20 percent turnout was 80, and 75 of them were in DNCC areas.

Centre-wise, the lowest turnout this year was at Shahid Police Smriti High School and College in Kafrul. It was 3.08 percent at the centre, which had 2,011 voters.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 5

Turnout less than 10% in 59 centres in DNCC and 28 centres in DSCC

Turnout less than 20% in 466 centres in DNCC and 243 centres in DSCC

Lowest 3.08% votes cast at a centre at Kafrul in DNCC and 4.12% at a Kamrangirchar centre in DSCC



A tipper truck about to dump concrete rubble on Karnapara canal in Savar near Dhaka-Aricha highway yesterday morning. Single-use plastic and other garbage have almost killed the canal that carries rainwater from the area to the Bangshi river.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

21 to get Ekushey Padak this year

STAR REPORT

Twenty eminent personalities and an organisation will receive the country's second-highest civilian award, Ekushey Padak, this year in recognition of their contributions to various fields.

The cultural affairs ministry announced the names of the recipients today.

Alongside the 20 personalities, Bangladesh Fisheries Research Institute will also be awarded this year, said a notice signed by Md Faizur Rahman Faruqi, joint secretary of cultural affairs ministry.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will distribute give away the awards to the recipients or their representatives at Osmani Memorial Auditorium in Dhaka on February 20.

Aminul Islam Badsha (posthumous) has been selected for his role in the Language Movement.

Begum Dalia Nowshin, Shankar Roy and Mita Haque are being recognised for their contributions to music while Golam Mostafa Khan, SM Mohsin and Prof Farida Zaman for dance, performing arts and fine arts respectively.

Hazi Akhter Sarder (posthumous), Abdul Jabbar (posthumous) and AAM Mesbahul Haque (posthumous) have been chosen for their roles in the Liberation War.

Journalist Zafar Wazed (Ali Wazed Zafar) has been picked for the award for his contribution to journalism and Jahangir Alam, Hafez Qwari Syed Saifur Rahman Nizami Shah and Bangladesh Fisheries Research Institute for their roles in research while Prof Bikiran Prasad Barua for education.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 3

Dhaka-Bhanga expressway to open next month Padma bridge will bring max benefit for people

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The country's first-ever expressway from Dhaka to Faridpur's Bhanga upazila is going to be opened for public next month as construction work of the road is almost done.

However, users will get the full benefits of the expressway once the construction work of Padma bridge is completed, RHD officials said, adding that they might have to wait about one and a half years.

After that the road user would be able to reach Bhanga from the capital (around 75km) within an hour, they said.

"The project summary has already been sent to the prime minister office and we have requested her to inaugurate it," Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader said yesterday.

Expressway is a highway especially planned for high-speed traffic, usually having no or fewer number of intersections, limited points of access or exit, and a divider between lanes for traffic moving in opposite directions.

Roads and Highways Department (RHD) is implementing the project at the

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

FIRST YEAR OF BANGLADESH Bangabandhu's nation-building challenges



Bangabandhu addressing a public meeting at Brigade Parade Ground, Kolkata, on February 6, 1972. Indira Gandhi is also seen in the picture.

FEBRUARY 6, 1972

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

BANGABANDHU'S HISTORIC VISIT TO KOLKATA

Bangladesh Prime Minister Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is accorded a hearty welcome on his arrival in Kolkata this morning on a two-day visit. Bangabandhu is presented the guard of honour by a contingent of the Dogra Regiment. The national anthem of Bangladesh and India are played.



SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

ROHINGYA ABUSES EU states urge justice in Myanmar at UNSC

AFP, United Nations

The UN Security Council's EU member states called Tuesday for Myanmar to bring to justice those who have carried out human rights violations against Rohingya Muslims.

France, Estonia, Germany and Belgium urged Myanmar to comply with measures meant to prevent genocide set forth by the International Court of Justice, in a joint statement issued following a closed-door Security Council meeting.

The text was also signed by former Security Council member and EU state Poland. But it marked the first time the EU members have issued a joint Security Council statement without Britain, which exited the union on Friday.

Britain was among the

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

Pluto has 'beating heart' of frozen nitrogen



INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Pluto has a "beating heart" of frozen nitrogen that is doing strange things to its surface, Nasa has found.

The mysterious inside seems to be the cause of features on its surface that have fascinated scientists since they were spotted by Nasa's New Horizons mission.

"Before New Horizons, everyone thought Pluto was going to be a netball - completely flat, almost no diversity," said Tanguy Bertrand, an astrophysicist and planetary scientist at Nasa's Ames Research Center and the lead author on the new study.

"But it's completely different. It has a lot of different landscapes and we are trying to

SEE PAGE 10 COL 5



PRAYER TIMING FEBRUARY 6

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 5:30 12:45 4:15 5:52 7:15
JAMAAT 6:05 1:15 4:30 5:56 7:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Pineapple growers bringing boatloads of their harvest in Samataghat bazar of Rangamati yesterday. The fruit, ripened a couple of months earlier than the season, is a boon for the farmers.

PHOTO: ANVIL CHAKMA

'Robber' killed in 'gunfight'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A suspected robber was killed in a "gunfight" with Rab in the city's Turag area early yesterday.

The deceased, Shahid Hossain, 45, was accused in at least 20 cases filed with different police stations, said Rab-1 assistant director Md Kamruzzaman.

Being tipped-off that a gang of robbers had gathered near the Beribadh area to commit a robbery in Ashulia, a Rab patrol team conducted a drive around 2:45am.

Sensing presence of the law enforcers, the robbers opened fire, forcing them to retaliate.

Shahid caught a bullet during the incident and was rushed to Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead.

Rab claimed to have recovered three firearms and seven bullets from the spot.

A Rab man sustained minor injuries during the gunfight, the Rab official said.

ABDUCTION, MURDER OF 4-YEAR-OLD Five sentenced to death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A Dinajpur court yesterday handed capital punishment to five people for abducting and killing a four-year-old boy in the district's Ghoraghat upazila in 2015.

The five are Mamunur Rashid, 22, Zillur Rahman, 20, his brother Jewel Islam, 27, Humayun Kabir Sagar, 25, and his brother Firoz Kabir, 20. All of them are from the upazila's Kadirnagar village.

Sharif Uddin Ahmed, judge of Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal in Dinajpur, passed the order in a packed courtroom around 4:00pm in the presence of the five convicts.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

OBITUARY

Bismillah Hir Rahmanir Rahim Khurshid Azim Siddiky left us forever rather early at 80 years on Feb 3, 2020 at United Hospital (Inna Lilla Hi... Rajjeun). She was a reputed Tagore singer from the late 1960s to mid-1990s combining her intellectual accomplishments with memorable contributions to art and culture. She was the daughter of Barrister Anwarul Azim and Begum Tohfatunnesa Azim, former MLA of Chittagong. Khurshid Azim Siddiky has left behind her beloved husband Chowdhury Tanbir Ahmed Siddiky, former Commerce Minister of Bangladesh and president of FBCCI and DCCI. She was a dearest mother to Irad, Alema and Ishrak, and mother-in-law to Sharmin, Shanila and Javed, Aymann, Aaron, Sofia, Isa and Inshirah will dearly miss their grandmother. A Doa Mahfil will be held on her memory on Friday 7th February baad Asr at Gulshan Azad Mosque.