

Metropolitan

Voter turnout in June 12 polls set new record: CCHRB report

The Coordinating Council of Human Rights in Bangladesh (CCHRB) yesterday released its observation report on the parliamentary elections 1996, commenting that voter turnout in the June 12 elections had set a new record in Bangladesh's electoral history, reports BSS.

In its more than hundred page report released at a ceremony yesterday at the National Press Club in the city, the CCHRB termed the June 12 elections as having exceptionally high turnout not seen during last six parliamentary elections of the country.

Quoting the Bangladesh Election Commission, the organisation said a total of 41.5 million voters cast their votes in the June 12 polls and the turnout was calculated to be 73.19 per cent.

According to the report, all over the country at least 11 persons including children were killed in poll violence and another five hundred people were hurt, many seriously.

Presided over by secretary general of the body's election monitoring council, Akram H Chowdhury, the publication ceremony was also attended

Barrister Syed Ishtiaque Ahmed, a member of the advisory council of the former caretaker government, as chief guest, and political scientist Dr Borhanuddin Khan Jahangir, journalist Abed Khan and Father R W Timm.

Dwelling on the report, Barrister Ishtiaque lauded the effort of the election observer teams including the CCHRB saying that as member of the caretaker government he felt happy for holding a "comparatively free and fair election."

Barrister Ishtiaque also said that the caretaker government had to discharge its responsibilities with lots of constraints, but, added that they put in hard labour and avoided controversies for completing the election.

The former adviser in the caretaker government also remarked that the recent election has proved the people's overwhelming support of multi-party democracy and has strengthened the democratic institution.

Dr Borhanuddin Khan Jahangir referred to many constraints of the election '96 and successes and failures of the caretaker government. He sug-

gested that such constraints of the caretaker government should be removed so that future elections could be held more freely and fairly without any interferences.

Abed Khan lauded the effort of the CCHRB, saying that such initiatives by local and foreign observer groups have contributed positively to holding a free and fair election.

Father Timm termed the election as "relatively free and fair" and recommended that the election authorities should undertake further measures so that more trouble-free elections are held in the future.

Placing a set of recommendations, the organisation suggested a long-term programme to educate and create awareness among voters. It has also advocated compulsory issuance of identity cards to check false voting, enhance the remuneration of the election observers as well as the election officials, ensure security and safety of the officials on election duties, take special initiatives to encourage women voters, set up electoral enquiry committees permanently with legal jurisdiction and ensure safety and security of religious minorities during electioneering.

Weather

Moderate rainfall likely

Moderate rain or thundershower accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at most places across the country with moderate heavy to heavy falls at places over Barisal and Chittagong divisions in the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Met Office says day temperature may fall by 1-2 degree Celsius throughout the country.

In its outlook for subsequent two days weathermen forecast increase in rainfall activity. Giving extended outlook for another five days Met Office predicted little change.

Country's highest temperature 31.6 degree Celsius was recorded at Rangpur yesterday and the lowest 22.2 degrees at Kutubdia.

The sun sets today at 6:50 pm and rises tomorrow at 5:15 am.

Dhaka Day by Day Desperate Search for Serenity

by Fayza Haq

Laila Sharmeen had an exhibition of her 25 mixed media and water colour pieces at Gulshan recently.

Sitting in a Dhanmondi cafe Sharmeen spoke of the thought processes in her mind that went into her work. She is still obsessed with TS Eliot's "Wasteland", even though now she feels she is closer to the concept of Utopia.

In her search for Utopia she gets only "dystopia". She reminds us that Da Vinci searched for four years for the face of Judas going from brothels to cafes; so she feels she too should delve deep to reach her goal.

Secured in the serenity of time it presses towards something for black. In "Enchanted Domain II", you see the black moon, the darkened sun, a boat plying upon a violet scene not far away." Sharmeen adds, "Thus I seek a Utopia where the mind is without fear and the head is held high; where knowledge is free; where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls..." (Gitanjali)



In the "Garden of Love-4" (water colour) a couple are sketched out in delicate lines. Soft and gentle impressions of flowers and birds are brought in. There is a boat at the back, shown by delicate lines. A hint of a rainbow completes the pristine image. The artist's style is naive and much of the beauty of the work lies in this and also in the economy of the lines and colours.

The themes of love and peace are continued in "Love-2" with its delicate crescent moon, the hugging couple, and the softly enveloping nature around them, seen in washes of blue and burnt sienna.

Black, ink-blue and burnt sienna waves of overlapping colours include the delicate figures of the subjects in "Radha and Krishna-5". The faces and limbs are brought in with subtle touch of the brush.

"In Enchanted Domain-2" (water colour) one finds the same delicate strokes and muted colours. Nature is brought in subtly and the piece is a joyous creation of mauves and blacks.

"Utopia-2" has the woman on a swing with the lover in a boat nearby. The world is a happy place with crimson sun and red beaked birds. The hint of the rainbow is found here too.

Sharmeen is among the promising young women artists of Bangladesh and has won a fair following of admirers. This is her third solo exhibition. She has taken part in several group displays as well. She has her masters from the Institute of Fine Arts, DU.

"I am fascinated by simple things such as the shining eyes of gypsy snake charmers, the scent of the henna blossoms and the smell of the earth after it rains. Fireflies and exotic people like a visitor from Cameroon also remind me of the colourful works of Matisse," she adds.

"Yes, I am influenced by Kate Millet and by the famous Bangladeshi sculptress Novera. Friends ask me if I'm influenced by Freud in presenting bare figures. When a man is born he is without clothes and there is nothing wrong in that. I am moved by the aborigines who make an effort to preserve the ecology of the earth as none of us do. I am also against colonialism that make the young rootless. I have tried to bring in the peace and tranquility that is found in the songs and poetry of Lalou and Tagore in my works. In my style I'm shaped by the works of Klee, Dalí, Kibria and Monirul Islam," she says about herself.

"In my pieces like the 'Enchanted Domain' a boat floats onwards among flowers and reeds.



Participants at the Inner Wheel District 328 assembly of solidarity and determination held at a city hotel yesterday. — Star photo

More felicitations to Hasina

More heads of government and states have felicitated Sheikh Hasina on her assumption of the office of the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, reports BSS.

In their separate messages available in the city yesterday the world leaders expressed the hope that the relations between Bangladesh and the respective countries would grow further in the years to come under the active and able leadership of the new Premier of the country.

They also assured of their continued cooperation towards Bangladesh's government headed by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and the people of the country.

They expressed their hope that the democratisation of the political life in Bangladesh would grow more and more during the period of the present government.

The world leaders wished good health of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and peace, stability, progress and prosperity of the people of Bangladesh.

Those who sent messages of felicitations included King Fahd Bin Abdul Aziz al-Saud of Saudi Arabia, Chairman of the government of the Russian Federation V Chernomyrdin, Venezuelan President Rafael Caldera, Chile's President Eduardo Frei Ruiz Tagle, Afghan President Prof Burhanuddin Rabbani, North Korean Premier Kang Song San, Slovenian Premier Dr Janez Drnovsek, Mongolian Premier Punsacim Jasrai, Alban acting Prime Minister Engr. Ahmed Shah Ahmed Zai, President of Seychelles France Alderi Rane, Prime Minister of Hellenic Republic Costas Simitis, French Socialist Party's first secretary Lionel Josephin Minister External Relations of Caracas Miruel Angel Burelli Rivas, SAARC secretary general Naemul U Hasan and N Bossonyud of the Non-aligned students and youth organisation.

DU students urge govt to rescue Kalpana Chakma

Some 170 students of Dhaka University yesterday urged the government to take effective steps to rescue Kalpana Chakma, reports UNB.

In a joint statement, they alleged that Kalpana, Organising Secretary of Hill Women's Federation, picked up by some plain cloth security men from her residence in Rangamati district at about 1 am on June 12.

The signatories to the statement include Bithika Banik, Raihana Sultana, Nadira Sultana, Jayanti Bardhan, Shamara Akter, Rikta Dutta, Arifa Hossain, Shaiful Shahid and Sajja Afrin.

Mahila Parishad greets Hasina

More socio-cultural organisations yesterday felicitated Awami League Chief Sheikh Hasina on her assumption of the office of Prime Minister, reports UNB.

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad congratulated the new Prime Minister for her party's victory in June 12 election after a long struggle.

The parishad leaders hoped that her able leadership would lead the country towards development establishing equal rights of man and woman and a repression free society.

They also assured the Prime Minister of their continued support and cooperation in establishing the democratic values in the country.

FBCCI workshop begins in city

A two-day workshop on "Information Services of Chambers and Trade Associations for Small and Medium Enterprises" began in the city yesterday, reports UNB.

Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) and the German Federation of Small Business (ZDH) and Technonet Asia (TA), Singapore jointly organised the workshop.

FBCCI Vice-President Alhaj KH Rashiduzzaman Duda inaugurated the workshop which was addressed, among others, by FBCCI Secretary General SM Al-Husainy and Resident Representative of ZHD/TA partnership programme M Azizur Rahman, said a press release.

Representatives from relevant government organisations, chambers and associations of the country are taking part in the workshop being held at the FBCCI auditorium.

Probe into 'corruption charge' against DU VC demanded

A total of 35 Senate members of the Dhaka University, in a statement Saturday, demanded judicial probe into the reported corruption charges raised against Vice Chancellor Prof. Emazuddin Ahmed, reports BSS.

Today it is clear that the present Vice Chancellor has lost all his moral rights to stay at his post and, therefore, it is no more possible on his part to run the normal activities of the Senate as well as the university," they alleged.

The Senate members said, "We demand a judicial enquiry to investigate into the allegations raised against him for the sake of a transparent and accountable administration."

Rotary Dist-3280 announces programmes for 1996-97

By DU Correspondent

Rotary International District 3280, Bangladesh has taken elaborate programmes for the Rotary year 1996-97.

Rtn M Ali Mahubub, district governor, Rotary International District 3280, declared the programmes at a press briefing, held yesterday at a city hotel.

The Rotary programmes for the forthcoming rotary year include eye camps, literacy and education projects, sustainable programme on environment, supply of tubewells and sanitary latrines, holding National Immunisation Days as part of continuing polio-plus programme and conferences on new generations.

Besides, Rotary International will commemorate three important dates — the 50th anniversary of Paul Harris's death, the 80th anniversary of Rotary Foundation and 50 years of success in the Scholarships Programme of the foundation.

Rtn M Ali Mahubub said throughout the country, about 50,000 people will be checked free of cost by eye specialists and offered corrective measures, including cataract operations and spectacles free of cost under the eye camp programme.

He said Rotarians will provide 1000 tubewells and 5000 sealed sanitary latrines in 1996-97.

Under the environment programme, seminars and workshops will be held and over 500,000 saplings will be planted as part of a tree plantation campaign throughout the country.

Over 1000,000 people would be made functional by literate under the literacy programme and training of teachers as well as students in computer science and in English will be organised, Mahubub said.

With community participation, specially the youth, award of Dhaka city in the Mohammadpur area would be cleaned of all waste products, to provide a model for others, he added.

Rotary would organise conferences on new generations in Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna, Bogra and Sylhet.

Mahubub said the polio-plus programme would be intensified, in this last year of the vaccination programme in Bangladesh. Two national immunisation days (NIDs) would be observed on December 8, 1996 and on January 8, 1997 respectively.

He informed the press that Bangladesh would continue to be the beneficiary of Rotary Foundation (RF) funds. This year, Rotary district will contribute a record US dollar 100,000 to RF.

He said in addition to receiving over dollar 500,000 annually from the Rotary International to carry out various humanitarian service projects, Rotary in Bangladesh will receive an additional ambassadorial scholarship, worth dollars 22,000 for one academic year abroad.

The press conference was also attended by Sanaulah Sheikh, associate district governor, Azizur Rahman, district secretary and MA Matin, assistant coordinator.



Rtn M Ali Mahubub, district governor, Rotary International District 3280, announcing Rotary year 1996-97 programmes at a press conference, held yesterday at a city hotel. — Star photo

What's on today...

**Rotary Club of Dhanmondi:** The club has organised a tree plantation programme. BUET VC Prof M Shahjahan will inaugurate the programme. Venue: BUET premises. Time: 10 am.

**Shippers' Council workshop:** The inaugural ceremony of the country-level workshop on Multimodal Transport Course # 5-4 — "How to Become a Multimodal Transport Operator" will be held. Shippers Council of Bangladesh has organised the workshop with the assistance of UN-ESCAP/UNCTAD. Venue: Park Hotel. Time: 10 am.

**Central Women's College Alumni Assoc:** A general meeting of the association will be held. Venue: Central Women's College campus, Abhay Das Lane. Time: 4 pm.

**Rotary Club of Dhaka Mid City:** The third installation ceremony of the club will be held: A tree plantation programme will follow. Venue: Ramna Garden. Time: 8 am.

**Rotary meeting:** An intercity meeting of Rotary Clubs of Dhaka, Narayanganj, Narasingdi, Savar, Gazipur and Manikganj will be held. Venue: Sonargaon Hotel. Time: 3:30 pm.

**Rotary Club of Dhaka Central:** The regular weekly meeting of the club will be held. Venue: Sonargaon hotel. Time: 4 pm.

**Rotary Club of Ramna:** The regular weekly meeting of the club will be held. Venue: Sonargaon hotel. Time: 4 pm.

**Rotary Club of Dilkusha:** The regular weekly meeting of the club will be held. Venue: Sonargaon hotel. Time: 4 pm.

**Desh Gallery:** Desh Gallery, a handicraft shop, will formally begin its operation from today. Rare household decoration piece and other handicrafts of Bengali heritage will be on display. Venue: 27, Manipuripara, Sangsad Avenue. Time: 10:30 am.

**Rotaract Club of Notre Dame College:** The club has organised a seminar on Rotaract District theme "Look With a New Vision." Venue: Notre Dame College auditorium. Time: 5:30 pm.

DU classes resume today

Classes of Dhaka University will resume today after 33 days summer and Muharram vacation, reports UNB.

Meanwhile, students have started returning to their respective dormitories after enjoying the longest vacation of the year of the university.

**EVERGREEN**

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