

## EU-EOMB, UNEAS

**FROM PAGE 1**  
A total of 92 observers divided into eight teams visited 700 polling centres in Chittagong, Sirajganj, Khulna, Sylhet, Rangpur, Barisal, Noakhali and Dhaka regions.

Reis added, "Although some cases of intimidation were registered both inside and outside the polling stations visited by the observers, voters were free to cast their votes in the majority of the polling centres observed by the delegations."

It said "practice of smear campaigning and usage of inflammatory language and brutal electoral campaigning material ... affected, in some cases, freedom of choice of voters".

The EU-EOMB will give its final observation report and suggestions to the authorities concerned within two or three weeks, Silva said.

Meanwhile, the international election observation mission has termed Monday's election 'free, fair, peaceful and orderly'.

General assessment of the observers on opening of polling centres, voting, closing of centres and counting of votes was 'good' and the election proceeded smoothly, said a statement issued by the United Nations Electoral Assistance Secretariat (UNEAS) supporting and coordinating services to the mission.

Reading out the statement released on behalf of the mission at a press conference in the city yesterday, Coordinator of UNEAS Tony Reis said, "The mission noted that despite sporadic violence and poor facilities and overcrowding in some polling stations, voters were able to exercise their franchise."

Members of the election observation team were from Canada, Japan, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Russia, Thailand and the United States, supported by a group of local embassy staff and volunteers.



BNP supporters and activists flash victory signs as they go round the city yesterday to celebrate the victory of their party leaders in Monday's parliamentary elections.

## AL wiped out in its heartlands

**FROM PAGE 1**  
In the final count, the equation may look even more bleak for the AL.

Conversely, the BNP has lost only eight of its traditional strongholds, six going to the AL and one each to the Jamaat and independent candidates.

Meanwhile, the JP faction loyal to Ershad, which cobbled a last-gasp alliance with the Islami Shshantantra Andolan and some small parties, has lost out on 16 seats, the BNP taking eight of these, the AL six and the JP (Nazir) and the Jamaat one.

The BNP has also won two hitherto unconquered constituencies - Barguna-2 (won by IOJ in 1996) and Laxmipur-4 (won by JSD in 1996). Although the latter remains undecided with polling at one centre suspended, the trend is in favour of the BNP.

The BNP has also succeeded in winning back 29 seats it won in 1991 but lost in 1996.

Division-wise, the AL has lost 13 seats in Rajshahi, eight of these going to the BNP, three to the Jamaat and one each to the two JP factions of Ershad and Nazir.

In Khulna, it lost 17 seats, with the BNP taking away seven, the Jamaat seven, JP (Nazir) two and the IOJ one.

In Barisal, the BNP snatched six of seven AL seats, the other going to a rebel AL candidate.

In Dhaka, the AL lost 27 seats. The BNP has grabbed 26 of these with Kader Siddiqui winning the other.

In Sylhet, the BNP snatched six of eight AL seats. Jamaat and an independent candidate took away one each.

In Chittagong, the AL lost 18 seats, with 16 going to the BNP and one each to the JP (Nazir) and the Jamaat.

In 1996, the AL won in 18 of 72 seats in Rajshahi and the BNP 32. In 1991, the AL bagged 20 seats and the BNP 27.

Besides, the BNP has dominated in a number of constituencies that include Panchagar-2, Joypurhat-2, Bogra-7, Chapainawabganj-3, Rajshahi-5, Natore-4, Meherpur-2, Kushtia-4, Chuadanga-2, Bhola-4, Manikganj-4, Dhaka-5, Rajbari-2, Narayanganj-5, Chandpur-5, Feni-

3, Laxmipur-4, and Cox's Bazar-3.

In 1996, it swept 11 districts against the AL's 13. This time AL did not win any seat in those districts as well as many other districts including Rangpur, Kurigram, Satkhira, Jhalokathi, Pirojpur, Dhaka, Sylhet and Noakhali.

Besides, the AL has only swept Gopalganj, Nariail and Madaripur this time around.

Of the 37 seats in Khulna division, the AL got 16 in 1991 and 22 in 1996 while and the BNP 12 in 1991 and 13 in 1996.

Of the 23 seats in Barisal division, the AL bagged 12 in 1991 and 11 in 1996 while the BNP seven in 1991 and five in 1996.

Of the 90 seats in Dhaka division, the AL got 29 in 1991 and 59 in 1996 while the BNP 56 in 1991 and 30 in 1996.

Of the 19 seats in Sylhet division, the AL got nine in 1991 and 13 in 1996 while the BNP one in 1991 and three in 1996.

Of the 59 seats in Chittagong division, the AL won 14 in 1991 and 23 in 1996 while the BNP 36 in 1991 and 34 in 1996.

## CA: Democracy

**FROM PAGE 12**  
voters was absolutely remarkable, he pointed out.

David Preston commended the caretaker government, the security forces and the Election Commission, the election officials and foreign and local observers for the strenuous efforts they made so that people could go confidently and securely to the polls.

The Canadian envoy said the true winners in the elections are the people of Bangladesh who turned out in such large numbers to demonstrate their desires for, and commitment to democracy.

He fervently expressed the hope that the participants, winners and losers, would carefully reflect the results and accept gracefully and agree to work together in parliament, to serve the people whose trust has been placed in them.

The leader of the Japanese poll observer team Shin Sakurai described Monday's election as most successful and expressed the hope that Bangladesh would be able to play more important role in democratic and economic development in South Asia.

Sakurai hoped that the political parties would follow their election pledges to the people to work unitedly.

The leader of the Asian Network for Free Elections in his speech expressed their heartfelt thanks to the caretaker government, Election Commission and other government officials for holding a most successful and meaningful election.

The Chief Election Commissioner MA Syed, in his brief speech, stressed the need for replacing the present election system in the country with the modern election system of voting as being followed in neighboring India.

## Historic win

**FROM PAGE 1**  
centres. The preliminary report issued by the largest observer group, the EU Election Observation Mission in Bangladesh said, "The electoral process has guaranteed sufficient conditions of freedom and fairness and represents an important step towards democratic consolidation."

The EU team comprised 72 long- and short-term observers.

The United Nations Electoral Assistance Secretariat, which provided co-ordination and logistic support to the foreign observers, was of the same view.

"Although some cases of intimidation were registered both inside and outside of the polling stations visited by the observers, voters were free to cast their votes in the majority of the polling centres observed by the delegations," read its statement.

Both Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina relied heavily on highly emotive family names in their campaigns. Khaleda is the widow of slain former president Ziaur Rahman, while Sheikh Hasina's father Sheikh Mujibur Rahman led the nation's war of independence in 1971.

## Misfortune

**FROM PAGE 1**  
Maj General Mahmudul Hasan also won on BNP ticket.

Maj General Golam Mowla (ret'd) who was AL nominee for a Bogra seat and another AL nominee, Maj General AMSA Amin, suffered defeat. Retired Maj General Subid Ali Bhuiyan who was an independent candidate also lost.

Besides, several former army officials of other d ranks contested the election. Some lost while some won.

## Attack on houses

**FROM PAGE 12**  
The youths damaged two cars parked in front of the house-37, road No. 9 at about 7:30pm. The cars are said to be his relatives'.

In yet another incident, BNP activists attacked the house of Haji Abu Siddique, Taranagar union Awami League president at village Joynagar, Keraniganj.

Family sources alleged that the gang exploded bombs in front of the house at noon.

Also ransacked was the house of AL activist Abdul Khaleq in the same village by the same gang.

When contacted yesterday evening, the duty officer of Keraniganj Police Station said the mobile team that went there did not return.

## FEMA

**FROM PAGE 1**  
the country.

"The turnout of voters particularly women all over the country was uniformly high in comparison to two previous elections which were widely acclaimed as free and fair" it said

FEMA observed that the polls began smoothly and in most places the voters could cast their votes in peaceful atmosphere.

A non-partisan citizen coalition FEMA made the statement on the basis of reports from its 70,000 volunteers who were engaged in poll observation through out the country.

The alliance also congratulated the chief advisor and his colleagues for holding the election in congenial atmosphere.

## Leader of Japanese polls monitoring team meets President

UNB, Dhaka

Visiting leader of the Japanese election monitoring team Shin Sakurai yesterday told the president that Monday's election was held peacefully and the people participated in it enthusiastically.

His remarks came when he made a courtesy call on President Shahabuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban to give his impression about the general election.

He informed the president that he observed eight polling centres in different places and found a large number of people casting their votes peacefully.

President Shahabuddin appreciated the interest of the Japanese election monitoring team in the election process of Bangladesh.

He hoped that Bangladesh-Japan economic cooperation would be deepened and diversified in the years to come.

Japanese Ambassador in Dhaka Jiro Kubayashi was present.

## India looks

**FROM PAGE 1**  
past prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

"We look forward to working together with the next government in Bangladesh," the Indian foreign office said in a statement.

"Given the size of the electorate, it was an impressive exercise. India is committed to a policy of friendship with all countries, particularly our neighbours."

## Khaleda: Time for unity

**FROM PAGE 1**  
spect to any portrait, do not misbehave with any one and also do not run after others' property. At this moment, we need peace, stability and patience."

A clam and confident Khaleda told the local and foreign journalists at the crowded hall room that people voted against the process to divide the country that started five years back.

"People want to see a united country... They never want a divided country. That's why they have voted overwhelmingly for the four-party alliance," she said.

"Let's come forward and unite the country again and march ahead unitedly. Let's come forward to eliminate terrorism and root out corruption."

Khaleda called upon leaders and activists of all political parties including the Awami League to 'join us in this urgent task' to build a peaceful, prosperous and modern Bangladesh.

Flanked by party leaders Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury, Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, M Shamsul Islam, MM Rezaul Karim and Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General Ali Ahsan Mujahid, the BNP chief expressed gratitude to Allah and thanked the people for the massive victory of her party and the alliance in he election.

She congratulated people for going to polling centres braving all threats and intimidation. She particularly thanked the sick and elderly people, women and new voters.

Khaleda thanked the President, Chief Advisor of the Caretaker government, Advisors, Chief Election Commissioner, Election Commissioners, officials and employees of the EC and the administration, and members of the Armed Forces, BDR, Police, Ansar and all others engaged in election duty for creating a congenial atmosphere for free and fair polls.

She also thanked development partners, donor countries and agencies, diplomatic missions and local and foreign polls observers.

The BNP Chairperson congratulated leaders, workers and supporters of BNP and the alliance.

Khaleda paid tribute to those who laid down their lives in the last five years of BNP's struggle against terrorism and prayed for salvation of the departed souls.

Later, the BNP Chairperson replied to questions from the newsmen. BNP leaders Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury and Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan assisted her.

Replying to a question, Khaleda Zia said the first task of her government would be to check terrorism, ensure security of life and property, restoration of law and order and establish rule of law in the country.

Curbing corruption will be another priority.

On a supplementary question as regards her home district of Feni, she observed that the degree of terrorism in Feni was much higher than any other area of the country in last five years. As a result, the people of Feni rejected the terrorists and their godfathers through the ballot. "Not only in Feni, we will eliminate terrorism from everywhere in the country."

Asked whether the immediate past minister Sheikh Hasina has made any phone call to congratulate her or whether she herself rang her, Khaleda said, "Final result of the election is yet not announced. I don't know whether she (Hasina) would phone me or not, but I will talk to her after the announcement of

final result."

Replying to another question as to whether she would be arrogant with her opponents, she said, "I am not at all arrogant. I have never been arrogant with anyone in the past and will never be in future. I want to build the country together with everyone and place Bangladesh in a dignified position in the international community."

Replying on Khaleda's behalf, Prof. AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury said there is no identified terrorist or corrupt person in the BNP and the alliance. He made it clear that no such person would have a place in the cabinet because the nation has given verdict against terrorism and corruption.

On another question on formation of cabinet, BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said the Election Commission is yet to announce the complete result. "Hopefully, we will meet the president and chief advisor tomorrow (Wednesday) and ask them to invite us to form new government immediately."

When asked whether the BNP will invite the AL in the cabinet, Bhuiyan said BNP believes in democracy and consult the opposition on all important and national issues before making any decision. "It is not necessary to include the opposition in the cabinet, but we want a constructive opposition and to take them with us in the nation-building activities. We will provide the opposition with facilities and opportunities they deserve."

He said the BNP will consult with its allies before forming the cabinet. "I hope they would not be unhappy." In this regard, he said, "the question of forming government keeping the alliance partners at bay does not arise at all."

When asked whether the BNP would cancel the deals and agreements signed with different international companies in oil and other sectors, Bhuiyan said BNP will review all the controversial deals signed by the AL government and take appropriate legal action if there is any fault.

Asked whether the BNP would sweep the corruption cases filed by the AL government against BNP leaders, including Khaleda Zia, under the carpet through administrative orders, the BNP secretary general said all the cases filed against them were politically motivated and none of them has been proved.

As regards the portrait of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Bhuiyan said the BNP never encourages damage to any picture of any individual and have already instructed the party activists to refrain from doing such acts. "If necessary, we will take decision in parliament."

## Ctg Shibir cadre

**FROM PAGE 12**  
DB police acting on a tip off, cordoned off Sajjad's residence at around 4.30pm when he was taking rest. Sensing police presence he tried to flee through a paddy field. He and his accomplice Delwar exchanged over one hundred rounds of bullets with police.

Sajjad said the AK-47 was bought by his cadre group for Tk. 3.5 lakh from Kalapahar at Alikadam in Bandorban two years ago. Sajjad is also main accused in sensational ward commissioner Liakot Ali Khan Murder Case that took place around two years back in the city.



Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee (C) sprinkles rose petals on the memorial of Mahatma Gandhi, father of the Indian nation, in New Delhi yesterday. India celebrated the 132nd anniversary of Gandhi's birth.

## Awami League rejects election results

**FROM PAGE 1**  
time I would not say it was a subtle rigging, rather what has taken place was simply a crude rigging."

She was flanked by party colleagues Abdus Samad Azad, Abul Hasan Chowdhury and Mozaffar Hossain Paltu on the dais. Besides, party's candidates who contested from different constituencies including Saber H Chowdhury, Haji Selim, Akhtaruzzaman, Ahsanullah Master and Tanjim Ahmed Sohel were also present.

The immediate-past prime minister alleged that the caretaker administration and the Election Commission were party to a blueprint designed long ago to see to it that the pro-liberation forces are defeated. She also gave a long list of wrongdoing by them that, she believed, had resulted in defeats of the AL candidates, who otherwise would have been victorious.

"We had complained that there was a conspiracy going on to manipulate the election so that the AL and the pro-liberation forces were defeated. The non-party caretaker government used the administration to implement this blueprint. There is evidence to support our contention," Hasina said.

She said because of the bizarre decision to suspend mobile telephone networks on the polling day, "several incidents which interfered in the conducting of elections could not be reported to us. We had to depend on official media which itself was suspect."

constitution, Hasina alleged that the chief advisor of the caretaker government transferred 13 top government bureaucrats even before the council of advisors took oath of office. She was also critical of the chief advisor's starting 'homework' long before he had taken oath.

She alleged that the caretaker government had staged a 'civilian coup' and tried to give an impression that whatever the previous AL government had done was all 'wrong' and what they did was 'all right'.

The AL chief said she had talked to the chief advisor, chief election commissioner and other concerned time and again about killings of and attacks on the AL leaders and workers across the country, "Unfortunately, the caretaker government did not arrest any of the terrorists responsible for the attacks."

She said the list of 'vulnerable centres', which was forwarded to the army, identified Zillur Rahman (AL general secretary) and even the Speaker (Abdul Hamid) as terrorists. "I apprised the president of the matter. Yet, only those areas were chosen and branded as 'vulnerable' where the Awami League has got 'guaranteed seats'."

Hasina alleged that the authorities had failed to confiscate additional ballot papers from different areas in the country, which, she suspected, were used to manipulate results. "Such additional ballot papers were found at ASM Rob's area. I had also apprised the president of the possibility of such addi-

tional ballot papers having reached other parts of the country."

The AL president also said that many BNP men had roamed inside the EC Secretariat premises all the time while the AL men were barred from entering the EC office.

She said some 21 EC officials received results from different districts over telephone and fax sitting in nine booths at the EC Secretariat and many of those faxes and phones came from fictitious people.

She also observed that both national and international media had predicted an AL win in the election. The media also forecast a tough electoral race. "Then from which sources did the BNP get the indication that it would get a two-thirds majority in the polls?"

Hasina also alleged a 'media coup' after the midnight on October 1. She said in some cases the AL candidates were declared elected first and after several hours they were declared to have been defeated. "For example, at one stage our candidate Akhtaruzzaman (in Gazipur) was unofficially declared elected. But, two hours later he was declared a loser."

In the evening of October 1, Hasina noted, the BNP itself had complained about lack of fairness in the polls in 50 constituencies. "How could those proved to be fair to them after just several hours?"

She further alleged that minority voters could not cast their votes in many places. "Inexpressible repres-

sion is there on the people belonging to the minority community, many of whom have now started migrating from villages to towns."

When a journalist asked her whether misdeeds by her own party men had anything to do with the AL's poll debacle, Hasina said, "Awami League had 154 seats in the last parliament. Due to bad images earned by some of the party men, we could at best lose 10 to 25 seats from those 154 seats. But how come we got so few seats this time?"

"It is very unfortunate for me that people in my in-laws' area (Pirganj under Rangpur-6) did not cast votes for me." Rangpur-6, ancestral village of Hasina's husband Dr Wazed Ali Mia, is the only seat where Hasina lost to a JP (Ershad) candidate while she won in all four seats she contested this time.

Asked whether she wants the system of caretaker government to go in the next elections, Hasina answered in the negative. "The caretaker (government) concept is my brainchild. I'm all for this system." She blamed the people who had abused the system this time.

Hasina also alleged mismatches in different voters' lists, saying that lists provided to agents sometimes contradicted those in the hands of polling officials. She also blasted the deployment of Islami Bank staff in the task of conducting elections.

## A verdict against

**FROM PAGE 12**  
bly fail" to develop a culture to discuss major policy issues in parliament.

Looking to the future, Prof. Mahmud said, "Election pledges have been made regarding many popular measures for social development and poverty alleviation, and even increasing salaries of government employees. But, the government will have to act now on less popular issues like tackling tax evasion, loss in public enterprises, wastage in public development expenditure and loan default."

"These measures will enrage powerful interest groups, but, nevertheless will have to be taken at the very beginning of the tenure of the government," he thought.

Prof Mahmud also thought that the overwhelming majority of the new ruling party has given it an added responsibility of exercising restraint. "It must be tolerant of opposing views, shun authoritarian posture and leave enough scope for the Opposition to play an important role in parliament."

On the other hand, the Opposition should also be responsible and play a positive role in parliament. "On its part, the Opposition should never consider boycotting parliament. Rather, it should air in the parliament whatever grievances it has," he said.

Both the major parties have the experience of being in the government and in the opposition, Prof. Mahmud said. "They should be able to draw lessons from their mistakes and have enough maturity to realise that politics of confrontation does not help either."

As BNP got overwhelming majority on its own, its partner Jamaat-e-Islami, which fought

## NATO

**FROM PAGE 12**  
held, Russian President Vladimir Putin was meeting EU leaders yesterday, and was to see Robertson on Wednesday. Putin has thrown his support behind the American-led anti-terrorist coalition, drawing his country into closer cooperation with the West.

"The facts are clear and compelling," Robertson said of the US briefing. "The information presented points conclusively to an al-Qaeda role."

"We know that the individuals who carried out these attacks were part of the worldwide terrorist network al-Qaeda headed by Osama bin Laden and his key lieutenants and protected by the Taliban," he said. "It is clear that all roads lead to al-Qaeda and pinpoint Osama bin Laden as having been involved in it."

## Blair

**FROM PAGE 12**  
he replied: "It appears so."

Another report says, Pakistan said yesterday it had yet to see conclusive evidence from the United States linking bin Laden to the September 11 attacks.

"Once they have some kind of conclusive evidence, we hope it will be shared with us," foreign ministry spokesman Riaz Mohammad Khan told a press conference.

Earlier US ambassador to Pakistan Wendy Chamberlin met with President Pervez Musharraf for talks on issues including the status of the investigation into the attacks, blamed on bin Laden and his al-Qaeda network.

A US embassy spokesman also told AFP that "no documentary evidence was shared", although he said "evidence was shared verbally".

Referring to a NATO announcement that the US had furnished the necessary proof that al-Qaeda was behind the attacks, Khan said Pakistan had yet to receive any written details on the probe.

against the country's Liberation War, should not be able to influence policy matters, they said.

"BNP's overwhelming majority will help it keep its middle-of-the-road stance in handling both internal and external affairs. Being a mainstream party, it will take a pragmatic approach," Prof. Mahmud hoped.

Sirajul Islam Chowdhury thought that it will be better for BNP if it does not share power with Jamaat.

## Only 6 women

**FROM PAGE 12**  
and Muslim League one each. The rest were independent candidates.

Khaleda bagged all the five seats she contested for in Feni-1, Laxmipur-2, Khulna-2 and Bogra-6 and 7.

Hasina lost to Noor Mohammad Mandol of JP (Ershad) in Rangpur-6 but won in four other seats in Gopalganj-3, Narail-1 and 2, and Barguna-3.

Khaleda's closest rivals were all from the AL while Hasina's strongest rivals belonged to JP and IOJ.

Khurshid Jahan Haq was elected from Dinajpur-3 constituency defeating her closest rival AL's Abdur Rahim. Eien Bhutto bagged the Jhalokathi-2 seat defeating AL heavyweight Amir Hossain Amr. Dr Shova won in Nilphamari-1 seat with NK Alam Chowdhury of JP (E) being her nearest rival. Roushan Ershad defeated Fazle Rabbi of AL in Gaibandha-5 seat.

Former ministers Sajeda Chowdhury, Motia Chowdhury and Zinnatunnesa Talukdar, former MPs from women's reserved quota Shagufta Yasmin, Quamrunnahr Putul and Mahmuda Saugat were among other AL's leading women candidates who lost the election.

"Ironically, in a country ruled by two women leaders in the last ten years and where women constitute half of the total population, women's participation in politics has been grossly insignificant. Also, with the tenure for women's reserve seats in the JS expiring recently, only a few women were bold enough to take on their male adversaries for direct election in Bangladesh's male dominated political arena."

"The facts are clear and compelling," Robertson said of the US briefing. "The information presented points conclusively to an al-Qaeda role."

## A similar tale

**FROM PAGE 1**  
Syed, Obaidul Qader, Mofazzel Hossain Chowdhury Maya, Sazer Hossain Chowdhury, AK Faizul Haq, Rashed Mosharrar, Anisul Haque Chowdhury, HM Ashiqur Rahman, Prof. Rafiqul Islam, Dharendra Devnath Shambhu of AL and ASM Abdur Rab of Jatia Samajtantrik Dal (JSD).

The JSD was part of Sheikh Hasina's 'consensus government' that ruled in the 1996-2001 period.

Besides, Chief Whip Abul Hasnat Abdullah, who was given the rank and status of cabinet minister, has been defeated in both the seats he vied for in Barisal district. Deputy Speaker Prof. Ali Ashraf, who enjoys rank and status of state minister, also lost the electoral race at a constituency in Comilla.

Defeated was former Finance Minister of Ershad government Abul Mal Abdul Muhi, who contested from Sylhet on an AL ticket.