

# THE DAILY **Star** ON FRIDAY

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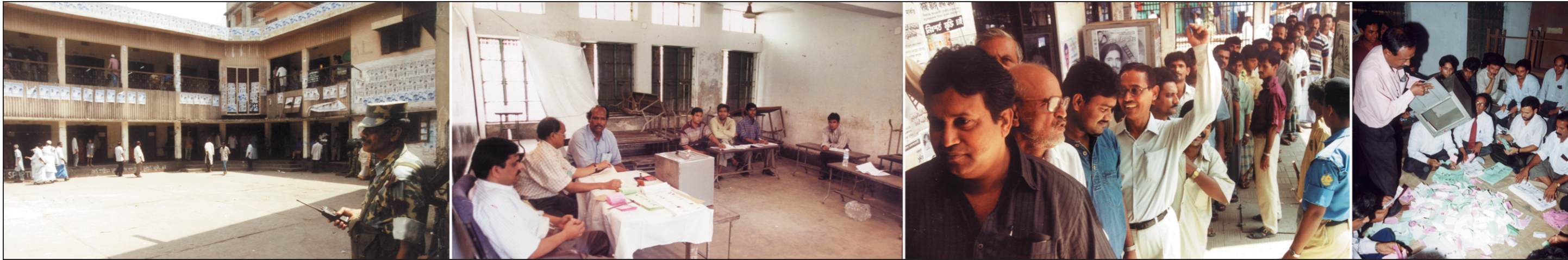
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During yesterday's Dhaka City Corporation polls: Nazirabazar Community Centre at 11.00am, Lalbagh Bhagalpur School at noon, voters in queue at Lalkuthi polling centre and counting of votes at Bijoynagar School.

PHOTO: STAR

## Khoka, Badshah, Tayeb lead in mayoral race

### Polling peaceful, low turnout in Dhaka

STAR REPORT

Sadek Hossain Khoka and Tayebur Rahman were poised for a clean sweep in Dhaka and Khulna respectively while incumbent Rajshahi Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu faced strong challenge from 11-party candidate Fazle Hossain Badshah in the long overdue elections to three major city corporations in the country.

Khoka bagged some 29,539 votes in 85 out of 1,342 centres in Dhaka. His closest rival ATM Hemayetuddin got 1,678 votes.

In Rajshahi, Badshah led the race with 37,104 votes in 61 out of 130 centres, with Minu trailing close, bagging 35,430 votes.

In Khulna, results of 54 out of 241 centres were available. Tayeb led by 35,915 votes while Enayet Ali pocketed 19,721 votes as his nearest rival.

Meantime, elections were held by and large peacefully. Voter turnout in Dhaka was remarkably poor, showing a lack of confidence in candidates. But in the other two cities, enthusiasm among the electorates was quite high.

In the capital, absence of enthusiasm among the electorate was induced by apprehension of widespread violence, presence of people with criminal

background in the race and boycott by the main opposition Awami League.

However, contrary to common fear, polling passed off without any major incidents of violence, as a 33,000-strong security blanket kept a tight rein on potential trouble-mongers.

In Dhaka, polling officers and agents, supporters of the ward commissioner hopefuls heavily outnumbered the voters at most of the 1,342 centres, fortified by law enforcing personnel.

Arrival of ballot boxes at the Election Commission was slow and boxes were still trickling in from different wards of the capital till 10:45pm, sparking speculations on the delay.

Our Khulna correspondent said that turnout in the city centres was generally high, due to strong rivalry. According to unofficial estimate by local EC officials, voter turnout was about 60 per cent.

Our Rajshahi correspondent said that polling was held peacefully and without interruption at 130 centres of 30 wards and voter turnout was estimated

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## 5 listed criminals win KCC polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A number of listed criminals have been elected Khulna City Corporation (KCC) ward commissioners, according to results available till 10pm yesterday.

Listed criminals Asaduzzaman Litu, Golam Mawla Shanu, Taslimuddin Khan Babul, Mohammad Hossain Mukta and Anis Biswas have been elected commissioners from ward 24, 26, 15, 31 and 16 respectively.

Listed criminal HM Abu Salek has also won the election battle, while listed criminal Shamsur Rahman and notorious smuggler Nazem Sardar have suffered defeat in ward 21 and 14 respectively.

The poll results of three other listed criminals could not be known till the time of filing this report.

Asaduzzaman Litu, the elected commissioner of ward 24, is a chargesheeted accused in the murder of Jessore journalist S h a m s u r

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## PDB for costly expansion of Haripur power plant

### No mention of SAPI suggestion, ERD objection in purchase committee briefing

SHARIER KHAN

Ignoring views of an independent consultant and that of the Economic Relation Division (ERD), the Power Development Board (PDB) will seek the Cabinet Purchase Committee approval for expansion of the decade-old Haripur power plant.

In 2000, a consultant, appointed by the Japanese government under the special assistance in project implementation (SAPI) programme, concluded that a new power scheme would be much more cost effective than the expansion project. The ERD also supported the view.

But, in its briefing, which will be placed before the cabinet committee next week, the PDB has made no mention of such observations and sought approval to open proposals of three bidders, sources said.

The bid, floated on August 8, 1999, remains sus-

pending due to disagreement between the PDB, the ERD and the Japanese financiers of the project.

The project, conceived in 1991 outlining a cost of 151 billion yen (nearly US\$66 million) or Tk 416 crore, aims at expanding the 100MW Haripur plant's generation capacity by 109MW.

However, with such a budget, it is possible to set up a new 180MW plant. The 360MW AES Haripur private power plant, which was commissioned last year, has been set up at a cost of US\$126 million.

The PDB briefing does refer to an ERD suggestion for conversion to combined-cycle plant but rejects it in favour of expansion.

There is no mention either of the observation made by the PDB tender committee on evaluation of the three bidders - Marubeni, Mitsubishi and Mitsui.

The committee observed that the project consultant

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## Gunmen in guise of 'civil police'

STAR REPORT

A suspicious-looking man guarded by some armed youths threaded his way to the campus of Titumir Government College in the city at 11.00am yesterday, sending chill among the already panic-stricken voters.

The sudden entry of the man in white pajama and punjabi to the college campus that housed three polling centres also spawned fevered speculations.

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## 'Down shutters, cast votes'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It is not unusual that during any election in the country, political party activists intimidate certain sections of voters not to go to polling centres. But probably for the first time, it was the other way round at Banani in the city yesterday.

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## AL wants fresh city polls, CEC to quit

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League acting president Abdus Samad Azad said the people rejected yesterday's city corporation elections and asked the government to give fresh election ensuring the participation of all parties in a congenial atmosphere.

Giving his party's reaction over the city polls that AL boycotted, he observed that in fact no election was held yesterday as he said voters did not go to the polling centres to cast vote boycotting the election for the "misrule and terrorism."

"Under the circumstances, the chief election commissioner should

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## Army picks up Khaleq's son for bribing voters

STAR REPORT

Army picked up the son of ruling BNP lawmaker SA Khaleque from Baghbari area at Gabtoli yesterday and handed him over to the Mirpur police for his alleged involvement in bribing voters to cast votes in favour of a commissioner candidate.

However, the incident put the

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Round **1** Draw in **Barisal** Today



see you at **Aswini Kumar Town Hall** at 4pm

Best wishes for you, but, in case you miss out, there's always Round 2 starting today.

see rules and coupon on page