

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Violence, ballot capture mark end of polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The five-day staggered municipal elections ended yesterday with voting in 19 municipalities on the last leg marred by violence, ballot paper snatching, false voting, polling booth capture and undue administrative influence.

killed and several hundred others injured in violence during polls in 115 municipalities in the last five days.

At the end of four days' ballot, the ruling BNP-led coalition runners secured 50 chairmen posts and the Awami League candidates bagged 38 posts among the 96 seats on offer.

Candidates of Jatiya Party (Ershad) won four chairmen posts while independent candidates bagged 16 posts. Of the 16 independent candidates, seven broke away from the BNP and six from the AL.

Chief Election Commissioner MA Syed, who requested the government for army deployment, yesterday

told reporters that violence could have been contained to a great extent had the army been deployed.

The main opposition Awami League (AL), meanwhile, yesterday demanded re-polling in

Mannan, Mahi picked for by-polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former president Badruddoza Chowdhury-led Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh yesterday nominated its Secretary General Abdul Mannan and Spokesman Mahi B Chowdhury as its candidates for the by-polls of Dhaka-10 and Munshiganj-1 constituencies.

The election will be held on June 6.

The Jatiya Sangsad seats fell vacant as Mannan, elected from Dhaka-10 (Ramna-Tejgaon), and Badruddoza's son Mahi, elected from Munshiganj-1 (Sreenagar), resigned from their respective constituencies on March 10 to join

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

AHSANULLAH MURDER Babar tells of CID clues

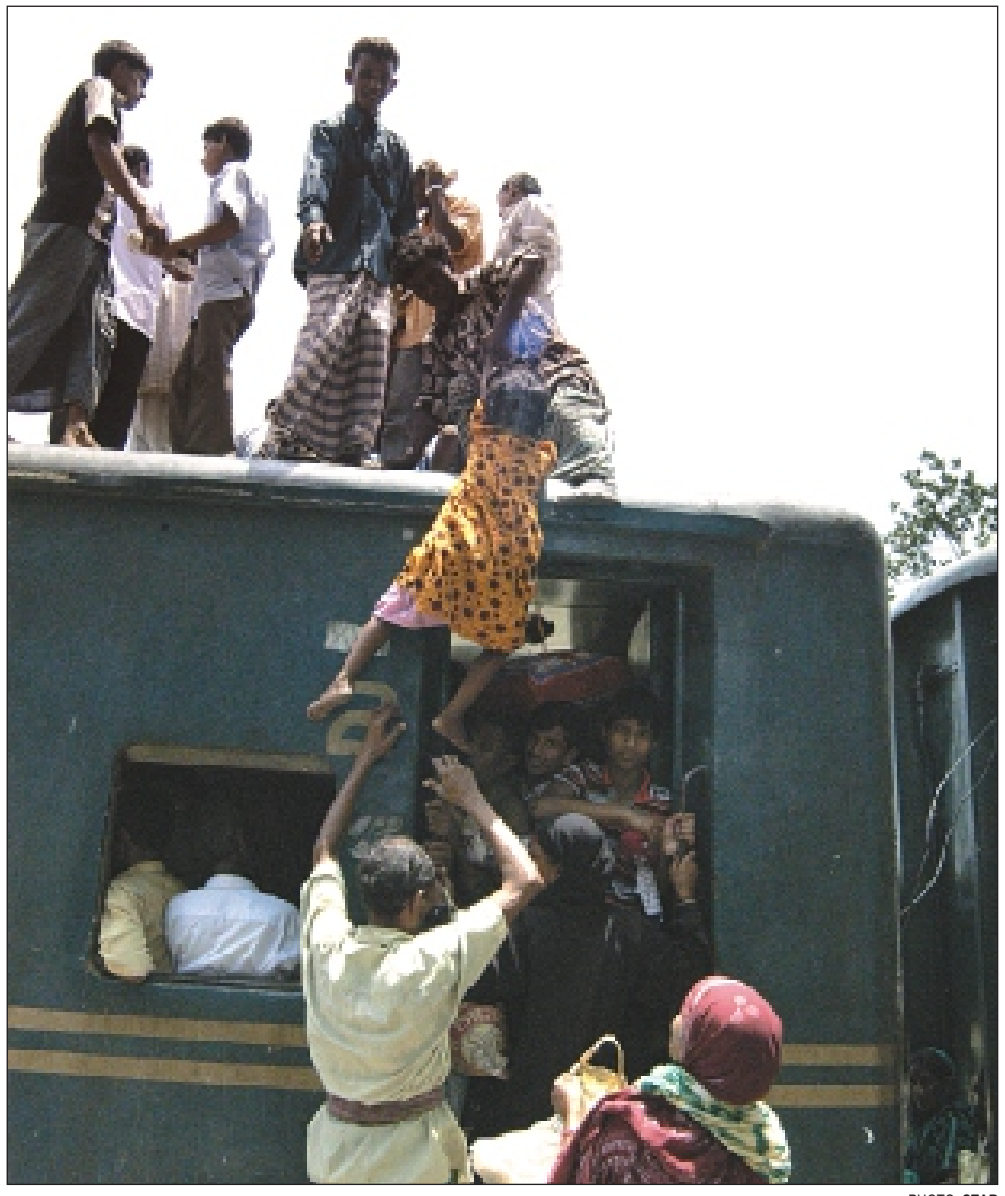
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfozzaman Babar yesterday said the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) has had some confessions and clues and is properly investigating the assassination of frontline Awami League (AL) lawmaker Ahsanullah Master.

Talking to BBC Bangla Service, Babar refuted the AL allegation that police coerced the injured into making confessions and said one who fights death in hospital cannot be taken for quizzing by force.

"We are trying to look into all the matters while investigating," said

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6



A girl struggles aboard a packed train as buses remained off the roads in Gazipur during hartal yesterday after the murder of AL lawmaker Ahsanullah Master.



Prime Minister and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia holds a meeting with the top leaders of the ruling four-party alliance at her office yesterday.

Curtain down on Indian marathon election

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

India's marathon parliamentary elections ended yesterday with an estimated 50 percent of the 215 million voters exercising their franchise.

Barring the killing of three persons, two of them in bomb blasts in West Bengal, the last leg of the five-phase poll was peaceful. The last lap, which covered a third of the 543 Lok Sabha seats, is crucial to determining if the ruling BJP-led NDA

headed by Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee would reach the half way mark.

Before the elections began on April 20, NDA was tipped to secure a comfortable majority riding high on BJP's much-hyped "India Shining" campaign powered by high economic growth, improved ties with Pakistan and charisma of Vajpayee. But the campaign has evidently failed to cut much ice.

Polling was held in 16 states and federally-administered territories

including 42 seats in West Bengal, 39 in Tamil Nadu, 20 in Kerala, 18 in Uttar Pradesh, 17 in Madhya Pradesh, 10 in Haryana and seven in Delhi.

NDA and Congress and its allies pin their hopes on their performance in different states. The BJP expects to ride on anti-incumbency wave in Punjab to sweep in the company of its ally Akali Dal. Congress hopes to blunt that in Delhi and Himachal Pradesh where it is ruling.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

Former AL lawmaker sued for money laundering

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Principal of Mirpur Girls' Ideal Laboratory Institute yesterday filed a graft case against former Awami League (AL) lawmaker and chairman of the institute Kamal Ahmed Majumder.

Principal Quamrunnahr filed the case with the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka against Kamal and four others on charge of misappropriation of a huge amount of the institute money between 1981 and 2002.

The other accused are former principal Razia Hussain, former

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

Scientists claim breakthrough in teleportation

AFP, Canberra

Teleportation always used to seem so simple. All it took was a quick call to Mr Scott, and Star Trek's Captain Kirk would be beamed up from the cheap-looking scenery of some alien planet and materialise on the Starship Enterprise.

These days it's all about lasers, subatomic particles and very hard sums, but one Australian research team's world-beating discoveries in the field seem almost as far-fetched as the science fiction version.

The multinational group from Canberra's Australian National

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

30 lakh people on drugs

Study says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 30 lakh people are addicted to drugs, a study conducted by an NGO said yesterday at a roundtable at the National Press Club.

The addicts buy their drugs for Tk 800 crore every year. Manas, the NGO, said, adding Tk 347 crore drugs substances come from neighbouring India. It also said addicts lavish Tk 220 crore on phensidyle.

"Developing social awareness against the negative impacts of drugs through motivation and restricting availability of the harmful substances are effective means to

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

Govt bars Santu Larma from leaving for UN conference in USA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma, president of Bangladesh Forum for Indigenous People, could not leave for the USA as the government has barred him from leaving the country.

He failed to join the third session of United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) conference scheduled for May 10-21 at the UN headquarters in New York because of a restriction slapped on him by Prime Minister

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

5 killed as bus, Tempo collide in Narsingdi

UNB, Narsingdi

Five people were killed and 10 injured in a collision between a Tempo and a bus on Dhaka-Manohordi road at Shibpur yesterday noon.

Witnesses and police said the accident occurred at noon when a Dhaka-bound bus collided with a Tempo near Asrabpur bus terminal, killing four on the spot. Another succumbed to injuries at Shibpur Hospital.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

US bombs Sadr's HQ in Baghdad, kills 35

US, UK brace for release of more abuse photos; Blair apologises; Bush stands by Rumsfeld

AGENCIES, Baghdad

US bombers yesterday flattened the Baghdad offices of radical Shia cleric Moqtada al-Sadr in a dramatic new show of force against his uprising.

Thirty-five suspected members of Sadr's Mehdi Army are reported to have been killed during fighting with US-led forces in Baghdad.

At least one bomb fell on the single-storey building and virtually destroyed it. There was no immediate comment from the US military, which reported 19 Sadr's men were killed in a series of clashes on

Sunday.

But Washington's standing in Iraq has taken a battering with shocking photographic revelations that soldiers sent to "liberate" them from Saddam Hussein have abused prisoners.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

Ctg in power crisis fear as Kaptai water level dips

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chittagong's power crisis is likely to persist as falling water levels in Kaptai Lake are threatening power generation at Kaptai Hydroelectric Power Plant.

Official sources said the water level at Kaptai Lake came down to 75.80 MSL (Mean Sea Level) yesterday from 76.15 MSL recorded on Sunday and 76.37 MSL the day before.

A minimum height of 90 MSL is required for safe operation of the power plant and water levels below 73 MSL would force suspension of power generation at all five units of the 230-MW (megawatt) plant.

Generation at units 1 and 4 has remained suspended due to technical faults developed in July and August last year, reducing the daily power generation in Chittagong by some 80 MW.

The three other units were

Prayer Timings		
May 11		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-10	4-45
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-36	6-40
Esha	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2