

PM greets Manjur

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has congratulated the newly elected mayor of Chittagong City Corporation M Manjur Alam Manju for his win in Thursday's elections.

In a letter of felicitation, she also thanked and greeted the Election Commission, law enforcing agencies, local

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Khaleda thanks Ctg people

UNB, Dhaka

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia yesterday congratulated the newly elected mayor and councillors for their win in Chittagong City Corporation (CC) election.

In a message of felicitation, she also congratulated the

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Manjur new Ctg mayor

He ends Mohiuddin's 17-year streak with record 95,528-vote lead; AL backed candidates dominate ward councils with 31 councillors among total 55



STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Mohammad Manjur Alam was elected the next mayor of Chittagong City Corporation (CC) yesterday, defeating ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury by the largest ever margin in the corporation's history.

Mohiuddin was the first elected mayor of the port city, who has been in the post for 17 years.

BNP backed Manjur bagged 4,79,145 votes defeating his main rival by 95,528.

Returning Officer Jesmin Tuli announced the unofficial poll result at 10:25am declaring Manjur the mayor-elect, amid cheers and slogans from several thousand supporters, many of whom waited there overnight with anticipation. A number of BNP and Jamaat leaders were also present.

CCC POLLS
TOTAL CENTRES: 673
M MANJUR ALAM : 4,79,145
ABM MOHIUDDIN : 3,83,617

After the announcement, Manjur's chief election agent, Chittagong City BNP President Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury, picked up the microphone and asked the cheering crowd not to bring out any victory procession.

He asked them to go back home, and to attend the Juma prayer, to express gratitude to Allah, instead of exulting over the victory.

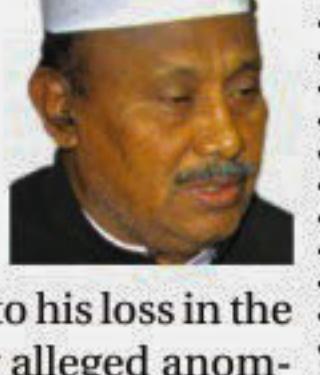
Expressing his joy over the win, Manjur told reporters that he will

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Anomalies in counting Says Mohiuddin

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg


A w a m i
L e a g u e -
b a c k e d
m a y o r
c a n d i -
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A B M
M o h i u d d i n
C h o w d h u r y
in his reaction to his loss in the
polls yesterday alleged anomalies
in vote counting.

"I will not make any
comments now about
acceptance or rejection of
the poll result," Mohiuddin
told reporters when asked
about the results of
Chittagong City
Corporation polls.

Blaming the administration
for favouring his main
rival BNP-backed Mohammad
Manjur Alam, he alleged that
the administration did not
take into cognisance the

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Manjur to enlist Mohiuddin's help

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Mayor-elect of Chittagong City Corporation Mohammad Manjur Alam yesterday said he hoped to run his office with the advice of his predecessor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury.

"He [Mohiuddin] is like my elder brother. I respect him. If I approach him, he will not drive me away," Manjur said after he was unofficially elected the mayor of the port city.

Manjur contested Thursday's CCC election with a ticket of the Chittagong Unnayan Andolan and was backed by the main opposition BNP. He said he would take opinions of others concerned to run his mayor office smoothly.

Around 10:25am yesterday, Returning Officer Jesmin Tuli said Manjur has officially been elected mayor as he has bagged a total of 479,145 votes.

The election official said Manjur's nearest contestant ruling Awami League-backed Mohiuddin polled 383,617 votes.

Seeking the government's assistance, Manjur said he wanted to help the government too and that he will work for the people of the city "regardless of their party loyalty".

Manjur, a former protégé of Mohiuddin, also thanked people of Chittagong for electing him their mayor.

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Clean image counts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, from Ctg

Domineering attitude, rudeness, failure to win party ranks' confidence, low turnout and his rival's clean image are believed to have ended Mohiuddin Chowdhury's 17-year mayoral rule in the port city.

Some local leaders and political analysts say growing public sufferings due to electricity, water and gas crises have brought on his downfall.

Others put it down to allegations of corruption and nepotism, and division in minority communities.

Low turnout of young voters and inactivity of ruling Awami League workers made it only easier for BNP-backed candidate Manjur Alam to rout his once mentor Mohiuddin in Thursday's election.

A few leaders questioned the role of the party's central leaders. They said more than one AL councillor candidate in most of the wards led to the drubbing.

Enamul Haque Danu, general secretary of city AL, said, "Party's General Secretary Syed Ashraful Islam had asked us to ensure single candidate in each ward. But Joint Secretary General Mahbubul Alam Hanif directed us to concentrate only on the mayor post."

"At the end, more than one leader contested for councillor in each ward and we didn't get their service in the mayoral race."

Danu also criticised the electoral manifesto. "Though some renowned persons drew up our manifesto, I think there was a lack of political commitment on their part."

Talking to The Daily Star, many leaders, analysts and general people said they believe Mohiuddin's downfall does not necessarily mean the AL-led

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Villagers torch stalkers' houses

A CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

Villagers yesterday set fire to houses of some alleged stalkers at Talupara village under Tarashupur upazila of the district.

The incident took place in retaliation for the death of a fellow villager.

The angry mob also caught a stalker's father and handed him over to police.

Earlier on Wednesday, at least 10 of a family were beaten for protesting against stalking, and one of them succumbed to his injuries.

Locals said Abdur Rauf, son of Delwar, used to pester Kamrul's wife Joinab, 18, everyday.

After Joinab brought the matter to Delwar's attention, Rauf and his men swooped on Kamrul's house and injured the family members.

Critically injured, Kamrul's uncle Aser Ali was rushed to Sirajganj Sadar Hospital. He died while being shifted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.

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Serbia stun Germany

Glut of yellow cards sees Germany reduce to 10-man

AFP, Port Elizabeth

Serbia stunned Germany 1-0 here on Friday in a pulsating World Cup tie marked by a cluster of yellow cards, Miroslav Klose's sending off and Germany's Lukas Podolski missing a second-half penalty.

Milan Jovanovic's first half goal gave Serbia victory to throw Group D wide open with Radomir Antic's side joining Germany and Ghana - who play pointless Australia on Saturday - with three points.

Germany striker Klose picked up the first booking of the game and then his fatal second, from Spanish referee Alberto Undiano, in the 37th minute for a tackle on Serbia captain Dejan Stankevic.

Less than a minute after he had left the pitch Serbia went ahead after a fine three-man move.

Milos Krasic sent a high ball in from the right post for Nikola Zigic, the tallest player at 2m 2cm high in the World Cup, to head down for

Jovanovic to flick in past keeper Manuel Neuer.

The Standard Liege midfielder celebrated by jumping into the arms of a small band of ecstatic Serbian supporters in the stands.

A goal and a man down Germany had a mountain to climb to get back into the match but they almost grabbed a first half stoppage time equaliser when Sami Khedira's shot hit the crossbar.

Before he was sent packing Klose thought he had come up with his 12th World Cup goal on the half hour but the linesman's flag had already been raised for offside.

Trigger-happy Undiano dished out two bookings in the space of barely a minute to Serbian duo Branislav Ivanovic and Aleksandar Kolarov.

It was two cards apiece on 21 minutes as Khedira caught Undiano's attention for felling

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NOT A HAPPY SPRAY: Coach Joachim Loew throws a water bottle in disgust as Germany fail to break Serbia in the closing minutes of their Group D tie at the Nelson Mandela Bay Stadium in Port Elizabeth yesterday. The Serbs notched up a shocking 1-0 win over the Germans.



PHOTO: STAR

Houses burn as villagers of Talupara in Sirajganj torch the homes of stalkers yesterday after the stalkers attacked protesters.

FBCCI polls today

UNB, Dhaka

The biennial election of the country's apex trade body Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry will be held today in the capital.

The voting will take place from 9:00am to 5:00pm at the FBCCI building without any break.

Some 58 candidates of four panels will vie for 28 posts of the 44-member Board of Directors for the next two years.

Of the 28 director posts, 14 candidates will be elected from the chamber group while 14 others from the association group.

Besides, 16 directors have

Lifestyle gets better

Reveals survey on welfare

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Although a large number of people still live below the poverty line, a new survey by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) shows that their standard of living however has been improving.

The first of its kind Welfare Monitoring Survey (WMS), carried out in March 2009, reports that 57 percent households received government help during crises.

It also found that 62 percent of the population now get their recreation from watching TVs, and listening to radios; 12.8 percent read newspapers; 72.5 percent have at least a pair of shoes or sandals.

Economists however said although the people's standard of living has improved, many are still deprived of basic amenities. The government must take steps to ensure those, they added.

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Mindless tree-felling brings on landslides

Say experts

PINAKI ROY

Mindless felling of trees in the hilly region has been the major reason behind landslides wreaking havoc among the people living on the slopes, said experts.

At least 300 people died in a series of landslides in hilly areas in the last decade. The last one claimed the lives of 54 people in Cox's Bazar and Bandarban on Tuesday.

Heavy downpour leads to water penetration in barren hills. It results in landslides in the hills formed by sandstones and siltstones, experts said.

"If there is no tree on a hill, rainwater directly enters the soil weakening the strength of the hill's base and causes landslides," said Humayun Akhter, professor at the department of geology of Dhaka University.

A proper balance between gravitational and frictional forces helps keep a hill stable. When rainwater enters the soil, it reduces the frictional force and causes landslides, said Humayun, who has been doing geological research in the hilly areas since early 80s.

Heavy rainfall escalates the risk of landslides in Rangamati, Bandarban, Khagrachari, Cox's Bazar and Chittagong.

Chittagong experiences the second highest rainfall in the country with an average of 300 millimetre of rainfall annually. Heavy rainfall of 70mm or more an hour creates a suitable con-

dition for landslides, experts said.

At least 137 people were killed in a landslide in Chittagong that witnessed a rainfall of 267 mm in 24 hours in June 2007. In August 2008, 11 people died in a landslide triggered by a cloud burst of 142mm.

People from the plains started settling in the hilly areas since early 80s. They felled trees and flattened hills for building houses and other purposes, they said.

The hills, which are now barren, used to have dense forest around them just two decades back.

A hill maintains its stability through the natural conditions of a system that is often disturbed by human interventions, said experts.

Prof Md Shahidul Islam, a teacher of Jangannath University, mentioned a few reasons behind the landslide.

Earthquake and cutting of hills have increased the likelihood of landslides. It is human activities, not natural reasons, which cause landslides in the hilly areas.

"We predicted it and warned the government and people several times at different seminars," said Prof Shahidul.

The recent 7.5 magnitude earthquake on Nicobar Island might have weakened the joints of rock blocks, he said.

More than 50,000 people live on the slopes of 12 hills marked as red zones in Chittagong city alone.

