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FIRST PHASE OF MUNICIPAL POLLS AL surprised at BNP's gain

Results show extremely close fight for mayoral posts in 4 divisions; 2nd phase starts Jan 17

SHAKHAWAT LITON

Results of the just-concluded municipal polls in four divisions indicate BNP is regaining its grassroots strength two years after the drubbing in the parliamentary election.

The ruling Awami League, on the other hand, had a rude awakening in the first phase of the polls staggered over four days.

The AL top brass reckon it was embarrassing to see how internal feuds and weakness at the grassroots level had cost them dearly in the elections on Wednesday and Thursday.

They were also surprised at the way the opposition-backed mayoral candidates succeeded despite their party's share of infighting and rebels [see related stories on page 20].

Though non-partisan in nature, the local body elections see political parties pick candidates and throw their weight behind them.

With the balloting over in Rajshahi,

Rangpur, Khulna and Barisal divisions, AL and BNP now concentrate their efforts on the rest 122 municipalities in Dhaka, Sylhet and Chittagong divisions going to the polls on Monday and Tuesday.

Out of 121 mayoral posts in the four divisions, AL-backed candidates won 40 and BNP 47. The rebel candidates from AL bagged 13 and BNP six.

The results reflect a close fight between the two parties.

The ruling AL-backed candidates did worst in Rajshahi and Rangpur. They won only 18 out of 72 mayoral posts in the two divisions. AL leaders put the poor performance down to the party's tough stance against rebel candidates.

"We expect to fare better in the remaining three divisions. We have urged all our rebels to work for the party-backed candidates," AL Joint General Secretary Mahbulul Alam Hanif told The Daily Star yesterday.

RESULTS IN 4 DIVISIONS	
AL 40	BNP 47
AL rebel 13	BNP rebel 6
Total 53	Total 53

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While a bone-chilling cold wave sweeps through the country, at least 100 students are left to reside and shiver on a balcony of Dhaka University SM Hall. Most of them are second-year students but yet to be allocated rooms in the dormitory.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

AL warns rebels of expulsion

HASAN JAHID TUSHER

Awami League yesterday directed its rebel mayoral candidates of municipalities in Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions to announce via megaphone in their area that they withdrew from the municipality race and are now

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Govt plans to acquire foreign coal, gas fields

Energy adviser says; country needs to generate 30,000-50,000 MW power in next two decades

SHARIER KHAN

Alongside tapping the coal and gas resources in the country, the government is planning to acquire some coal and gas fields abroad to ensure long-term energy security, said Energy Adviser Towfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury.

At a discussion of the power division and Power Development Board (PDB) on Saturday he said, "We are looking at generating 30,000 to 50,000 megawatts of power in the next two decades and hence are open to acquiring assets in other countries."

In future, half the country's energy would be generated from coal, he told the discussion organised to interact with the four non-resident Bangladeshi experts who were invited by The Daily Star to share their knowledge on alternative energy and new technology at the news-

paper's first Colloquium Friday.

Replying to a question on why the government has not yet taken any visible move on larger scale coal development, the energy adviser said the works on building a coal city in Barapukuria was in progress which would serve as a hub for coal development in that region.

"We have to ask the National Water Modelling Institute to study the aquifers in the northern region so that we understand the effect and result of coal mining there," he said, adding, "Presently, we lack adequate data."

Understanding ground water tables is vital for coal mining. Mining without understanding the water structure can seriously affect the ground water situation.

The energy adviser noted that for such enormous development in the energy

SEEPAGE 19 COL 4



Widow of Fazlul Huq, an Awami League leader shot dead by armed cadres, mourns his passing at her Agargaon home yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

SUST student among 3 dead in road crash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Three people including a student of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST) were killed and two others injured in a head-on collision between a truck and an auto-rickshaw in the city yesterday.

The dead were identified as Alimuddin, from Ghoramara village of

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AL leader shot dead in city

2 cops suspended, 2 transferred

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Criminals shot dead the general secretary of Awami League ward-41 unit of the capital's Agargaon yesterday, six days into the shooting of AL president of the same unit.

Victim Fazlul Huq, 40, came under attack on his way to offer juma prayers and distribute sweetmeats on the occasion of his father's death anniversary at a mosque in the area.

Following the back-to-back attack on the two AL leaders, the home ministry yesterday transferred Deputy Commissioner (DC) Mohammad Ali Mia and patrol inspector Swaraj Kumar of Tejgaon Division to Public Order Management (South) and suspended officer-in-charge Riaz Hossain and sub-inspector Kamruzzaman of Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station.

DC Selim Mohammad Jahangir (traffic west) took the DC's office as additional charge while Inspector Syed Ziauzzaman of Rajarbagh Police Lines the charge of Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station.

Witnesses said four of the gang members shot Fazlul in the head and abdomen leaving him critically injured in front of Baitun Nur Jame Mosque at BNP Bazar around 1:00pm.

Fazlul was immediately rushed to Pangu Hospital where the doctors declared him dead. The body was later

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Home minister unhappy with cops' role

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Minister Sahara Khatun yesterday expressed concern over the role of police in maintaining law and order as the department failed to find out the attackers of a ward unit AL president even six days after the incident.

A group of criminals yesterday shot dead Fazlul Huq, Agargaon AL general secretary, after Nur Mohammad, president of the same AL unit, came under a gun attack and was injured on January 8. The home minister expressed doubt about the efficiency of the police department at Dhaka Medical College morgue where she went to see the body of Fazlul Huq.

She accompanied by LGRD State Minister Jahangir Kabir Nanak at DMCH said the officer-in-charge and a

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Fog disrupts traffic in waterways

2 flights cancelled

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A dense fog covered much of the country yesterday leading to major traffic disruptions in air and water ways, although temperature rose a bit after three freezing days.

Two international

SEE PAGE 19 COL 4

MAURITIUS CRASH Bodies of 10 Bangladeshis brought home

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The bodies of 10 Bangladeshi garment workers out of 11 killed in a road crash in Mauritius on January 12 arrived in the city last night.

Abdul Gaffer, officer-in-charge of immigration

SEE PAGE 19 COL 8

THE NEWLY ELECTED EXECUTIVE BODY OF BANGLADESH INLAND CONTAINER DEPOTS ASSOCIATION

<p>President Mr. Nurul Quayyum Khan (Chairman, QNS Container Services Ltd)</p>				
<p>First Vice President Mr. SAJ Rizvi (Managing Director, Ocean Containers Ltd)</p>	<p>Vice President Mr. S. M. Shafi (Chairman, Shafi Motors Ltd)</p>	<p>Vice President Hajj Mohd. Younus (Managing Director, Esack Brothers Ind. Ltd)</p>	<p>Vice President Alhaj Khalilur Rahman (Chairman, KDS Logistics Ltd)</p>	<p>Vice President (Finance) Mr. Imran Fahim Noor (Managing Director, Vertex Off-Dock Logistics Services Ltd)</p>
<p>Director Mr. Ahsan Iqbal Chowdhury (Managing Director, Iqbal Enterprise Ltd)</p>	<p>Director Mr. A. S. M. Nayem (Board Director, K&T Logistics Ltd)</p>	<p>Director Mr. Anis Ahmed (Managing Director, Portlink Logistics Centre Ltd)</p>	<p>Director Mr. Omar Faruq Chowdhury (Sabuj) (Director, Chittagong Container Transportation Co. Ltd)</p>	<p>Director Mr. Yasser Haider Rizvi (Deputy Managing Director, Summit Alliance Port Ltd)</p>