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THE KEY CHALLENGE

Economists say political instability is a major barrier to budget implementation

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FATHER EXTRAORDINAIRE

Subarna shares memories of her father, late actor Golam Mustafa

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Four-Zero

BNP-backed mayor aspirants triumph over AL-blessed rivals in four city polls

STAR REPORT

BNP-backed mayoral candidates scored a resounding victory in elections to the four city corporations, defeating their ruling Awami League-supported rivals, in a high-voltage, peaceful battle of ballots held peacefully yesterday.

In Rajshahi City Corporation, Mosaddek Hossain Bulbul's win has brought the BNP leader back to the helm of the city after a gap of five years. BNP-supported candidates had previously won mayoral polls in 1994 and 2002.

AL favourite AHM Khairuzzaman Liton, who was elected mayor in 2008, lost to Bulbul by a margin of 47,332 votes.

The election to Khulna City Corporation saw the return of a local BNP leader to the mayoral post after



five years.

BNP favourite Moniruzzaman Mony beat AL-backed Talukder Abdul Khaleque by 60,671 votes in Khulna. Khaleque secured the mayoralty in 2008 by defeating Mony. Khaleque's win had ended a long run of BNP leader Sheikh Tayebur Rahman, who was elected mayor in

1994 and 2002.

In both Barisal and Sylhet, BNP-backed mayoral candidates defeated their rivals by 17,010 votes and 35,157 votes.

In Barisal, Ahsan Habib Kamal sealed his victory over AL-backed Shawkat Hossain Hiron, who had won the mayoralty in the 2008 polls. Before that, BNP

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Women queue up at Nirala Primary School polling centre in Khulna to cast their votes in the city corporation elections yesterday.

PHOTO:
RASHED SHUMON

BNP inspired

Results justify call for non-party govt: Khaleda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia last night said people's verdict in the four city corporation polls justified the opposition demand for a non-partisan government for holding the national election.

She said this while discussing the election results with some party leaders at her Gulshan office, said a BNP leader who was present at the meeting.

The BNP chief congratulated people in the four city corporations and winners of the polls battle.

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AL shocked

Voting free, peaceful, says PM

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The results of the prestige battle in four city corporations came as a shock for the ruling Awami League as all its candidates suffered heavy defeat before their BNP-backed rivals.

Talking to The Daily Star last night, some AL leaders said they now needed some soul searching to find out the reasons behind the debacle and do some mending before the upcoming parliamentary elections.

They also said the win would give the BNP-led opposition alliance political mileage at a time when both camps were at loggerheads over the

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Polls fair; accept results

Urges CEC, hopes to hold JS elections more peacefully

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmed yesterday described the city polls as free and fair and called upon all to accept the results.

Talking to reporters in the evening, he also said he had taken note of all the allegations of the BNP against Awami League-backed candidates and acted accordingly.



Asked if he was happy over the city polls, the CEC said: "We will be satisfied when we can finally hold the next [parliament] election peacefully."

Yesterday's polls tested the Election Commission's credibility and efficiency, as this was the first time the five-member commission had held such major polls in four cities since its formation in February last year.

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RAJSHAHI

M ABUL KALAM AZAD and
ANWAR ALI, from Rajshahi

The Rajshahi City Corporation election was held peacefully yesterday, barring one incident at the Chandipur Government Primary School polling centre over a page of its official voter list going missing.

Around 11:00am, Alamgir Hossain, presiding officer of the centre, said a page of the voter list could not be found. Then 20 females whose names were there began venting their anger at the school premises. Some people tried to

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Polling centres 137
Result declared All

MOSADDEK HOSSAIN
BULBUL

1,31,058
VOTES

AHM KHAIRUZZAMAN
LITON

83,726
VOTES

PANKAJ KARMAKAR and
ZAHID HOSSAIN, from Khulna

With the exception of the death of a jute mill worker, allegedly in police action, election to Khulna City Corporation yesterday was peaceful with enthusiastic voters queuing up at polling centres in their thousands.

Tea-stall owner Ruhul Amin, for example, kept his shop at Iqbalnagar Mosque Road area closed all day so that he could cast his vote and take in the atmosphere.

"An election day comes

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Polling centres 288
Result declared All

MONIRUZZAMAN
MONY

1,80,093
VOTES

TALUKDER ABDUL
KHALEQUE

1,19,422
VOTES

BARISAL

HASAN JAHID TUSHER,
SUSHANTA GHOSH and
JAHIRUL ISLAM JEWEL, from
Barisal

While BNP-backed mayoral candidate in Barisal City Corporation (BCC) Ahsan Habib Kamal yesterday alleged that the voting there had not been held in a free and neutral manner, his agents denied it.

Talking to reporters at a poll centre around 1:30pm, Kamal claimed that his agents had been forced out of some centres where ruling party-backed candidate Shawkat Hossain Hiron's men were rigging votes.

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Polling centres 100
Result declared All

AHSAN HABIB
KAMAL

83,751
VOTES

SHAWKAT HOSSAIN
HIRON

66,741
VOTES

M RAHMAN and IQBAL
SIDDIQUEE, from Sylhet

In her nineties, Kiron Bala Talukder cannot walk a step without help. But yesterday, she could not hold herself back from casting a ballot.

Her three grandsons took her to Madan Mohan College in Sylhet.

A smile broke on her face when she was leaving the polling centre around 1:00pm. "I am happy. For the first time I have used a machine to cast my vote," said Kiron Bala.

Partially paralysed Taslima Begum, aged about

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Polling centres 128
Result declared All

ARIFUL HAQUE
CHOWDHURY

1,07,330
VOTES

BADAR UDDIN
KAMRAN

72,173
VOTES

6TH BERGER AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN ARCHITECTURE 2013

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