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POLLS IN 13 UPAZILAS

AL 7, BNP 5

AL rebel candidate wins one; rigging, violence in 5 upazilas

STAR REPORT

The ruling Awami League-backed chairman aspirants won in seven upazilas, while the BNP favourites came out victorious in five in yesterday's upazila polls.

However, the chairman post in the other upazila went to an AL rebel, according to unofficial results declared by the returning officers.

Stray incidents of violence, vote rigging, stuffing of ballots and capturing of polling centres by the AL men were reported in at least five upazilas out of 13 that went to the polls.

At least 25 people were injured in the violence and 11 were arrested over creating violence and casting fake votes in different upazilas.

The Election Commission has postponed voting in two polling centres and cancelled it in one due to violence and vote rigging, said Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad.

"According to reports by our officials, polling in the remaining areas was fair and peaceful," the CEC told a press conference at the EC's media centre last evening.

After lagging behind in the first phase of the upazila polls, AL men resorted to violence and vote rigging in the next phases. Yet chairman candidates backed by the AL were trailing in the polls till the end of the third phase. With the fourth phase over, the party's favourites took the lead from rival BNP-backed candidates.

Although the scale of violence and irregularities was

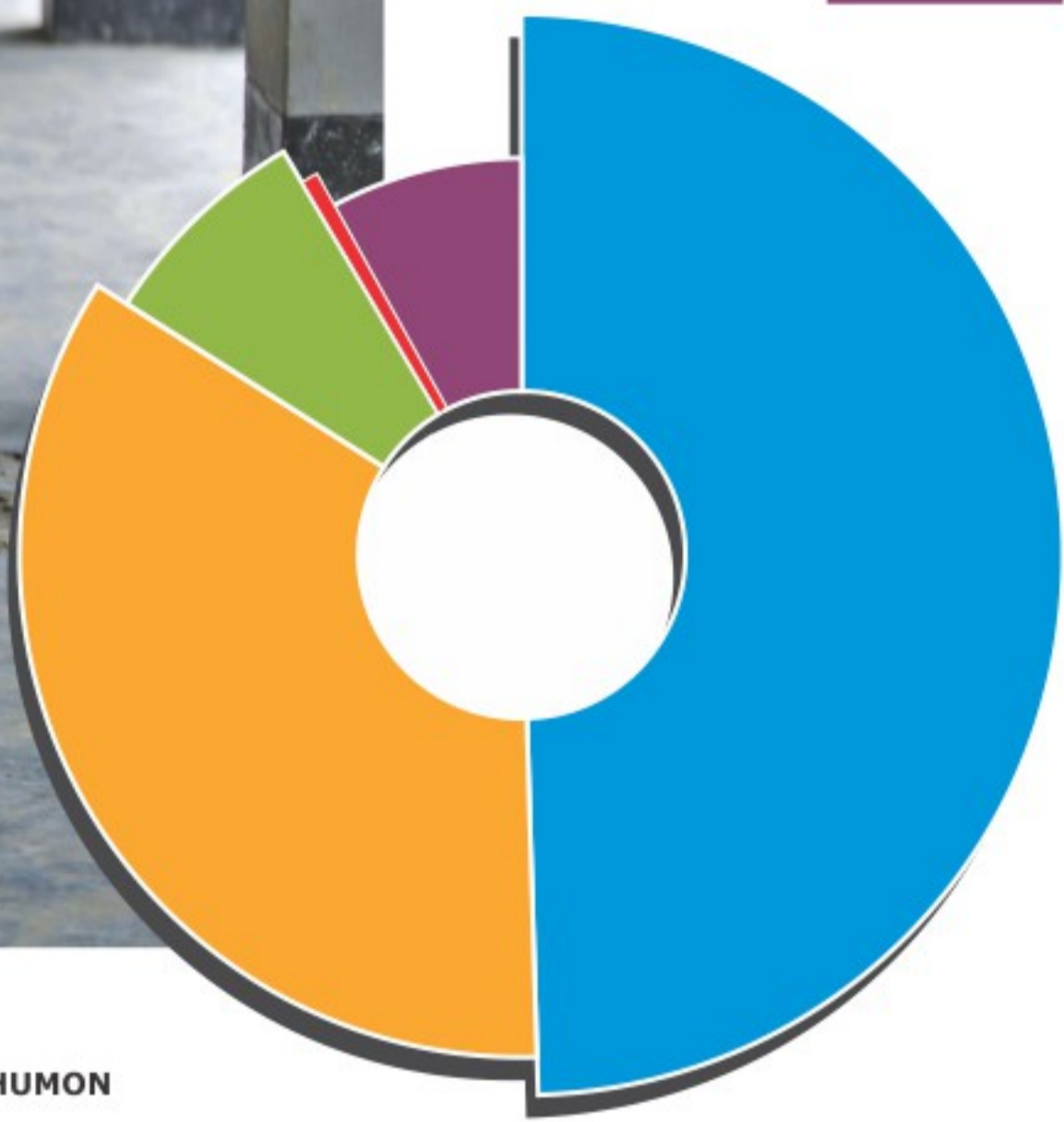
SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



A security staff falls asleep on a bench in Pirujali Amania Fazil Madrasa polling centre around noon yesterday. Voter turnout was very poor in the polls to the Gazipur Sadar Upazila Parishad.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

CHAIRMEN	
6 phases	
TOTAL UPAZILAS 472	
AL	233
BNP	164
JAMAAT	35
JP	3
OTHERS	37



Dr Kamal contradicts Hasina's comments

UNB, Dhaka

Gonoforum President Dr Kamal Hossain in a rejoinder has contradicted the statement made by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina about his role following the events of August 15, 1975.

The rejoinder was issued by Dr Kamal Hossain & Associates against the background of a UNB report published in a number of dailies on May 18.

The report was based on the prime minister's statement over what she called the inactive role of the then

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

N'GANJ-5 BY-POLLS SCHEDULE ANNOUNCED

Osman family critics rally behind AL rebel Akram

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE and RASHIDUL HASAN

The dominance of the Osman family in Narayanganj is set to be challenged in the by-polls to the Narayanganj-5 constituency on June 26.

The one-sided January 5 parliamentary polls was a blessing for the controversial Osman brothers -- Shamim and Nasim -- as both of them were elected unopposed in the district.

After Jatiya Party MP Nasim Osman passed away on April 30, thus leaving the Jatiya Sangsad seat for Narayanganj-5 constituency vacant, the Jatiya Party, which got the seat through a deal with the ruling Awami

League, is thinking about nominating Nasim's widow Parvin Osman.

Rival camps, however, are now gearing up to take the Osman family down.

Talking to The Daily Star, a cross section of people, including local politicians and cultural activists, said they were taking the by-polls as a chance to be rid of the Osmans, who are involved in "unlawful activities".

The man in the forefront of the challenge is SM Akram.

He was the convener of Narayanganj district Awami League



SM Akram

but had resigned in 2011 protesting the AL's backing of Shamim Osman in the Narayanganj city corporation election in 2011.

"As people have asked me to take part in the by-polls, I have decided to honour their wishes. I was the lawmaker of this constituency and I was ignored by the party in the 2008 national elections.

Now I want to fight back as an independent candidate," Akram said.

Akram is now a leading figure in Nagarik Oikya, a civil society platform led by Mahmudur Rahman Manna.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Lawyers demand fair probe into 7-murder

Call for Maya's resignation, protest appointment of 2 doctors for remanded ex-Rab officials

STAR REPORT

Leaders of Narayanganj District Lawyers' Association yesterday demanded the resignation of the disaster management and relief minister in the interest of a proper investigation into the seven-murder case.

As one of the former Rab officers is a close relative of Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya, he should step down to keep the probe free from influence, they said at a protest rally at Narayanganj Court premises.

Maya's son-in-law Lt Col Tareque Sayeed Mohammad, along with two other former Rab men Maj Arif Hossain and Lt Commander SM Masud Rana, were arrested on charges of

alleged involvement in the murders.

The trio were placed on remand at Narayanganj Police Lines.

Shakhawat Hossain Khan, president of the association, said, "Allegations about the involvement of the minister's son in the murders have also surfaced. The case is very sensitive. If the minister remains in his position, he may influence the investigation."

He alleged that the interrogators were not quizzing the three in connection with their involvement in the murders.

Rather, he claimed, two physicians were appointed to provide full-time health care services to the trio without having any

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Detective Branch of police shows the handcuffs, drugs, money, phones, and the fake pistol they seized from a gang of five alleged kidnappers on Sunday. The photo was taken from DMP media centre in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

5 'abductors' arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detective Branch of police have arrested a gang of five alleged abductors, including a minor girl, in separate drives in Dhaka and Sirajganj.

The gang leader, Mohammad Rezaul, had 16-year-old Sheuli Akhter Shilpi trick their targets, mainly youths, into building a relationship with her. She then called them to a desolate place from where Rezaul, 36, along with Anwar Hossain, 45, Abdus Samad, 49, and Mortuza, 28, abducted them for ransom, Senior Assistant Commissioner Nazmul Alam told The Daily Star by phone.

The girl is the second wife of Rezaul, police said.

Four of them, excluding Mortuza, were arrested in a drive in Raiganj of Sirajganj on Sunday. Mortuza was picked up from the capital's Mirpur on that day.

Identifying the abductors during an investigation into a kidnapping case lodged with Turag Police Station on May 2, detectives conducted Sunday's drive, said Monirul Islam, joint commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) at a press conference at its media centre yesterday.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

BSF men kill Bangladeshi

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) allegedly beat to death a Bangladeshi cattle trader on Putkhali border under Benapole Port Police Station early yesterday.


The dead, Sirajul Islam, 25, was son of Siddikur Rahman of Kayemkola under Jhikargachha upazila in Jessore.

Lt Col Mostafijur Rahman, commanding

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

PRAYER TIMING			May 20
Azan	Jamaat		
Fajr	4-05	4-40	
Zohr	12-45	1-15	
Asr	5-00	5-15	
Maghrib	6-40	6-45	
Esha	8-00	8-30	
Source: Islamic Foundation			

The Daily Star



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ONLINE POLL

Do you agree with a CPD study that mainstream political parties, specially the Awami League and BNP are in a race to "grab state resources"?

Yes

93%

No

07%

TOTAL VOTES: 300

TODAY'S POLL

Do you agree with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina that her government had ensured free flow of information through enacting the Right to Information Act?

PLEASE CAST YOUR VOTE AT

www.thedailystar.net

Congress keeps trust in Gandhis

Rejects 'resignation offer' made by Sonia, Rahul taking responsibility for polls debacle

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

Having suffered the worst electoral defeat in the Lok Sabha polls, Congress chief Sonia Gandhi and her son Rahul yesterday "offered to resign" from the party taking moral responsibility but it was rejected by the party's highest decision-making forum.

A meeting of the Congress Working Committee (CWC), where Sonia and Rahul

were understood to have made the offer, however, passed a resolution expressing full faith in their leadership.

"We will fight under the leadership of Rahul Gandhi", party spokesperson Raj Babbar said.

The CWC, which met here yesterday to discuss the party's drubbing in the elections, authorised Sonia to draw up a roadmap for the party's political recovery, party sources said.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

Korea to disband coast guards

President takes responsibility for ferry disaster

AFP, Seoul

South Korean President Park Geun-Hye took tearful responsibility yesterday for the mishandling of last month's Sewol ferry disaster, admitting many lives were unnecessarily lost and vowing to dismantle the national coastguard.

"The ultimate responsibility for the poor response to this accident lies with me," Park said in a televised address to the nation, during which she openly wept and twice bowed deeply in a display of contrition.

Park's popularity ratings have been hammered by the April 16

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

